

COMMUNITY

Third-Graders Present Mayor Book on Reducing Violence

By MARK R. MOSS
Chronicle Staff Writer



Mineral Springs third-graders wait outside Mayor Martha Wood's office last week to present a book they compiled on ways to stop violence.

It appears that third-graders also have something to say about violence.

Last week, 20 children from Mineral Springs Elementary School presented Mayor Martha S. Wood a collection of "haiku" poems and drawings that expressed their views on violence. Elsie C. Holland, the children's teacher, and other school officials were on hand to help make the presentation.

For a month, we have been taking this to the max," said Assistant Principal Chloris Shore about efforts to keep the issue of violence on the students' mental agenda.

"We knew it would take longer than a week to get the job done," she said, referring to the week of activities sponsored by the mayor's Violence Reduction Task Force which ended on Nov. 20.

Shore said that something relating to violence is mentioned during morning announcements over the public-address system and the students have put together posters.

Each page of the laminated

book held a poem and a drawing by one of the students. The drawings were marked with the familiar red circle with the slash across the middle that has become the universal sign of warning.

One drawing was of a graveyard with two tombstones, one of which had 1995 on it. Another showed a person pointing a gun at someone.

Third-graders Canary Wilson and Stacy Cook took turns reading the 20 poems to the mayor, who was obviously pleased.

"You're going to have to be the leaders of our country," Wood said. Cook's poem read:

*"Violence is a crime
It should be stopped right away
The Lord will help us."*

Wood said this is the Advent season and "the Bible says the little children shall lead them."



Mayor Martha Wood is surrounded by Mineral Springs students as a student, Canary Wilson (in vest), reads poems.

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