

Kind Kids Club holds book drive for those less fortunate

Coin collection drive raises \$2,000 for Bernie's Book Bank

FOUAD EGBARIA, Assistant Editor

Hickory Point children are holding a book drive to collect book for Bernie's Book Bank. As a result, not only are the kids at Hickory Point getting excited about books, but they are also helping others who are less fortunate as well.

Bernie's Book Bank in Lake Forest collects gently used books and sends them to kids and schools in need. Hickory Point's book drive started on Feb. 10 and it ends on Friday, Feb. 28. Anyone who wants to donate can drop off books in the front foyer of the school or during parent-teacher conferences.

Part of the effort of the book drive comes from the "Kind Kids Club," a group at the school that promotes kindness.

"One of the projects [the kids] chose early in the year was a book donation," said Principal Sheila Streets. "We felt for us that it was something that our kids understood. ... When you're 5, 6 and 7 years old, you get that kids don't have as many books as you."

Through the PTA, the school held a coin collection drive that raised \$2,000. That money was then used to allow members of the Kind Kids Club to select books from the school's book fair to contribute to the book drive. Streets said kids were able to select between three and five books that they wanted to donate.

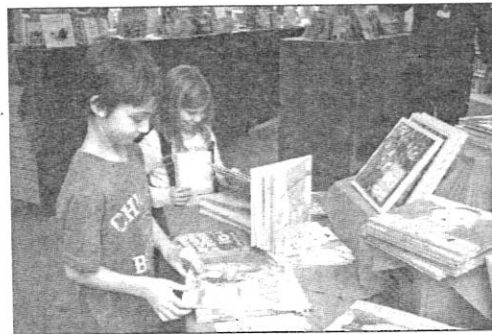
Meanwhile, Streets said watching the kids pick out

the books gave them "a great perspective on what [kids] want to read," which was especially useful since the kids were, of course, picking books that other kids of a similar age would be reading.

Streets said the school's goal is to donate about 400 books; but by looking at the collection tubs in the front of the school, it seems that they have far surpassed that mark.

Andrea Dalinka, one of the co-chairs for the book fairs, said the chance to raise money for the school while also contributing to a charitable cause is a "win-win" situation.

"I think our kids benefit



Hickory Point students Joah Weissman (left) and Lucy Kesselman help pick out books for Bernie's Book Bank donations. PHOTO SUBMITTED

by understanding that they are fortunate to grow up in a home where children's literature is available," Dalinka said, "and that it isn't everywhere."

Help Hickory Point win a free author visit

School needs to win Facebook contest to bring Jan Brett to NB

FOUAD EGBARIA, Assistant Editor

When it's cold outside, what better way to find comfort indoors than with a book?

The kids at Hickory Point Elementary certainly feel that way. That's why they are trying to bring author and illustrator Jan Brett to their school for a free visit.

The school is competing in the fourth annual "Like Jan Brett on Facebook" contest, in which the school with the most Facebook "likes" on Brett's Facebook page gets a free visit from the author.

Anne Dierbeck, the school's librarian, was one of the initiators of the attempt to get Brett to come to Hickory Point.

"She's written so many books, she's a wonderful author and illustrator," Dierbeck said. "[She's] very well-known. We just thought it would be so much fun to have her come visit."

Anyone can vote on behalf of Hickory Point by either going to Brett's Facebook page and specifying Hickory Point as the preferred school or by emailing Dierbeck at dierbeck.a@nb27.org.

The voting began on Jan. 6 and will con-

tinue until April 11. The school hopes to collect around 4,000 Facebook "likes," which is about the total of last year's winner. The current leader has about 1,700 likes, according to Dierbeck, and Hickory Point is currently No. 6 in the contest standings, which are posted each week.

"Since [Brett's] an illustrator, our art teacher is very excited about having her come [here]," Dierbeck said.

Dierbeck said she's been talking to the kids about the contest, particularly so they can get their parents to vote via Facebook. The school library even includes a colorful display featuring materials about the contest to get the kids aware and excited about the effort.

"We're hopeful," said Principal Sheila Streets.

The school district sponsors an author visit each year, and Hickory Point has gotten visits from local authors Suzanne Slade, of Libertyville, and Candace Fleming, of Oak Park, over the last two years. But a visit from Brett would be a real page-turner of an event for the school.

"If she doesn't [come to the school], we will find an author," Streets said. "But [having Brett] would just be a great way for us to have a wonderful author that our kids are invested in."

The Gardner preschool opens in Northbrook

STAFF REPORT

The Gardner School opened in Northbrook on Monday, Feb. 24, at 2380 Waterview Drive (previously 1 Astellas Way).

The award-winning, academic preschool serves children ages 6 weeks through pre-kindergarten. This location marks the third Gardner School in the Chicago area, with plans for three additional schools by spring 2015.

"We are thrilled to be expanding in the Chicago market," said Scott Thompson, chief executive officer at The Gardner School, in a press release. "At TGS, we're committed to redefining early childhood education. ... We've already seen extreme success in the Naperville and West Loop schools, and we're looking forward to bringing our same commitment to the northern suburbs."

The Gardner School's first Chicagoland location, which was the eighth location overall, opened in Naperville in the spring, providing a state-of-the-art school with full- and part-time child care. Later that summer, the second Gardner School location opened in downtown Chicago in the West Loop, providing the same convenient child-care services for parents who work downtown. Over the next year, the Gardner School plans to deepen its footprint in the Chicago market with three more locations: Bucktown, Oak Brook and Lincoln Park.

"We are excited to offer

our unique and award-winning services to the families of Chicago who commute to Northbrook for employment and to those who live in nearby communities," said Thompson.

The schools offer a structured daily schedule and a research-based curriculum that promotes active, engaged and academic learning to set children up for future academic success. A unique learning atmosphere incorporates a careful blend of traditional and Montessori techniques through a balance of child- and teacher-directed educational activities.

The teaching philosophy incorporates structured play while remaining flexible enough to foster the self-discovery that will help each child learn at his or her own pace. Each location is designed to provide a stimulating, creative and educationally engineered environment to prepare young children with the foundation to excel in kindergarten and beyond. Additional amenities include health-conscious, nutritious meals prepared on-site; first-class security measures, including closed-circuit cameras throughout the entire school and a four-digit pass code for all parents to enter; and a full suite of enrichment classes that provide specialized, small-group training in foreign languages, dance, gymnastics, drama, computer-based learning and more.

For more information, visit www.TheGardnerSchool.com.