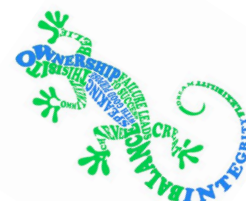


The Gecko Gazette

Robert E. Willis Elementary School

14705 The Masters Avenue, Lakewood Ranch, Florida 34202 (941) 316-8245



February 2016
Vol. 3/Issue #3

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

It's hard to believe that we are into the third quarter already. Time seems to fly by when we are busy learning and growing. These days will get even busier as we move further into the second half of the school year.

The students and teachers continue to work hard towards mastery of grade level standards. We see this hard work every day as we visit and observe the classrooms. This year 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students will be taking the FSA (Florida Standards Assessment) again, which replaced the FCAT last year. The FSA occurs on a variety of days between March 1st and April 27th.

Our 4th and 5th grade students will be taking the writing portion of the FSA, and their teachers have been working hard to help the students be successful. Third, fourth and fifth grade students' will also be assessed in Reading and Math. This year our 4th and 5th grade students will be taking the reading portion of the FSA on the computer. Fifth grade will also take the FSA math assessment on the computer, while fourth grade will take a paper based test for math. Science mastery will be assessed in 5th grade using the Science FCAT 2.0. Please look for updated testing dates on our [school website](#).

Please ensure that your child receives several good nights of sleep prior to testing dates and during the testing window. Proper sleep and a healthy breakfast can make a difference in your child's performance. Also, be sure that your child arrives at school on time every morning during testing. A stressful morning can be a huge distraction for students. If your child is ill during testing it is best to

keep them home, make-up dates are built into the testing window.

We are in need of proctors to assist the teachers while they administer the standardized assessments. If you are willing to proctor please contact Mrs. Morales at moralesp@manateeschools.net. See specific dates below.

On another note, please remember that supervision for students is not provided prior to 8:00 a.m. We have had an increasing number of students over the last few weeks dropped off before that time. Please do not drop off your children before 8:00 a.m. We want our children to continue to be safe and appreciate your help with this.

Thank you for all you do to support Willis and for all you do to make Willis a great place to learn!

Bill Stenger, Principal and
Michele Danowski, Assistant Principal

PLEASE HELP PROCTOR THE FSA!

Email Phyllis Morales or call (941) 316-8245 x2004

Date	Test	Grade(s)
March 1st	FSA - ELA Writing	4th & 5th
March 29th & 30th	FSA - ELA	3rd
March 31st & April 1st	FSA - Mathematics	3rd & 4th
April 11 - May 6	FSA - ELA Reading	4th & 5th
	FSA - Mathematics	5th
April 26th & 27th	FCAT 2.0 Science	5th



Welcome to the second semester of the year! As we reflect over all that was accomplished the first semester, the P.T.O. wants to thank each of you for all the ways you helped our students.

The Holiday Shop was an outstanding success, with over \$14K in merchandise sold, resulting in a profit of \$2K for the school. The students shopped for their families and cheerfully brought their carefully chosen presents home to surprise their loved ones for the holidays. We wish everyone could have seen their joyful faces at the shop! Deb Sharpe, thank you and each one of your volunteers. Many families enjoyed the Evening with Santa, where Schuyler Galliano and her amazing team of volunteers turned our foyer into a winter wonderland! It was all so amazing.

Did you know we have a "Secret Santa" at Willis Elementary each year? Thank you to each of those secret volunteers who gather wonderful gifts to support Willis families who could use some extra help during the holidays. The spirit of giving shined extra bright this year!

Muffins with Mom was magnificent! Thank you Deb Hossenlopp and each volunteer who set up, served, took pictures, and cleaned up! Way to go Dads for helping! We LOVED making special memories that morning with our precious children.

Our spirit night at Blaze Pizza had a great turnout. Because of your patronage, they are donating \$330 to Willis. Be sure to attend our next Spirit Nights:



February 25th



March 14th

The PTO is continuing to hold Walk-a-thon prize events. A whopping 231 students enjoyed a delicious ice cream social with Mrs. Danowski. Next up will be lunch at Geckos with Mr. Stenger for our top 20 contributors and Jungle Gardens will be visiting in April to wow the 28 students who raised over \$500 each. There are still more great experiences to come for our Walk-a-thon prize earners!

Our annual Gecko Gala will be held April 9th at the Lake Club. Invitations went home in agendas last week. We will need lots of help with donations, so thank you in advance for any and all efforts to obtain items to help auction for this wonderful event.

School Bricks will be on sale until February 17th, and we will hold our first Father Daughter Dance May 13th (more details below).

This next semester will be filled with exciting events. We cannot wait to enjoy each of them together as a Willis "family"!

**THANK YOU TO
OUR SPIRIT NIGHT
SPONSOR:**



Willis PTO MEETING

Everyone is welcome to attend P.T.O. meetings, which are held monthly in the Cafetorium (Willis Cafeteria) at 2:00 p.m. Meeting dates for the 2015/16 school year are:

Friday, Mar. 11th
Friday, Apr. 8th
Friday, May 6th

We look forward to seeing you!

Willis YEARBOOK

The yearbook design is actively underway! Have photos? Please submit any and all to your room mom or to the yearbook committee.

[Elizabeth Baas](#) or [Jen Bowles](#)

Thank you!

SCHOOL BRICKS

Commemorate your child's enrollment at Willis by buying a brick with your customized message! The 4" x 8" engraved bricks will be installed in the school courtyard in late spring. Bricks cost \$50.00, payable to the Willis P.T.O. Please place your order prior to February 17, 2016 by completing this [form](#). Payment may also be made on-line at the [P.T.O. store](#).



Willis collects Box Tops for Education throughout the year to raise funds for our school. Cut and save those labels and send them to your classroom by:

Thursday, February 18th

The top 3 collecting classes wins a popcorn party!

Congratulations to the following classes for winning our 2nd collection of the school year:

Mrs. Nelson
Mrs. Piper
Mrs. Scherpf

Willis P.T.O. BOARD

Ashley Henderson - President
ashenderson321@yahoo.com

Liz Combe - Vice President
liz.combe@hotmail.com

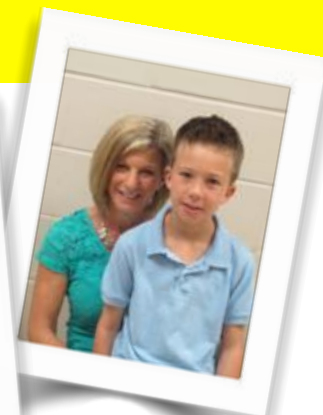
Deb Hossenlop - Vice President
debhoss@gmail.com

Tara Merino - Treasurer
tarabergstrom@yahoo.com

Christa Nash - Secretary
nashgril1@gmail.com

[P.T.O. website](#)

Muffins for Moms Memories





Save the Date for Willis Elementary's Gecko Gala!

Every year Willis Elementary School holds its annual fundraising event called the Gecko Gala. Don't panic though, it is not really a formal gala - any casual resort wear will work. The

evening is a fun gathering where we auction off amazing donations such as classroom baskets, experiences, services, tickets, memorabilia, and much more. You are not going to want to miss it!

This year's Gala is on Saturday, April 9th from 7-10pm at The Lake Club Clubhouse. We will have heavy hors-d'oeuvres, adult beverages, entertainment, and a lot of fun!

Mobile Bidding?

For sure we are! We will once again have electronic bidding so that you can bid via your mobile device. Get creative coming up with your secret agent code names for mobile bidding!

Have a Donation?

If you are interested in donating an item, service or maybe a long weekend at your vacation home, we would greatly appreciate it! Do you, friends and/or family have a local business connection? We would love your help in requesting a donation for the Gala.

Sponsorships?

Gala corporate sponsorship opportunities are also available. If you would like to sponsor a table, we have 4 levels available this year. It is a spectacular way to feature your business and support Willis at the same time.

Childcare?

The Gala is an adult-friendly event. Kids wouldn't have any fun, so we are excited to announce that

some of our amazing staff members will provide childcare for parents attending the Gala. More information will be coming soon about childcare details.

Raffle!

Last, don't forget about our Chance Item Raffle that is held in the school foyer the week prior to the Gala. You do not have to attend the Gala to take part. You will be able to purchase a sheet of 25 tickets for \$20. Raffle items include staff donations, a class ice-cream party, and so much more! The kids love this opportunity to directly participate in the wonderful Gala opportunities.

The Gala is a great fundraiser to help support Willis and our children's education. It is a fun evening with our school community and we hope that you will attend. For more information please visit <http://www.williselementarypto.com/> or contact us at williselementarypto@yahoo.com.

Ashley Henderson, Chair



Willis is excited to announce our first Father-Daughter dance! Mark your calendars now for this very special event on Friday, May 13th. Fathers (or father figures) and daughters should come dressed in their Sunday best and be ready to enjoy some quality time together. This event will be open to all girls K-5, and will take place in the school Cafetorium. Dance the night away to fun DJ tunes, and enjoy keepsake photos and refreshments. More details soon to come.

FRONT OFFICE NEWS

CLINIC NEWS!

It's still the beginning of 2016, so why not make that one new change in taking care of your health? Not a resolution, a change! Maybe add an extra veggie at dinner or for a snack instead of cookies and chips? What about turning off those electronic devices or phones for 30 minutes and play a card or board game with the family? Sometimes being "connected" at all times does not give us time to "reboot" ourselves. We all need some time to just "be." Let's begin the year with taking care of things that mean the most to us, our families and our health.

"9" Hours of Sleep

National experts surveyed kids about their sleep habits. They learned that 70% of kids said they wished they could get more sleep; and 25% of kids said that they feel tired at school every single day.

How much sleep is enough? It is recommended that preschoolers (ages 3-5) should sleep about 11 to 13 hours per night. School-Age children (ages 5-12) need about 9-11 hours of sleep per night. Teens should get at least 8-10 hours of sleep per night.

Lack of adequate sleep leads to sleep terrors, teeth grinding, snoring, and moodiness. Inadequate sleep also may result in problems with attention, memory, decision making and creativity.

Also, please remember that the weather is constantly changing. On those cooler days, remind your students to dress in layers. Those jackets and sweaters for the morning and outside play, but easily taken off in case it gets warmer as the day goes on.

Mary Fischer, RN, School Nurse &
Kris Miller, LPN, Clinic Nurse x2010 or x2011



April 20, 2016

9:00am - 1:00pm and 2:00pm - 5:00pm

Can you believe it's time for our Kindergarten Round-up? We plan to meet our rising Kindergarten students who plan on attending Kindergarten for the 2016/17 school year. Please save the date and pass on the information!

For more questions, please contact Kathy Bowen, Registrar, at bowenK@manateeschools.net or call the school, (941) 316-8245, x2009. We look forward to seeing our prospective students!



FRONT OFFICE NEWS

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

The Florida State Assessment (FSA) Grades 3 - 5

Our teachers have been very busy preparing students with the knowledge and skills needed to do well on the FSA. They have also provided test taking strategies and opportunities to practice questions similar to the ones on the test. We ask that you also help your child prepare for the test with some suggestions:

- ★ Discuss the importance of the test with your child. This should be balanced with positive expressions of confidence in your child.
- ★ Provide a space and time free of distractions for your child to study.
- ★ The night before the test be sure your child gets enough sleep.
- ★ Each morning of testing, a free breakfast snack and drink will be provided for every student at 8:00am in the cafeteria. If your child eats at home, encourage a good breakfast that includes a source of protein (milk, eggs) and a source of carbohydrates (cereal, toast, oatmeal). Try to avoid foods high in sugar and fat, which will tend to reduce mental alertness.

Please understand the following policies from the State of Florida regarding the FSA:

- ★ Electronic Devices Policy: If students are found with ANY electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones and smartphones, during testing OR during breaks, their tests will be invalidated. The best practice would be for students to leave devices at home on the day of testing.
- ★ Leaving Campus: If students leave campus before completing the test (for lunch, an appointment, illness, etc.), they WILL NOT be allowed to complete the test. Students and

parents/guardians should be made aware of this policy. If a student does not feel well on the day of testing, it may be best for the student to wait and be tested on a make-up day.

★ Discussing Test Content after Testing: The last portion of the testing rules read to students before they affirm the acknowledgment states, "After the test, you may not reveal details about the writing prompt or passages to anyone. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, or posting online, for example, on websites like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. If you are found sharing information about the writing prompt or passages, your test will be invalidated." Please make sure that students understand this policy prior to testing and remind them that "discussing" test content includes any kind of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, or posting to blogs or social media websites, etc.

If you have any questions related to the FSA, please contact me. We hope that all of our students have a successful experience with the testing this year.

[Phyllis Morales](#), School Counselor
(941) 316-8245, x2004
moralesp@manateeschools.net



FRONT OFFICE NEWS

Dear Parent/Guardians:

All Educators in Florida are monitored to ensure they meet certification and training requirements as mandated by law. Per Florida Statute 1012.42, when a teacher is assigned teaching duties out of the field in which the teacher is certified, the parents of all students in the class shall be notified in writing. Per the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), we are also required to notify parents when their child has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher not highly qualified for that class.

Manatee County Public Schools is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. All of our teachers are certified to teach, although some of them are currently out-of-field and/or not highly-qualified and are working on additional areas of certification. You have the right to know the professional qualifications of the teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's teachers and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. If you would like more information, please contact your school 941-316-8245.

The table below lists teachers who are currently out-of-field and/or not highly-qualified.

Sincerely,
Bill Stenger, Principal

Teacher	Classes Taught/ Assignment	Assignment Start Date	Certification Held	Out-of-Field Area/Class	High Qualified
Diana Grigsby	Kindergarten	August 2015	Elementary Education	ESOL	Yes
Jennifer McGregor	Third Grade	September 2015	Elementary Education	Gifted	Yes



7th Annual • March 6, 2016
Take Stock 10k / 5k / Fun Run

Suncoast
Credit Union

www.takestock10k.com

Logos for "Take Stock in Children" and "Take Stock in Children" are also present.

Main Street, Lakewood Ranch. Students \$15, School Employees \$20, and General Public \$30. Register online at www.takestock10k.com before March 3, 2016. Participating schools are eligible for scholarships, so please designate Willis Elementary as your school!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

With the weather getting cooler our physical education program will be moving to doing more activities out on our field. We will be incorporating a lot of running and flag tag type of games to our program. Shortly we will be getting into a unit of soccer and eventually a cooperative skills challenge activity for grades 3 - 5.

We just finished up a great unit of Lacrosse with our KG - 5th grade classes. Students learned a little history of lacrosse as it is the oldest sport in North America created by the Native American Indians. Some classes also got a chance to meet and learn from a Professional Lacrosse player, Casey Powell. He talked to the students about how lacrosse has made a great impact in his life and taught them how to play Speed Lacrosse. You can check the game out at speedlacrosse.com for more information or monsterslax.com.



Upcoming Events

- ★ Guest speaker Ms. Lisa Indovino will be coming out to provide pedestrian/bike safety to our students. She is part of the Safe Routes to School Program in Manatee County.
- ★ Jump Rope for Heart Activities will be starting up soon so watch out for "Year of the Puppies!" information to come home with your student.
- ★ Elementary School Track Meet - April 16, 2016 will be held at Bayshore High School. We will hold try outs for 3rd - 5th grade boys and girls during their physical education class. The top 3 boys and girls from each grade level will represent Willis Elementary at this annual track event.

Parents and students please check out our bulletin boards by the cafeteria and in the first grade hallway. This is where we post important information, upcoming events, student performances and Willis Runner's Club laps.

To help insure the SAFETY and SUCCESS of your child in Physical Education class, we require SNEAKERS with SOCKS along with a comfortable school uniform and a jacket for the cooler weather. Students wearing unsafe attire will not be able to participate in class, which is a major part of their grade. Your child may also wear a hat, sunglasses and bring a water bottle out to their PE class, if needed. If your child has any medical problem that may limit or adapt his/her participation in PE class, please write a note and/or send a Doctor's note.

Miles of Smiles,
[Coach Jason Morales](#) and [Coach Mary Quinn](#)

SPECIALS

SCIENCE

The science lab has been busy these last few weeks with activities to support the science instruction in our classrooms. The fourth and fifth grade reviewed the three types of rocks and how they are formed. We had a great time making sediment tubes to illustrate how sedimentary rocks are formed over millions of years. The third grade has been learning about friction and gravity. I hope you'll ask your third grader to tell you about when these concepts are helpful in our everyday lives and when they are not. The first and second grade have been busy learning about our different body systems. It was quite an experience to see a slice of a cow's bone, liver, and large section of a stomach. The Kindergarteners have been learning about plant parts as well as differences between pictures of real animals and plants versus make-believe ones.

Coming up, the fifth grade will be reviewing some physical science concepts like mass, weight, density and volume. The fourth grade is going to learn about the phases of the moon, while the third grade begins a unit on the Sun and stars. As always, if you have any questions or have an idea to make our science lab even better, please do not hesitate to contact me.

[Mrs. Bradl](#), Science Teacher x2021

Students Exploring in Science!



SPECIALS

MUSIC

We have had an exciting year so far. The fourth and fifth graders attended the Sarasota Orchestra's Young Person's Concert in October. The Sarasota Opera House came in November, the Third graders performed "Christmas at the O.K. Corral" in December, and in a surprise event, the Manatee High School Drum Performed at the Gecko Awards in January!

The Manatee County Elementary All County Music Festival will be held in on March 15, 2016 at Manatee High School. I auditioned over twenty students for the All County Chorus. I am pleased to announce the Willis Elementary participants for the All County Chorus: Summer Hughes, Ava Ipjian, Aspasia Markowski, Brooke Morgan, Ellis Rodimel, and Carlos Wilson. Please wish them all good luck!

The annual Talent Show is approaching fast. The Talent Show will be held on May 24th (an early show during school and an evening show at 6:30 pm) and May 25th (only a show during school). The tryouts for the Talent Show will be held on Friday, April 29th during the school day beginning at 9:00 am. Your child must have their entire act learned and ready to perform for the tryouts. Please make sure they have their music and any props with them to perform. If you need Mrs. Isaacs to find the music and burn it to a CD, please send \$2.00 with your child's name, the song title, artist, indication of either karaoke or regular track, then send to Mrs. Isaacs (who will begin burning the CDs in March). Please note if your child is singing they must perform with the karaoke version.

If your child wishes to audition for the Talent Show, please download the Talent Show Permission slip from [Mrs. Isaacs website](#) and turn in ASAP. Good luck to everyone!

[Christy Isaacs](#), Music Teacher x2079



Willis students selected for the All County Chorus which will be held on March 15, 2016 at Manatee High School.



Kindergarten

The year is flying by in Kindergarten! We enjoyed a fun POW WOW, learned about Holidays Around the World, and Martin Luther King, 1st and 2nd Quarter Gecko Awards, and had our Winter Parties! We are very excited for our upcoming field trip to the Glazer Children's Museum!

As the year continues, we will have our 100th Day Celebration and reinforce our different strategies to count to 100. We can count by 1s, 2s, 5s, and 10s! We will continue to work on addition and subtraction word problems as we focus on numbers more than 10. Science will continue to be exciting as we explore the life cycle of living things! In Social Studies, the students enjoyed creating their own timeline and sharing with their peers. We are still working hard to build word fluency, comprehension, and finding Main Idea and Key Details. Opinion writing will be fun as well.

We appreciate all of your support at home to help make your children successful and confident learners. Please continue reading and using flashcards to reinforce these skills at home! We still have much more FUN ahead!

1st Grade

We have had a super semester so far. From celebrating Halloween, to terrific Thanksgiving activities, and ending with amazing celebrations before our Winter break.

What are we learning?

- ★ Science: Earth in Space & Time
- ★ Social Studies: Historical Knowledge, Civic & Political participation
- ★ Math: Numbers & Operations in Base 10
- ★ Writing: "How to" books
- ★ Reading: Comprehension skills with key details from text and illustrations. Informational text using text features.

Reminders

- ★ Field Trip: First grade will be visiting O'Brien Farms on February 18th - 19th. Please remember to turn in your child's permission slip, if you have not already done so.
- ★ Agenda: Please remember to sign the agenda every night and return it back to school the next day.
- ★ Morning Reading Hallway: Students can arrive at 8 a.m. and sit quietly in the first grade Reading hallway. They need to be reading a book.
- ★ Sending Money to School: Please send all money/checks to school in an envelope labeled with your child's name, teacher's name, grade level, and purpose of money, and amount of money.



Anthony, Ava, Parker, Hayden, and Anton show off their 100th Day Super Hero Capes.



Olivia, Caroline, and Starlla love being silly on the playground!

2nd Grade

Our second graders are learning and growing at lightning speed! Now that we have hit the mid-year point, we will continue to move forward with full momentum. Here is a peek of some things to come.

Over the next quarter our math gears will be shifting from two and three digit addition and subtraction to time, money, and measurement. Many of us do not often carry cash, so this is a great time to help students pull out their piggy banks and practice counting groups of coins. Telling time using an analog clock often seems like a thing of the past in our digital world and many students often need extra practice with this skill. Don't forget to also continue to practice basic math facts as we change topics, so that students do not lose the fact fluency they have gained. Calling out math facts is a great game to play in the car!

The students are truly blossoming as readers! It is important to continue reading with your child and encouraging them to read for at least twenty minutes each night. As you read fiction texts together, you can discuss how and why a character changed in the text, any lessons that were learned, problem and solution, etc. In the nonfiction texts, discuss the main idea and key details, compare and contrast information learned, identify the purpose of text features, cause and effect, etc. Remind your child to find text evidence that proves their thinking.

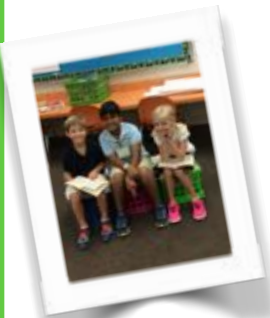
Finally, in Science we will focus mostly on the composition of Earth, including how and why it changes, along with beginning a unit on changes in matter. Our Social Studies lessons will have us exploring and using maps and then cycle back again to immigration and citizenship.

We love watching our students grow and hope you are enjoying all that they are learning as well! Thank you for all of your continued support in your child's education.

Mrs. Rockafellow's class got a special visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus for their holiday book exchange.



Thank you to Manatee High School Drum Line for coming to honor our Gecko Awards Assembly, Friday January 29, 2016. The kids loved it!



Mrs. French's students hard at work!



Mrs. Flynn's Class earning lunch with the teacher for their January Reading Logs.



3rd Grade

The third quarter of third grade is jam-packed! We are busy preparing the students for the Florida Standards Assessments the last week of March. For many of our students this is their first statewide assessment. Third graders will only test in the subject areas of Language Arts and Mathematics. We're sure they're going to do great!

In Language Arts students are working on determining text structure of fiction and nonfiction text, analyzing point of view, using illustrations to lift meaning, and sustaining independent reading for longer periods of time.

In Mathematics students are working on naming, ordering, & comparing fractions as well as geometry and measurement. Geometry is fun, but includes a ton of new vocabulary!

Meanwhile ... students are writing informational text from 2 - 3 reading passages. This is great practice for the 4th grade FSA writing assessment! They are studying forces and motion in science, which will be a great segue into space science! Students are also concentrating on North American geography in social studies.

In May, our third graders will participate in the Wax Museum! More information will be coming from your child's teacher closer to the project. Be on the lookout for this annual favorite!

4th Grade

What a great first half of the school year it has been! Our fourth graders have been working very hard in all subject areas. In math our current unit of study is fractions. Some of the key fraction skills that we cover are comparing and ordering, simplifying, converting, adding, subtracting, and multiplying. Fractions can be a difficult skill for some students to understand, so we recommend using models and drawings in the beginning, which may help students grasp the "why" behind the concepts. In science this quarter we have been focusing on force, motion and speed, and then moved into our unit on plants.

Fourth grade is a big year for essay writing, so students are very busy preparing for the state writing assessment this spring. Students have been writing many essays in class, focusing on informational texts. The essays that your children have been writing require them to read several provided passages and then pull text evidence from the articles. They have been paraphrasing and using direct quotations from the information they read. Students now are being asked to state their opinion in argumentative essays.

In language arts children are being exposed to a variety of genres, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Students have the opportunity to read independently and with partners, so that they can discuss their thoughts and better understand the text. Students have been given the opportunity to read novels from the Sunshine State Young Readers Award List. We are so proud of all the students who have taken on this challenge. We have several fourth graders that have read at least five of the books - great job and keep reading!

5th Grade

Brrrr! Winter has come to visit Willis Elementary! It is hard to believe we have finished one whole semester. Time flies when you are having fun! The 5th graders had a fabulous holiday party where they built a gingerbread house made out of small milk cartons. Every student had to draw their house to scale, calculate area, perimeter and surface area. They had to learn about serving size and quantities to order their candies. Volunteer parents came in to fill each students order and place the candies in a plastic bag. They used graham crackers and icing to build their houses and then applied all kinds of candies. The gingerbread houses turned out BEAUTIFUL! The event was both educational and fun!

We have been studying author's point of view, the underlying theme in our stories, and digging deep to discover meaning. Most students in fifth grade can read fluently, but when it comes to answering the comprehension questions, some students struggle finding that underlying meaning because they have to really think, as the meaning is not written in the passage. Our goal in reading is to continue digging deeper for 2nd semester. In writing, we have been working on informational and opinion writing. In math, students are learning to add, subtract, multiply, divide and compare fractions. A good way to reinforce these concepts at home, is to allow your children to experiment with cooking and measurements. Numbers are everywhere and can lead to many discussions. Another way you can help at home is to encourage your children to read every day.

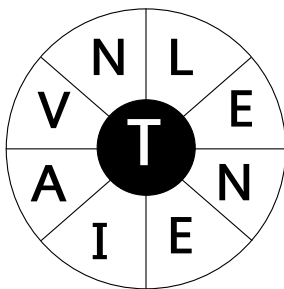
FUN & GAMES

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES CAN BE FOUND ON THE PTO WEBSITE [HERE](#).

Word Wheel Challenge

Your aim is to create as many words of 2 letters or more using the letters in the word wheel only once in each word, and always including the letter in the centre of the wheel. No proper names are allowed.

Can you find a 9 letter word?



Good 15+
Excellent 18+
Outstanding 22+

My Total:

Valentine's Day Maze



WILLIS BUSINESS PARTNERS

Platinum

Arsenault Dermatology

Buffalo Wild Wings

Four Pillars Mind, Body, Spirit and Social Connection

IMG

Jimmy Johns

Jumpin Fun Sports

LWR Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

Primrose School at Lakewood Ranch

1bid1

Gold

Beyond Dancing

Brain Balance Center of Lakewood Ranch

Cooper Creek Dental

Eagle Home Mortgage

First Physicians Group

Golf Cart Outlet

Hornback Chiropractic

Jess Jewelers

Kristin M. Culliton, Atchley International Realty

Kumon

Lil Divas and Dudes

Moricz & Varone Orthodontics

Morrish Stewart Orthodontics

PDQ

Premier Sports Campus

Riverchase Dermatology

Square 1 Burgers & Bar

Team Cash, Coldwell Banker

Silver

Cleaning Plus Cleaning

Let's Create Art

FOR MORE INFO ON BECOMING
A BUSINESS PARTNER, LINK [HERE](#)

GECKO GAZETTE

For questions concerning The Gecko Gazette,
please contact P.T.O. Newsletter Editor Christine
Shaklik at shaklik@me.com.

Calendar of Events

February

- 15 No School (Holiday)
- 17 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
Brick Order Forms Due by 2:00pm
- 18 Box Tops Due
- 24 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)

March

- 1 FSA Testing Begins (4th & 5th Grade)
- 2 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
- 9 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
Dress Down Day (\$2 to P.T.O.)
EARLY RELEASE (1:15pm)
- 11 P.T.O. Meeting (2:00pm/Cafeteria)
- 14 Spirit Night: Buffalo Wild Wings
- 16 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
- 21-25: NO SCHOOL (Spring Break)
- 28 BACK TO SCHOOL
- 30 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)

April

- 6 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
Dress Down Day (\$2 to P.T.O.)
- 7 End of Third Quarter
- 8 NO SCHOOL (Record Day)
- 9 Gecko Gala (7:00-10:00pm/Lake Club)
- 13 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
- 14 Third Quarter Parent/Teacher Conference
Night (3:00-7:00pm)
- 15 P.T.O. Meeting (2:00pm/Cafeteria)
- 27 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)

May

- 4 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
- 5 Box Tops Due
- 6 EARLY RELEASE (12:30pm)
- 11 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
Dress Down Day (\$2 to P.T.O.)
EARLY RELEASE (1:15pm)
- 13 P.T.O. Meeting (2:00pm/Cafeteria)
- 18 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)
- 25 Runner's Club (7:30-8:15am/Willis Field)

Click [HERE](#) for more dates ...