

## **LITTERING, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Gretchen Matteo, Fell Elementary School**

To listen to Gretchen Matteo's students describe their project, click here:

<http://tinyurl.com/3vund7m>

Can you imagine how much trash is generated by 45,000 fans at a Phillies game? Gretchen Matteo's 3rd graders have some ideas about this since their project involved helping the Phillies' "Red Goes Green" team collect all kinds of trash and recyclables from fans at Need in Deed Night at the Phillies in early May. This service was part of their yearlong exploration and response to the topic of littering.

Their efforts started in their school and began when their teacher encouraged them to take photos of the trash and litter in and around the school. Their findings were disturbing. They saw litter everywhere -- candy wrappers in hallways, Cheeto bags caught in between windows and the wire mesh that protects them, gum stuck under desks. Their documentation motivated them to take action and create a school-wide littering campaign.

They met with a representative of Keep Philadelphia Beautiful, who encouraged them in their efforts to spread the message throughout their K to 8 school. They also met with representatives from the Phillies, their South Philadelphia neighbors, who described the team's ambitious recycling effort.

Encouraged by their community partners, the students wrote and produced weekly announcements for the school's public address system and created colorful posters to line the hallways, along with prints of the photos they took displaying unsightly litter.

A few weeks before the end of school they held a morning-long clean up day at the school. But perhaps the greatest lesson was seeing how their younger peers admired them for their leadership.