



## **Postcards Around the World 2007-2008 Venture Grant**

Imagine an art class where students are learning about print-making, technology, writing, geography and a variety of cultures with one project. The multi-disciplinary project is called Postcards around the World and Franklin Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were able to participate because of a grant from the La Crosse Public Education Foundation and the creativity of their Art Teacher, Amoreena Rathke and LMC Director, Cindy Halter.

Students created postcards to send abroad using new non-toxic intaglio printmaking materials. Intaglio printmaking had not been available to public school students in the past because of its danger and toxicity. The new printmaking technology required many labor intensive class periods of planning, drawing, and carving designs to eventually create prints of flowers, animals and birds native to Wisconsin.

Each student wrote a message about his or her self and their community on the back of their postcard and sent it off to a foreign land with the help of an international pen pal bank called [postcrossing.com](http://postcrossing.com). Technology skills were honed by scanning the postcards onto the computer for public viewing on the school's web site. Cindy Halter showed one student in each class how to scan their print and then each student was able to become the teacher and teach the student behind them in line the same process. Postcards were also showcased by their creators on the Franklin News Show. Students enjoyed the project so much that they chose to create numerous prints in spite of all the time and energy required to accomplish the task.

Franklin Elementary students, to date, have received 75 postcards in return from 25 different countries! This has been exciting for all the students and a great way to learn about another country through a personal connection.

The La Crosse Public Education Foundation was honored to fund a project that touched not only children in La Crosse but people all around the world, as well. This multi-disciplinary project blurred the lines between school subjects for the kids who participated, making learning authentic and interesting. ✨