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Updated: Dec 12, 2006 - 10:50:29 am CST

'Wright Around the World' tour held

MALTA - Wright Elementary students and their families recently took a "world tour" right in their own school.

On Nov. 30, Wright Elementary School held an international night called "Wright Around the World."

Students researched different countries and created artifacts and displays according to grade level.

Kindergarten students made flags; first-graders designed coats of arms; second-grade students researched traditional clothing; third-graders created quilt squares; fourth-grade students made cookbooks and fifth-graders placed countries on a map of the world.

Classrooms were transformed into small regions of the world where posters and other materials from countries were displayed.

Several families provided additional artifacts such as clothing, pottery or souvenirs.

The "Wright Around the World" project extended into parts of the curriculum beyond social studies.

In music, for example, students explored the origins of today's music.

"By researching the musical forms and instruments of different countries," said Chris Perkovich, fifth-grade teacher, "students better understood the origins of the music we listen to today. They learned that early rock music was a fusion of the African rhythms and Irish and Scottish folk music. They were surprised to find that many of the musical instruments they were familiar with actually originated in other countries."

Language arts and art classes were also involved.



Wright third-grade student Meenas Mohamed models a sari at the "Wright Around the World" event. Provided photo

"We're very proud of the calendar every student contributed to in language arts and art class," Perkovich said. "Students wrote several sentences about a favorite activity they do at home with their family. Students then took this information to art class. Using Faith Reingold's book, "Tar Beach," as a model to discuss the African oral tradition and telling a story using a quilt, Ms. [Christine] Woywod-Edlund led the students through a pencil and ink drawing activity. Every member of the class combined their image. This combined 'quilt' image became the illustration for each month of the '2007 Wright Special Times and Family Traditions' calendar - truly multicultural!"

The evening opened with students singing songs in the gym. Each student then received a "passport" that he or she could have stamped after visiting different "regions."

In addition, families brought food indigenous or traditional to different countries to share.

"It was great to see that each child was made to feel special by celebrating their own heritage," said Gina Greenwald, Wright principal. "Everyone made a contribution to the event. The families really pulled it all together by bringing fabulous ethnic dishes! Everyone enjoyed sampling foods from the many different countries that represent our Wright community!"

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