

How many cartwheels can YOU do? "Au-Athon" Raises over \$1,700!

Broomfield Academy Students Support At-Risk Children in Brazil Through a Fun Service Learning Project: "Au-Athon" (cartwheels)

By: Dr. Vanessa Ewing

"Au" is the Portuguese word for cartwheel. Throughout the month of October, Ms. Kleinsteiber, Music Teacher at Broomfield Academy, vowed to teach every student at Broomfield Academy how to do a cartwheel, culminating in an all-school event called an "Au-Athon" held on Wednesday, October 29, 2008. Students set goals of how many cartwheels (25, 50, 100) they could do during the "Au-Athon" and solicited sponsor donations of 10 cents (or more) per cartwheel. The school goal was to raise over \$1,000 for *Project Kirimurê*.



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Project Kirimurê is a program that supports at-risk children in Bahia, Brazil, and gives them opportunities to participate in art

and capoeira after-school programs and to give them healthy, safe, and culturally relevant alternatives to spending time on the streets. In August 2007, Ms. Kleinsteiber traveled to Brazil and had the opportunity to interact with the children of *Project Kirimurê* directly. "The joy and hope this project brings so many children on a daily basis cannot be over emphasized. Every day after-

school, the children have a safe place to go to take art and capoeira classes and to receive tutoring in school subjects" Kleinsteiber stated. "Capoeira, currently offered as an after-school special here at the Broomfield Academy, is an African-Brazilian art form combining martial arts, music, dance and acrobatics, and is a cultural treasure to the country of Brazil" said Kleinsteiber. "And, it is great exercise too!" she continued.



The Broomfield Academy “Au-Athon” was a huge success. Students began their school day with a capoeira (Afro-Brazilian Martial Art) presentation, with various community capoeira teachers performing for the students. Broomfield Academy students were able to also participate by singing and clapping, while our after school capoeira students performed with their teachers. At this time, over \$1,700 has been raised and many art supplies have been donated to Project Kirimurê. Students and teachers did over 6,000 cartwheels during this fun, healthy and important school-wide event. The first grade class did an especially outstanding job, doing 1,800 cartwheels!

