

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Special-needs children given unique opportunity at arts/music camp *Arts Express marks 10th anniversary with 'Around the World in a Hot Air Balloon' theme*

For Immediate Release

July 21, 2003
54-03

Contact: Debra Martz-Melanson
Administrator to Arts Express Camp
(519) 884-0710 ext. 2658 (Laurier)
(519) 886-8886 (KidsAbility)

or Kevin Klein
Media Relations Assistant
(519) 884-0710 ext. 2085

WATERLOO – Arts Express, a week-long camp for children with and without special needs, is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a trip 'Around the World in a Hot Air Balloon'. Forty-eight children are preparing their dance moves and singing voices for the camp's annual recital on Friday at 1:30 p.m. in the Maureen Forrester Recital Hall at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Arts Express is an integrated arts and music camp designed for children with a variety of disabilities. It provides the participants, who range in age from six to 15, with a unique opportunity to create and perform with their non-disabled siblings and friends.

"We are very excited to be celebrating our tenth anniversary this year and are looking forward to continuing the tradition we've been building," says camp administrator Debra Martz-Melanson. "The camp counselors are working very hard to stimulate creativity in the children, who take centre stage when they perform their interpretations of the theme 'Around the World in a Hot Air Balloon'."

From July 21 to 24, children participate in drama, music, dance, and arts and crafts at the KidsAbility Centre for Child Development at 500 Hallmark Drive in Waterloo. Each child chooses his or her favourite form of expression for the closing recital, which includes performances of original camps songs, dances and dramas.

– more –

To ensure close interaction between instructors and participants, the camp maintains a ratio of one counselor to three children. Counselors are music and therapeutic recreation students from Laurier and the University of Waterloo, and professionals who work in special education. With this variety of artistic specialties and backgrounds, counselors can help camp participants enhance their personal creative vision.

Arts Express is co-sponsored by KidsAbility, the music therapy program at Laurier, the kinesiology department at the University of Waterloo and the early childhood education program at Conestoga College.

Friday's performance is open to the public and admission is free.