



4400 NEW JERSEY AVENUE
WILDWOOD, NEW JERSEY 08260

OFFICE OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

(609) 522-2444 PH
(609) 523-2444 FX

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Please contact:

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City of Wildwood
609-522-2444

Ho Ho Ho, Off They Go!

WILDWOOD – When it comes to the Christmas wishes of children, sometimes things are better done the old fashioned way – like putting pencil to paper and gluing on a stamp that will take a letter all the way to the North Pole.

Second grade students from Glenwood Avenue Elementary School made their way from their classrooms to the Wildwood Post Office Dec. 5 to put their carefully crafted and well thought out letters to Santa in the outgoing mail slot in hope their missives will reach Santa prior to his Dec. 24 run.

With the outgoing mail slot out of reach of the pint-sized correspondents, two boxes served as a stepping platform to allow each child to personally pull the handle, slip their letter into the slot and listen as the envelope plopped into a mailbag destined for the North Pole.

Letter writing is part of the second grade curriculum, said teacher Liz Wade. Who better to write to than the king of kids' wishes – Santa Claus. Wade said the school tries to coordinate the letter writing unit with the holidays so children can write their wish list to Santa.

“We also do a unit on the post office,” Wade said. “We talk about how letters are sent and sorted and how postal workers go through their route and spend their day.”

Wildwood Post Master Bernadette Puodziunas explained to students how their letters will leave the Wildwood Post Office, be sent to a sorting center 80 miles away and then sent on their way to the North Pole. “Your letters to Santa will get picked up this afternoon,” Puodziunas assured the group.

In addition to getting a glimpse of what happens to their letters once they're deposited in the post office, students were shown the inner workings of the mail truck that will take their letters along the way.

“Everything is in delivery order, big parcels on one side, small parcels on the other and the mail is upfront,” explained Tim “Mailman Tim” Steck of his truck with the right-sided driver’s compartment.

Each child was given the opportunity to see the world from a letter carrier’s perspective as they sat in the front seat of the truck.

Steck, who has worked for the postal service for the past 24 years, understands the importance of getting letters to the North Pole in a timely fashion. “I will personally deliver these letters to Santa.”

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Three (3) photos attached

Photo 1 - Dennis Deeney, center, window clerk at the Wildwood Post Office, chats with Glenwood Avenue Elementary School students who came to mail their letters to Santa.

Photo 2 – Left to right: Angel Velez Soto, Jacqueline Philhower, Gabriel Mayren Hernandez, Madison Mauro, and Kelly Dunn are ready to mail their letters to Santa.

Photo 3 - Jayden Easter waves as he pretends to deliver mail during Liz Wade's class visit to the Wildwood Post Office