

## **Kingsley School 1st Graders Raise Money** **for** **Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park**

First grade students at the Kingsley Elementary School in Evanston are learning to give back and their lesson has benefitted the Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park. Last week, the Park was presented with a check for \$170, money raised by the children selling snacks as part of a lesson in how to make change.

The 68 students of Karen Reid, Colleen O'Connor and Esther Kamara had participated in "Sculpture in the Classroom" (SITC) an educational outreach program of the Sculpture Park. In March the children enjoyed learning about the Sculpture Park through a slide presentation, a tour of the Park and a classroom art project.

Each year the Kingsley first graders raise money through a bake sale and donate it to one or two local charities that touched their lives during the school year. This year the funds went to the Sculpture Park and to Kingsley Green Acres, a gardening program with the City of Evanston.

Sheila Oettinger, President of the Board of the Sculpture Park, told the students that during all the years the Sculpture Park has worked with local schools, this was the first time that students had contributed funds. Obviously touched, she said, "We are going to put a leaf on our 'Donor Tree' in honor of the 1st grade Kingsley students. You will be able to come to the Park with your friends and family and show it off, year after year," she said.

The Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park Board offers its "Sculpture in the Classroom" programs to area schools free of charge. "We work closely with the teachers in each participating school, tailoring the lecture, classroom project and tour to fit the age of the students and the curriculum they may be studying at the time," Oettinger said.

"We reach hundreds of students each year through SITC and often it is their only exposure to art and art appreciation, something we believe contributes to the development of well-rounded adults," she said. "With the current budget restrictions eliminating art and music from the curriculum in many schools, we believe our program helps by introducing the children to the arts and, perhaps, awakens in some, the idea that they may want to pursue art as a career or hobby. You should see the creations the students come up with in the classroom projects – they are just terrific" Oettinger said.

The Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation responsible for selecting, installing and maintaining the more than 60 sculptures in the two-mile-long park, located in the Village of Skokie along McCormick Blvd., between Dempster and Touhy streets.

The Village maintains the physical park, providing a welcoming environment for bikers, walkers, joggers, picnickers and skate boarders along its winding paved paths and undulating landscape. The park is open to the public 24/7 and is always free. The Board of Directors also is responsible for raising funds to cover its expenses. Supporters include the Village of Skokie, Niles Township, the Illinois Arts Council and various corporations and foundations. Individual "Friends of the Park" also are important, donating time as docents and Board members as well as making annual contributions of money. More information about the individual sculptures, their artists and various events are available on the Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park's website, [www.sculpturepark.org](http://www.sculpturepark.org).