

Reprinted with Permission of This Week Community Newspapers Copyright 2008

## Students 'harvest' pennies for charity

Wednesday, November 19, 2008 1:54 PM  
By CANDY BROOKS  
ThisWeek Staff Writer

Students from four Worthington elementary schools are collecting pennies to make change in the world.

Neighbors and friends of students at Granby, Liberty, Slate Hill, and Wilson Hill elementary schools can expect to be asked to donate their spare change to the students participating in a pilot of Penny Harvest, a nationwide program that allows young children to become philanthropists and to see how their efforts can make a difference.

The student-led program kicked off last week, when students attended assemblies to learn about the program.

Each was given a paper bag in which he or she will collect change. With parents in tow, they will ask neighbors to donate the contents of the penny jars that seem to accumulate in everyone's homes. Pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters and even dollars and checks are accepted.

The kids dump their collections into larger cloth bags in their classrooms. Collections continue until Dec. 1.

Over the winter, student leaders in each building will meet to decide how to make the greatest impact on the community by making grants to various causes. Usually, several grants are made.

At the Penny Harvest kickoff assembly at Granby School, each classroom reported the cause they would like to support. Ideas included helping animal shelters, homeless people, Red Cross, recycling, soldiers, people in the hospital, old people.

Some said they wanted to help cure childhood diseases or donate to Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Once the grant recipients are chosen, the students in the spring will make grant presentations at the school, then participate in hands-on service projects, where they will see how their donations are put to work.

Approximately 1,000 schools nationwide take part in Penny Harvest, which was started in 1991 by Teddy and Nora Gross, a father and daughter in New York City.

One day, 4-year-old Nora saw a homeless man on the street and asked Teddy if they could take him home.

Penny Harvest was one of the outcomes of the father's quest to provide all children with a way to help.

In the past 17 years, students have donated more than 25-million service hours and \$7-million in grants.

The program was brought to Ohio by Worthington residents Bill and Laura Grindle, who for many years were searching for a way to encourage children to participate in service projects. To support the funding needs for the program, they formed the non-profit See Kids Dream.

The Worthington AM Rotary donated funds to cover the cost of materials such as bags, a curriculum guide and printed materials.

Besides the four Worthington schools, the program is being piloted in Devonshire and Dana elementary schools in Columbus.



By Tim Norman/This Week  
From left, Granby Elementary School student, Madeline Fox, Sami Young and Tyler Davis listen to Wilson Grindle as teachers Cindy Schlarb, lower left, and Rachel Dawson hold microphones for the skit the students presented during a Penny Harvest kickoff assembly on Nov. 7. Students will be collecting money to go to charity until December.