

# winterberry

Community Newsletter

JANUARY 1, 2011  
VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4



- WET ON WET WATERCOLOR PAINTING -

**Expect to have hope rekindled. Expect your prayers to be answered in wondrous ways. The dry seasons in life do not last. The spring rains will come again.**

## A Word from Ms. Mall...

As we begin a fresh year I would like to begin with a sincere apology for dropping the newsletter for the past two months. While many wonderful things have happened for our school over the weeks of our first semester I, like so many of you, have been spending a lot of time with my memories of Owen, Nicholas, Jane, and Stacia. Our school is such a beautiful place for those who are experiencing grief or struggles and I feel fortunate everyday to find myself here.

As we move into the second half of the school year I would like to take some time to remember the remarkable things we have achieved. I will also take some time to share what is on the horizon.

Over the past five and a half years our teachers and Board members (WCC & WPG) have committed their shared work to the process of securing Waldorf teacher training for our staff. A large

- Sarah Ban Breathnach

portion of this training is funded by the WPG after its yearly fundraising efforts. Additionally, our WPG has secured a \$54,000 grant to fund this training as well. Some of our general fund balance is also used each year for this purpose although each year these funds decline dramatically with the rapid rise in operational costs.

Our faculty is currently enrolled in a hybrid training program through Rudolf Steiner College (RSC). This program is unique in that it includes many online and distance/satellite components allowing for the Winterberry staff to be involved in training during the school year. As part of this program, RSC sends instructors to our site two to three times each year for on-site instruction.

November 11th - 14th was our first on-site instruction block offered by the

## January

6th: WPG Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

14th - 16th: Waldorf Charter School Conference @ Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks, California

17th: NO SCHOOL, Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

20th: WCC Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

22nd: ASD Alt. Schools Fair

27th: 3-Body Meeting: Future Site Possibilities

28th: 12:30 Release to Prep for Winter Faire...

29th: **WINTER FAIRE!**

6th Annual Winter Faire @ Winterberry Charter School, 11-4pm



BRING YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND NEIGHBORS... EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

31st: NO SCHOOL, In-service

## February

3rd: WPG Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

17th: WCC Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

17th – 20th: Waldorf Teacher Trainers visit our Faculty Cohort

21st: NO SCHOOL, In-service

## March

3rd: WPG Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

4th: NO SCHOOL, In-service

5th – 13th: NO SCHOOL, Spring Break

14th – 25th: School Mentors Visit George Hoffer & Donna Burgess

program developer Bonnie River and one of her co-instructors Thom Schaefer. Also attending this training were two teachers and one founding parent from Birchtree Charter School, a new school inspired by Waldorf methods that has opened in the Mat-Su school district. We are hoping that other schools, both currently in existence and those beginning the process will also consider joining our Alaska hybrid. This team will return in February to work with our teachers again. We are all looking forward to their return.

During the second week of January a delegation of teachers, parents, and Boars members from Winterberry will attend the 2011 Alliance Waldorf Teacher Conference. This conference always delights and reinvigorates all who attend. Mr. V will be spending the week prior to the conference at another school in California where he will observe and be mentored by a longtime Waldorf movement teacher.

Our three body meetings have experienced great success this year in our search for a new site. Together we have worked to examine and eliminate several possibilities. Currently this group has tasked two committees to research both the Marlow proposal as well as a site in midtown surrounded by trees and adjacent to a lake and a park. We will be meeting again on January 27th to hear updates on both sites and see if a decision can be made.

Also coming up will be the WCC elections. Working as part of this body has proven rewarding for many in the community. The body meets monthly to discuss and determine issues involved in governing the school. If you are interested in learning more about the positions and the WCC as a whole please contact Melissa Janigo or Meg Eggleston.

Our annual Winter Faire and Head, Heart, and Hands Auction are coming up in the next three months as well as the second visit of our mentors George and Donna. It is our hope that we will be able to offer a parent evening during their visit. Please let your child's teacher know if there are any topics that you are particularly interested in learning more about.

Blessings,

Shanna

## GRADE ONE

**11.1.10:** First grade has been immersed in a world of numbers and math with the glorious Queen Equalis and all the members that make up her kingdom and beyond. Her love of numbers has sent her and Jester Julius on a quest for where the numbers live in nature; three body parts make up an insect, six sides to one cell of a honeycomb, eleven stars in the constellation Orion.

We are learning to count by 2's, 3's, 5's and 10's, learning to write our Roman numerals, writing our numbers up to twelve, and using all the

19th: 3rd Annual Winterberry...

## Head, Heart, & Hands Auction

6pm, Location TBA



25th & 26th: 2nd Annual...

## WINTERBERRY CIRCUS!!!

28th – 30th: 12:30 Release, Parent /  
Teacher Conferences

31st: SBA Testing in Science for Grade  
4 & 8 Students

## April

5th – 7th: SBA Testing for grades 3 – 8  
in Reading (T), Writing (W), and  
Math (R)

7th: WPG Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

18th: NO SCHOOL, In-service

21st: WCC Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

## May

5th: WPG Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

6th: ALL SCHOOL ASSEMBLY, 1pm @  
the PAC/Discovery

operations of math. It's a fun and exciting time to be in first grade and we are so very pleased with our work.

- Ms. Drinen

## GRADE TWO

**10.26.10:** As I write this, we have just started parent/teacher conferences. In preparation for the conferences, I have been reflecting on the wisdom of continuing with our class for several years in a row. The strengthening connection I feel within our class community of children and parents is a real gift. Thank you for the commitment you show, not only to your own child, but to me and the other children in our class who benefit from your time, talents, and supportive thoughts.

We are finishing up our first math block this week, and putting to rest (for a few weeks) the story of Foxboy. Like many other children his age, Foxboy loves to fill his pockets with shells he collects at the beach. He has found that once he has more than 9 shells in his pocket, they begin to fall out onto the ground. His mother sewed him some pouches that hold exactly 10 shells each. When the pouches become too cumbersome to carry, he discovers he can carry exactly 10 pouches in a basket. Our work with place value will continue throughout the year.

- Ms. Towner

## GRADE THREE

**10.30.10:** Conference week always leaves me with a sense of gratitude. It is a privilege to teach your children. Thank you for your dedication to family life and school community.

Our silkworm studies continue to amaze us all. We have 6 silk moths that have been very successful in producing eggs! We have harvested our first cocoons and are busy with many math and science activities around these fascinating animals.

The children are finding great satisfaction in their paintings as they each create the pages of their collection of creation stories. Our latest story follows:

“An Aborigine Creation Story

This is the story of Dreamtime. It comes from the Aborigines of Australia.

When the earth was new-born, it was plain and without any features or life. Waking time and sleeping time were the same. There were only hollows on the surface of the Earth, which, one day, would become waterholes. Around the waterholes were the ingredients of life.

Underneath the crust of the earth were the stars and the sky, the sun and the moon, as well as all the forms of life, all sleeping. The tiniest details of life were present yet dormant: the head feathers of a kookaburra, the thump of a kangaroo's tail, the gleam of an insect's wing.

13th: FRIDAY FIELD DAY,  
11am – 3:30pm

19th: 8th Grade Graduation, 10am @  
the PAC

19th: Student's Last Day of School

20th: Teacher's Last Day of School

## August 2011

16th: 2011/2012 School Year Begins  
for Grades Two – Eight

A time came when time itself split apart, and sleeping time separated from waking time. This moment was called the Dreamtime. At this moment everything started to burst into life.

The sun rose through the surface of the Earth and shone warm rays onto the hollows, which became waterholes. Under each waterhole lay an Ancestor, an ancient man or woman who had been asleep through the ages. The sun filled the bodies of each Ancestor with light and life, and the Ancestors began to give birth to children. Their children were all the living things of the world, from the tiniest grub wriggling on a eucalyptus leaf to the broadest-winged eagle soaring in the blue sky.

Rising from the waterholes, the Ancestors stood up with mud falling from their bodies. As the mud slipped away, the sun opened their eyelids and they saw the creatures they had made from their own bodies. Each Ancestor gazed at his creation in pride and wonderment. Each Ancestor sang out with joy: "I am!" One Ancestor sang, "I am kangaroo!" Another sang, "I am kookaburra!" The next sang, "I am Honey-Ant!" and the next sang, "I am Lizard!"

As they sang, naming their own creations, they began to walk. Their footsteps and their music became one, calling all living things into being and weaving them into life with song. The ancestors sang their way all around the world. They sang the rivers to the valleys and the sand into dunes, the trees into leaf and the mountains to rise above the plain. As they walked they left a trail of music.

Then they were exhausted. They had shown all living things how to live, and they returned into the Earth itself to sleep. And, in honor of their Ancestors, the Aborigines still go Walkabout, retracing the steps and singing the songs that tell the story of life."



- Ms. Eggleston

## GRADE FOUR

**10.26.10:** The fourth grade has begun their first Norse Mythology block with curiosity and a sense of power. As we chose colors for a painting of the Norse God's creation story we spoke of bold reds for the fire of Muspell flaming up into the icy blues of Niflheim's glaciers, the two blending in the middle to form a dark brown/black void of Ginnungagap. Ginnungagap is where the heat of the flames melted the ice into drops of life, which formed the horrible frost giant Ymir, who in turn was destroyed by the newly formed God's, Odin, Vili, and Ve. The details of the Gods formation and the giant's destruction are for a fourth grader to share. But the color conversation ended on a note of pink. We were very clear that our artistic work this block will not have very much pink, not even the Norse Goddesses Freya or Idun bring up images of pink; they are not

princess images but beings struggling with experiences not so far from those we can identify with ourselves at times, even as we struggle to be tolerant and accepting of our peers and older or younger school mates on the play yard.

- Ms. Mayer

## GRADE FIVE

**10.27.10:** We have been studying the myths of Ancient Persia and Mesopotamia during these past weeks. The stories of Zarathustra and Gilgamesh have captured students' imaginations and easily fueled their own compositions. We have been practicing using descriptive words and self- and peer-editing. The stories and writing have been so involved that we have fallen behind our Block Rotation Schedule! We will delay the start of our next block by one week.

**11.9.10: EGYPT:** We are finally bringing our study of Egypt to a close. For the past week, fifth grade has been researching and studying subjects such as King Tut, Egyptian Geography, Tomb Robbing, Pyramids, Mummies, Egyptian Gods, cats, and the Sphinx. They have written research papers and created projects of their choice. Mia, for example, has been leading a large group of students in practicing a skit of an episode in a myth of the Egyptian Gods. David is constructing a beeswax war chariot. Rydin and Audrey can't wait to share some mysterious masterpieces that they have created at home. Curtis' presentation today on Egyptian Cats brought a forest of hands raised with questions about Egyptian pets, cat mummification, and cat funerals. Egyptians' interest in preparing for life after death has captivated fifth grade.

**12.18.10: Geometry Block:** At the beginning of our geometry block, we discovered the characteristics of points, lines, and circles. Next, we explored triangles. We took triangles apart to find that the angles of any triangle can be added to equal 180 degrees. We have built 3-4-5 triangles to create right angles as the Egyptians did when relocating their fields after the Nile's yearly flood. And we drew and described the characteristics of equilateral, isosceles, and scalene triangles. We concluded our geometry block by comparing and contrasting the characteristics of common quadrilaterals.

**Geography:** We started studying North American geography this past week with letters from our pen pals at Wellspring Waldorf school in the rural town of Chelsea, Vermont. The 12 students in Wellspring's 5th/6th grade class had written and addressed letters to every student in our class. Their letters described a little bit about their hobbies, their small towns, their animals, and their maple syrup. Enclosed in the package were maple candies homemade by the family of a student in their class. This week, the students wrote back, telling their pen pals things about their lives in Alaska that they thought might be interesting to young Vermonters. I was wishing for some dry smoked salmon to send across the country, but I did not have any on hand.

-Ms. Johnson

## GRADE SIX

**11.9.10:** Sixth grade has just finished our first real history block: Greece and the founding of Rome. We studied Greek philosophical thought (anyone remember what a syllogism is?), as well as the cultural and historical events that shaped the golden age of Greece. We learned just enough about the founding of Rome to make us eager to take it up again in the weeks before winter break.

As I write, snow is falling: our first real snowfall this year. I anticipate high energy this week, and much joy and enthusiasm on the playground. The sixth grade is very cohesive socially right now (I'm finding and knocking on wood), with whole-class (or nearly) games being the predominate mode of play at recess. The social energy of these 11 and 12 year olds is extraordinary, and we are channeling it with much more social interaction during main lesson in the form of group work.

Energy is the theme—well, not officially, that is for 7<sup>th</sup> grade—and these students are ready, for the most part, to reach out into the real world. Real-world projects are good for this age, and our first real venture culminated last week, with



a First Fridays showing at Modern Dwellers, which we shared with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. More is on the horizon, both for fundraising and for community outreach. This class is ready to be part of the world!

Blessings,

-Mr. Crawford

## GRADE SEVEN/EIGHT

11.9.10: "Whenever possible, please try to have the students see geometry in movement."

~Rudolf Steiner

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade would like to send a big thank you to Sara Robicheaux for putting on November's First Friday event at Modern Dwellers. This was a fundraising event for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders work really hard getting ready for this art showing, and now, their oil paintings, silk paintings, and handmade bags are on display and up for sell at the Modern Dwellers Chocolate Lounge. The proceeds will go towards the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip fund, so thank you for your support. 6<sup>th</sup> graders also have their amazing sketches up for display and sell to help fundraise for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. So go by the Chocolate Lounge on 36<sup>th</sup> and New Seward to check out and support our students reach their goal for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade would also like to send a thank you to Morgan Stenson for donating skeletons for our upcoming anatomy block. We are looking forward to the experience of putting together these skeletons. We will also use them as models for sketching bones during our Anatomy and Physiology block.

Thank you to James Bowers, Colleen and Jay Bickford, Sarah Robicheaux, Della and Dave Swarts for helping the 8<sup>th</sup> grades facilitate their 8<sup>th</sup> grade meetings after school on Thursdays. Thank you 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents for your continuous support and dedication! I thoroughly enjoy teaching, connecting, and learning from all your children. Most of all, we are just have a ball! An important reminder: **8<sup>th</sup> grade Parent Meeting Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**

Now for a scope of what has been happening during main lesson: The emphasis of the seventh and eight grade geometry unit focuses on accuracy and content; the material presented is a balance between the thinking realm and the artistic. For the first week of our four week geometry block, the seventh and eight graders reviewed general geometry concepts including: circle and polygon terminology, angle measurement, types of triangles, quadrilaterals, and three dimensionality. We then launched into an in-depth study of geometry: using a straight edge and compass, our first task was to construct a series of geometrical drawings, known as the "Euclidean constructions." Students also participated in advanced constructions such as: equiangular spirals, rotations of circles, the limaçon, and the 24<sup>th</sup> division of a circle with all its diagonals.

As we studied Euclid's constructions, we also learned that he was a mathematician who collected and organized geometric constructions and proofs dating back to the Babylonian, Egyptian and early Greek mathematicians such as Thales and Pythagoras in his magnificent book, *The Elements*.

The first theorem we attempted to prove from *The Elements* was Euclid's Shear and Stretch theorem. From Euclid's Shear and Stretch theorem, students learned to calculate the areas of given regular polygons, non-right triangles, squares, trapezoids, and parallelograms.

A new level of consciousness opened for the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students as they began to see the mathematics unfold in geometry. We spent a significant amount of time on the construction of the pentagon as well as understanding the properties of the pentagon. Through the process of constructing the nested pentagon and our pentagram drawing, we discovered many geometrical properties: every triangle within is either a tall or obtuse-angled isosceles triangle, there are many similar rhombuses and trapezoids, and each angle of the pentagon is trisected by the pentagram that sits inside it. After observing these geometric properties we attempted to theorize: given that the angle in the pentagon is

trisected, what are all the angles inside each of the two types of isosceles triangles? We derived a mathematical equation and solved for each of the interior angles.

We took another look at the nested pentagons and pentagrams to for the relationship of the line segments. Once the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students had carefully copied all line segment lengths positioned in order of length, longest to shortest, they discovered the two amazing properties about the organized segments: the length of any one of the line segments is equal to the sum of the lengths of the previous two shorter segments and that each line segment is approximately 61.8% longer than the previous one. This ratio, approximately 1.618 to 1, is known as the golden ratio, or  $\phi$ . After constructing the golden rectangle, golden spiral, and the golden triangle we were pleased to discover that the ratio of the length to the width is  $\phi:1$ ; and, similarly, it is also the ratio of the diagonal to the side of the pentagon. Our final thrust with the golden ratio was to examine the mysterious Fibonacci progression of numbers (where every unit was equal to 1/8) and create another golden rectangle. This effort developed a new shape, a logarithmic spiral, merging the naturally occurring pattern of Fibonacci numbers and the Golden Rectangle.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders also proved and practiced the Pythagorean theorem to find the lengths of all the sides of a right triangle. We developed mathematical concepts for the relationship of the sides by probing our algebraic equations: we replicated Pythagoras' method for generating whole number length right triangles e.g.: 3-4-5, 5-12-13; Plato's formula e.g.: 8-15-17, 6-8-10; and, finally, the Arabian or Euclidean formula that generates all whole number "triples" e.g.: 36-77-85, 48-55-73.

We are currently constructing five three-dimensional platonic solid: the cube, tetrahedron, octahedron, icosahedron and the dodecahedron. Each Archimedean solid is beautifully colored and are rapidly decorating the ceiling of our classroom. They seem to be like blooming mushrooms; you never know when they are going to pop up. We will continue our geometry unit for another week calculating square root algorithms as well as surfaces and volumes when given basic platonic solids.

**11.24.10:** While our Geometry Intensive comes to a close, seventh and eighth graders are finishing their End-of-the-Block Projects. All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students constructed five three-dimensional platonic solid: the cube, tetrahedron, octahedron, icosahedron and the dodecahedron. The assignment was to paint and make a mobile with their hanging solids to display from the ceiling of our classroom. Each Platonic and/or Archimedean solid is beautifully painted and the mobiles are rapidly decorating the ceiling of our classroom. They seem to be like blooming mushrooms; you never know when they are going to pop up. Please do stop by to see these intricately painted pieces of art. During the final weeks of this block, students learned to calculate square root algorithms, surface areas, and volumes of solids. We also focused on platonic solid vocabulary words: polyhedron, edge, vertex, and dihedral angle. Understanding these terms allowed us to arrive at the four properties of the Platonic solids. Eighth graders have also been studying the biographies of Kepler, Euclid, Archimedes, Plato, and Euler, the fathers of geometry. Eighth grades will need to be ready to turn in their 5-10 paragraph biography as well as be ready to present on Monday, when we return from Thanksgiving.

In addition to our fulfilling lessons, our eighth graders have been busy fundraising for their eighth grade trip. We appreciate your support, contributions, and hope that not only will our fundraising events help the eighth grades raise money to reach their goal to go to London, England. We hope that our fundraising events will in turn build community. As the months continue to get darker, the eighth graders hope that they can help you leap out of bed by providing fresh hot coffee, hot chocolate, and baked goods in the morning at Winterberry from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. This is a great way to socialize with your school community over coffee and baked good. Running late and you don't have time to make breakfast, no worries; you can grab a cup of coffee and muffin at Winterberry. As 8<sup>th</sup> graders will provide to-go cups, we want to make a conscious effort to eliminate waste, so if you can, please bring your own coffee mug. Here are some additional fundraising events you can participate in and enjoy.

- Ms. Besh



## MUSIC

**10.27.10:** The music program has been off to a running start. The first through third grade student have started playing percussion and Orff instruments. Their singing voices have also been blossoming. Fourth and fifth grade students have started their work on the violin and will be receiving practice journals next week. If your child does not yet have a violin, please e-mail Mr. V ([vander-schrier\\_kyle@asdk12.org](mailto:vander-schrier_kyle@asdk12.org)) so that we can secure a violin for them soon.

The sixth grade choir students have been working diligently on River in Judea, which they have quickly taken to. The students quickly learned the carol Dormi, Dormi, which is being sung in Italian. The seventh/eighth grade chorus have been working hard on two songs. The Geographical Fugue is a four part, speaking chorus that incorporates various countries into complex rhythms. The other piece is for two-part chorus called Bidi Bom, which uses a traditional Hebrew folk mode.

-Mr. Vander-Schrier

## RUSSIAN

**10.26.10:** I would like to thank everyone in the Winterberry community for all of the love and kindness they have shown to my family and I since Owen left us. The many notes and cards, the wonderful food and all the warm wishes have really been a blessing. Our need for support and connection is being well met.

Thank you also to everyone who came to visit during conferences. It's important for me to connect with families so we can better insure our children's success. If you didn't get a chance to speak with me, please contact me by email and I'll be happy to talk with you sometime, especially if your family is new to the school this year. In a further attempt to communicate efficiently with families, I have a web site, hosted by ASD, which has links for Russian enrichment activities and keeps students in 6th grade and higher updated on current assignments. You can find the site by looking on the ASD site under schools, then finding Winterberry and lastly clicking on my name. Let me know if there is anything you would like to see there that would further assist your child in learning Russian.

**11.8.10:** I am so glad to be back. These last few weeks we've been working on reviewing old material and building the foundations for meeting our main goals of the year.

Starting Tuesday, November 9th I will be hosting weekly tutoring sessions from 3:30 to 4:30. Students in fourth grade and above are welcome. The tutoring will take place in the 6th grade room. I will be available to help with homework and help new children catch up with their peers, primarily through building reading skills. It's no problem if you need to leave early or can't make it each week. The meetings will continue until winter break, after which point I'll reevaluate if and when I'll offer additional tutoring second semester. If there is enough interest, I'll also consider opening additional sessions and/or offering a group that is more focused on enrichment activities than support. Please contact me if you are interested.

- Mr. Harmon

## HANDWORK

**10.28.10:** "With ordinary talent and extraordinary perseverance anything can be attainable"

~ Sir Thomas Foxwell Buxton, British Abolitionist

Handwork ~

What more can I say? Amazing work is being accomplished in handwork, even by students who have never had the privilege of creating lasting, beautiful and useful objects. I'm so humbled and aware of the tremendous effort and focus it takes the students as they follow their hearts and me on this wonderful journey together towards learning the ability of their hands.



First grade will begin knitting on November 1<sup>st</sup>. There's an open invitation to all parents who knit, or not, to be present for this wonderful event. We will be using the following verse:

Under the fence  
Catch the sheep  
Back we come  
And off we leap.

During the first quarter we have experienced projects that bring us together as a class in learning to follow instructions in a focused way with patience and fun!

"Pebbles" the gnome has visited through stories in our second grade class, which is useful as most have started the knitted gnome and are eagerly choosing colors for boots, pants and sweaters. Introduction into crochet begins as they do the gnomes hat. It's an exciting time for the second grade!

Third grade has moved on from stitchery back to crochet making dishcloths and star mats moving into designing their own crocheted hats. The quality of their work is astounding as I walk into their room each time and see it lying on their desks. Truly beautiful as you can see they are putting their heart into the work at hand.

"Jump ropes in a day"! That should be the sign on the door of the fourth grade classroom. I have this class at 10:30 am and by the time lunch was over one student had theirs done and asking for more! This is the prevailing attitude of this class – they always do more than expected of them and so well done.

Cross-stitch is off and running as well. This is a "long term" project-using colored thread as a kind of thread painting where the color bubbles up and drops down from above creating different colors altogether that really breathe. Their effort should result in some sort of glass case, wallet, purse or whatever they conjure up. We'll be in suspense until then.

Fifth grade is finishing up their "samplers" that helped them get back into the swing of knitting to begin the sock. They are keeping track of the directions in a "Sock Journal" for present and future reference. Hopefully, one or two will be ready to start next week. Ask your student to sing the song "Black Socks" for you. We've already had great fun as well as working hard toward our goals. One student described goals as "possible dreams". Beautiful!

Seals were everywhere in the sixth grade and may be gracing your home by now as one by one the students have finished them. The quality of their work was amazing and the different personalities were so differently presented by each student. In woodcarving or clay work you take away the outside of the object, but in soft sculpture you are filling in around an armature in a solid, purposeful way. Our aim is to create from the pattern out an animal that shows the students will- directed efforts. This is challenging and I have to say they are step by step becoming acquainted with the building blocks that will be their guide to creation of their chosen animal. It will be fun to see what they come up with.

Junior high has finished for the most part their wonderful pillowcases, just a few seams to go in finishing up the "straight seams. The next projects are clothing articles of warm mittens and a newsboy type hat sewn on the machine involving "curves". "Upcycled" clothing will be the material used for these items in keeping with our recycling philosophy here at Winterberry.

I appreciate working with your students every day!

Kindest Regards,

Ms. Paula  
Handwork Specialist

# WINTERBERRY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

**10.28.10:** WEP would like to thank a few folks for their generous gifts of time, energy and materials!

Thank you to...

...WEP parents Christina Eubanks (RaeAnn's mom), and John Whitesides (Lauren and John's dad), for much-needed contributions to our crafts/activities supplies.

...our friends Katie, Darla and Erin at The Upstairs Studio, for inviting us on a studio tour and telling us about their life as artists.

...recent Art Club guest artists Erin (texture rubbings), Danielle (photography) and Jordan (painting/color), for their thoughtful presentations and good energy.

...Jared Tyler and the friendly staff at South Restaurant, for some very fun cooking classes.

...Dot Watts, our outgoing licensing specialist from the Child Care Licensing department, for her support and care over the years and also for her donation of boxes of yarn and other crafts materials. We hope it's a very happy retirement, Dot!

**11.9.10:** WEP has enjoyed making new artist friends this year during Art Club. This month we'll visit with a biologist who is also a children's book illustrator; a weaver who just retired from a successful career teaching art for 30 years at West H.S.; and a young amateur painter. Art Club members walk to Modern Dwellers every Monday to meet our artist, enjoy a quick art lesson, then drink hot cocoa and chat with the guest artist. Deee-licious!

**11.23.10:** The Winterberry Enrichment Program is excited for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, and has plans for a *Friendship & Thankfulness* celebration on Wednesday afternoon. Children will prepare and enjoy special seasonal snacks, including popcorn balls, as well as taking time to share things for which we are grateful. We will also paint the Thanksgiving beads we made from scratch last week; see recipe below to make this simple craft with your family!

**WEP needs** the following items: bottle caps; washable mittens, hats and scarves. Thank you!

## *Thanksgiving Beads*

### *MATERIALS:*

*½ c salt, 1 c white flour; powdered tempura paint or food coloring, water; toothpicks, string*

### *PROCEDURE:*

*Mix the salt and the flour together. If color is desired, add paint or food coloring to water before mixing. Add water gradually until the mixture is of modeling consistency. Shape the mixture into beads of various shapes and sizes, like seasonal vegetables and fruits. Poke a hole through each bead with a toothpick before mixture dries. Let beads dry naturally. Thread beads on the string. Tie the string ends to form necklaces, bracelets, etc., for Thanksgiving feast celebrations.*

*source: [A Child's Seasonal Treasury](#)*

- Ms. Amy

*The Winterberry Enrichment Program, a Before, Kinder and After Care program, is currently serving 35 students over the course of each day. All programs have some open spots; there is room in Kinder Care only on M, T, R and F. For more information:*

*[WinterberryEnrichmentProgram@gmail.com](mailto:WinterberryEnrichmentProgram@gmail.com) or 980-2280.*

*The Winterberry Enrichment Program  
seeks to provide a nurturing and enriching experience  
while supporting the WCS mission and vision  
for children before and after school.*

# Tips For Parenting as a Single Mom

An Interview with Parent Coach Leslie Mayer

Do you feel stressed parenting as a single mom? Do you feel like your going insane and are unsure on how to continue taking care of the children on your own? If you answered, "yes" you're not alone. There are many single moms who are struggling to find a way to cope with the daily challenges of parenting. To help understand common parenting challenges that single moms face and how to cope with parenting as a single mom, I have interviewed Parent Coach, Leslie Mayer.

**Tell me a little bit about yourself.**

"I am a certified parent coach, through the Parent Coaching Institute, as well as a certified Waldorf teacher. I currently fuse these two perspectives in my work within the public Waldorf school movement by helping support parents as they strive to provide a healthy and respectful environment for their children amidst the chaos of our times."

"In both of these settings, as parent coach and as Waldorf teacher, I work from the theory of Appreciative Inquiry. I help others hold tight the image of what they want, almost as if it were already a reality, while simultaneously working to remove the obstacles that are in the way of the vision's manifesting in the family's life. By carefully placing attention on the aspects of life that we want, those aspects automatically grow into positive forces that turn again and support all other areas of life. When we place all of our concentration on a problem, then the problem is what will grow and our outcomes will be limited by the definition of the problem. In coaching and in teaching, I am always helping parents or children see the larger picture of what can be, freeing movement in that direction."

**What are some parenting challenges a mom faces once they are divorced?**

"The over all challenge of single parenting is increased stress. Although the specifics depend on any given situation, there is the same amount of housework, child rearing, and breadwinning to be done by one person instead of two. Divorce can end a life stage that needs ending, but it still leaves the future open and ambiguous. Facing the unknown and the lack of security that goes with it can create fear and anxiety, adding to the stress. If there remains unresolved conflict between the parents, this can add even more stress. Larger families, elder care needs, financial crisis, or the demands of a spirited/special needs child can exasperate the stress even more."

"On the level of daily life, organization and efficiency are challenges that can make or break any given day. Being focused and attentive to your child in the evening, when everyone is tired, is almost impossible when you do not know what you are preparing for dinner, no one can find the progress report that is due at school the next day, signed by a parent, and the internal guilt for having sent your child to school in dirty clothes is hovering over you. Getting out the door in the morning on time and with everyone ready for the day can be equally challenging."

**What type of impact can those challenges have on the parent child relationship?**

"There is positive stress, the kind that motivates us to do better, but the stress we are talking about here is of a different sort. It is the kind that penetrates and seeps into every interaction, every attempt to connect, and deteriorates all patience. A parent who is stressed is at risk for reactive and volatile responses to typical child behaviors, while a parent who is simply exhausted is more likely to neglect some basic emotional needs of their children."

"A positive parent/child relationship is based on a parent's attunement with their child's individual personality and basic child development needs. In order for a parent to be attuned, she must be able to attend with interest and caring to her child's world. This takes time and focus, which are two things that can be a challenge for a single mother."

**What are some tips you can give to single moms who want to be successful in parenting?**

"Focus on rhythm. Rhythm in your daily routine, communication patterns with your children, and self-care. Just as your lungs breath in an automatic life sustaining rhythm and your heart pumps blood without intentional thought or

energy, a daily lifestyle based on rhythm has the momentum to carry you forward regardless of immediate strife. When you have the consistent pattern with dinner at 6:30, bath at 8:00, in bed at 8:30, and lights out at 9:00 and me time at the end of the day, the household will soon begin to run on its own instead of depending on the surmountable will of a mother to make it happen each night. We are all creatures of habit."

"Keep an image of your child at his/her best near your heart at all times. Even the most difficult children have moments of peace and offer glimmers of all that they could become. Sometime you may need to go back far, all the way to the birth, in order to find this image. I hold the memory of a photo where my child is sweetly cradling a stuffed elephant all swaddled in his blanket. He is staring compassionately into the animal's eyes. Calling up this image when the hormones of puberty take over his body and caring and kindness seem far from his capacity helps me gain perspective and find the empathy to support him instead of just being angry with him."

"Limit screen time. It seems like a helpful tool to let your child watch a video or play a computer game; he is busy, you get a break, and it is what society as a whole is doing. Really think about it for a minute. If your child is sitting still for two hours before bedtime watching a show, is his body going to be ready to go to sleep? Or is your child going to say, "Wow, I am rested and now I need to move". This lack of movement is also deceptive. Even though the physical body is still, the brain is highly active in an automatic response mode while looking at a screen. So not only is the body ready to move, the brain is wide-awake and on alert status. This pendulum of energy levels can create distress and non-adaptive behavior in children. By limiting the screen time, you are allowing your child to modulate his own activity level to a more balanced and even level."

"Take care of yourself. Ask yourself, "What activities relax me? What activities energize me?" Figure out how to incorporate these into your weekly routine. It may be a longer-term vision that needs some temporary installments to get going. Just remember that a few moments for your own can pay back in hours of more manageable family time due to decreased stress. As quick fixes, look into childcare swaps and places that offer onsite child care, such as some grocery stores, health clubs, or churches. Sometimes the opportunity to shop alone can be that break you need."

### **What type of professional help is available for single mom's who want to be successful in parenting?**

"There is a new field developing called parent coaching. A coach is not a mental health professional such as a therapist or counselor because they are not "treating" a disorder. They are instead a professional support person who can walk along side a parent offering insight and information that specifically addresses the situation and the personalities involved. Anyone one can attend a generic parenting class, but then you leave with generic information and are left on your own to work it out. Anyone can also go to the bookstore and see the large selection on parenting, but it takes time and expertise to weed through all that is available and find the one that is right for any given need. Because the coach is working out of a relationship with the individual parent, the coach is able to make suggestions based on the individual circumstances and is able to meet with the parent over time, helping her make adjustments and fine tune the strategies given. The goal is always to help the parent have confidence and skills in her own parenting, thus weaning away from the coaches support."

"Many coaches offer services over the telephone instead of in a clinical office. This allows for flexibility in timing and the opportunity to work with coaches from all over the world. As any new field, parent coaching is not yet a licensed or certificated profession, thus the consumer must be careful in selecting who to work with. There maybe many programs for training currently, but I know that one of the original programs that has continued as a rigorous graduate level training is the Parent Coaching Institute. It's website offers direct links to its graduates' services."

Thank you Leslie for doing the interview on tips for parenting as a single mom. For more information on parent coaching, you can check out the website at [www.parentcoachinginstitute.com/](http://www.parentcoachinginstitute.com/)

# **Thursday Popcorn Sales: Fund Raiser for London Trip**

By Brandon Irleirmer, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Nov. 24, 2010

As you may know, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class has been fund raising for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. Our goal is to go to London, England to continue our education and see all the things we have been studying over the past six years at Winterberry; Egypt, Greece, Impressionist painters, the Renaissance, ect.. Eighth graders got together and came up with the idea of selling popcorn. Beginning Thursday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class will be selling popcorn at pick up every Thursday after school. We will send out popcorn order forms on Monday, when we return from Thanksgiving. We would like to thank Ms. Cindy for teaching us how to use the popcorn machine for this fundraiser. We appreciate the support we are getting from the students, parents, and faculty. We look forward to seeing you at our popcorn sale. For your convenience, 8<sup>th</sup> graders will deliver the popcorn at the pick-up area (on the blacktop). One 8<sup>th</sup> grader will be assigned to a class to ensure safe and organized popcorn delivery. The popcorn will be fresh out of the popcorn machine, so get some while it is hot out of the machine. Thank you again,

Winterberry's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class of 2011

## **Winterberry 2011/2012 Calendar**

By Esme Brudie, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Nov. 24, 2010

Our 8th grade class is also creating a Winterberry Calendar! This is another fundraising project for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to London. The calendar will be a collection of paintings from Winterberry K-8th grade students. The calendar will also include Winterberry's main events throughout the year. We will have order forms available soon and you may also purchase them at the school store. Each copy will be \$20. These will be great gifts and thank you for your continual support!

Winterberry's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class of 2011

## **Winterberry Charter Council (WCC) Elections**

The Winterberry Charter Council (WCC) is holding its yearly elections during the regular monthly meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup>. School wide voting will occur the week of February 7-11. There will be 5 seats open for the 2011-2012 year. The WCC requests a two year commitment to the board.

The WCC is looking for individuals who are interested in becoming a member of Winterberry's primary governing body. We seek individuals who have knowledge in areas that are most integral to our functions: legal, budgeting/ accounting, real estate and building acquisition as well as the desire to work together with a group of individuals in a consensus model with the shared vision of taking Winterberry to a place it will grow and thrive in the future.

Following is a brief overview of the WCC's responsibilities and functions within the school:

Winterberry Charter School has three governing bodies: the Winterberry Charter Council (WCC), Winterberry Parent Guild ("WPG"), and the Faculty. These three bodies govern together through building consensus. In the event that there is a disagreement on policy or procedure between bodies that cannot be worked out through consensus (including but not limited to emergency actions), the WCC acts as the primary governing body.

The WCC performs the following major functions:



- A. Ensures the fulfillment of the mission of Winterberry Charter School as stated in the Charter.
- B. Oversees and has ultimate accountability and responsibility for academics, curriculum, legal/risk management, personnel issues, finances, operation/maintenance and budgeting issues.
- C. Contracts with an administrator, delegates and oversee their responsibilities.

The WCC meets monthly on the third Thursday of each month at 6 pm during the school year August – May. Though we take our responsibilities seriously, we find time to enjoy our work together.

If you are interested in becoming a board member please contact the election committee: Meg Eggleston [eggleston\\_margaret@asdk12.org](mailto:eggleston_margaret@asdk12.org) or Melissa Janigo [janigo\\_melissa@asdk12.org](mailto:janigo_melissa@asdk12.org) by January 13<sup>th</sup>. We will be holding a “Meet the Candidates” at our regular January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

# The Importance of Handwork in the Waldorf School

By Patricia Livingston

*Handwork is an important element in Waldorf Education, being understood as critical to the intellectual, emotional, and volitional development of the child. In the first grade the children learn knitting, and in the course of their schooling will learn to crochet, to sew by hand, knit with five needles, to cross-stitch, do wood carving, and to make clothing using a sewing machine. The following article is an excerpt from a newly published book called Will-Developed Intelligence: Handwork and Practical Arts in the Waldorf School by David Mitchell and Patricia Livingston. While addressed to and written primarily for teachers, the piece will be of interest to anyone concerned about education and the development of the child. Will-Developed Intelligence is published by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, is 210 pages long and costs \$22.00, plus \$4.50 shipping. It can be ordered from AWSNA at (916) 961-0927 or via the online bookstore at [www.awsna.org](http://www.awsna.org).*

R.E.K.

**T**he hands are a unique and beautiful part of the human being, and they bring us important, far-reaching experiences. Therefore as teachers we must try to help the children become aware of their hands and of the great gifts they bestow on themselves and on others. Their hands need to become skillful, sensitive, and strong so that they can accomplish many wonderful deeds. Blind people get to know the world through their hands, but most people are unaware of the knowledge that can be gained when the hands are used in useful and sensitive ways. Think of art and music! Think of what physical work and daily tasks teach us. Think of a handshake and what it tells us about another person.

Handwork and crafts should be imaginatively and artistically taught, so that the children are encouraged to make original designs that are colorful and creative in form. The children should

learn new ways to use color and to make designs that indicate the practical use of the project. Rudolf Steiner gave several indications of how this can be done. The painting and form drawing the children do in all their lessons are extremely important. Working with color and experiencing how colors flow into one another in painting affects everything the children do in and beyond handwork lessons, and fosters artistic, imaginative growth in their thinking as well.

We want the children to make things they love and enjoy and to work skillfully, always increasing their artistry. Handwork should be relaxing and fun, and at the same time productive, involving strong will activity. Nothing happens if you don't use your hands and get to work!



Handwork projects created by Waldorf students in the elementary grades.

©Alicia Sapountzis



Some children need more help and encouragement than others in order to achieve such goals, but the wise teacher will know how to guide them without destroying their confidence and sense of achievement. Confidence in one subject is carried over into another. Activating the will strengthens ability in all subjects.

There are immense therapeutic possibilities in handwork teaching. Waldorf teachers must study and strive to understand Rudolf Steiner's view of the developing child—an ongoing work for all of us. The teacher must learn to work in a way that is appropriate for each age group, must study the different types of children (small- and large-headed, and so on), and understand and work with the different temperaments. We must know the children so well that we begin to see exactly what each child needs. How much help will move someone forward? Who needs to slow down and perhaps redo work that is poorly and thoughtlessly done? How do you handle a melancholic perfectionist? With the older children it is important that they begin to develop some self-awareness about the way they work.

Resourcefulness is developed as the children see how much they can achieve with a few simple materials. Many simple tasks are no longer experienced in the home. Children today often have no idea how to sew on a button. When a young child learns the "magic trick" of putting a cord in a drawstring bag, he is thrilled. He then becomes more interested and resourceful in solving other problems.

The gifts of nature fill our handwork lessons and create an opportunity to involve the children in the world of ecology and social interaction. The children experience wool, cotton, and many other fibers

through using these materials. They learn of the sources of these materials, about the natural dyes used to color them, and how human beings have contributed to their development and to their use. Respect and reverence are fostered for all we receive and for how humankind and nature work together. We should use only natural fibers in our classes, if possible. Touching silk or wool is an experience very different from that of handling synthetic materials. Our Waldorf kindergarten children know that well!

In a first grade, as the children use their beautiful wool, one can talk about the sheep. Near the Rudolf Steiner School in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, there is a sheep farm. Many children pass the farm daily and watch the sheep gradually grow heavy with wool. Then suddenly one day they see the sheep shorn—a rather shocking experience, but an opportunity to discuss how generously the sheep give their wool for our scarves, and also to talk about the craftsmen who spin it into yarn for us. First-grade children know from the fairy tales how "magical" spinning is and still retain a feeling of wonder about spinning straw into gold. One can also speak about the trees from which our wooden needles are made. The children learn to value and not waste



©Alli Sapountzi

Doing handwork with a friend is fun. Here two students compare their progress.





On a sunny day, students in this Waldorf high school weaving class work outside on inkle looms to make woven belts.

these gifts. Conversations such as these continue into the upper grades, changing according to the age of the children, the crafts they are learning, and the materials they are using. At the appropriate time modern technology will also be discussed.

All this helps the children make a real connection to their surroundings, closing a gap created by a modern world in which everything appears out of stores in a somewhat abstract way, made out of unimaginable materials which seem worthless and easily disposable. The children see so much waste! Through the handwork classes they gain a realistic knowledge of and reverence for the world of nature, and become aware of the ecological problems that arise in our modern world. We need to encourage new perspectives and foster a real social consciousness. ✱

**Patricia Livingston** was born in Manhattan and attended the Rudolf Steiner School of New York (the first Waldorf school in North America) for her first five years of schooling. Later, after having trained as a singer and then having married and had children, she returned to the school as a handwork teacher and was privileged to have Arvia Ege, noted artist and teacher of handwork, as her mentor. Patricia was with the New York school for twenty-seven years, serving a term as chairperson of the faculty and taking a special interest in teacher training and in working with parents. In 1984 Patricia left the school and Manhattan and moved to Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Since then she has been active throughout North America advising established schools, training teachers, and helping young schools in their developmental stages. She is a member of the Pedagogical Section Council of North America, which she chaired ten years. She has served on the editorial advisory board of *Renewal* since the magazine was founded nine years ago.





Thank you to Lynne Jablonski, Mike  
Rehberg, Winterberry volunteer  
parents, and UAA practicum  
students for the

## WINTERBERRY TAO PROGRAM!

TAO = the Thursday Afternoon Optional Program

### Winterberry Charter Council Members (WCC)

Melissa Janigo, Chair	<a href="mailto:janigo_melissa@asdk12.org">janigo_melissa@asdk12.org</a>
Arthur Harmon, Staff/Secretary	<a href="mailto:harmon_arthur@asdk12.org">harmon_arthur@asdk12.org</a>
Erin Fleischer, Parent	<a href="mailto:erininak@gmail.com">erininak@gmail.com</a>
Della Swartz, Parent	<a href="mailto:ddswartz@mtaonline.net">ddswartz@mtaonline.net</a>
Franny Hall, Community Member	<a href="mailto:frannyinak@yahoo.com">frannyinak@yahoo.com</a>
Meggan Judge, Parent	<a href="mailto:ericandmeggan@gmail.com">ericandmeggan@gmail.com</a>
Tara Smith, Parent	<a href="mailto:tamarlene@gmail.com">tamarlene@gmail.com</a>
Vacant, Parent Seat	
Lynne Jablonski, WPG Rep	<a href="mailto:lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com">lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com</a>
Meg Eggleston, Faculty Chair	<a href="mailto:eggleston_margaret@asdk12.org">eggleston_margaret@asdk12.org</a>
Vacant, Staff/Faculty Seat	
Shanna Mall, Principal	<a href="mailto:mall_shanna@asdk12.org">mall_shanna@asdk12.org</a>

Monthly Meetings: 3rd Thursday of each month, 6pm, second floor of  
Winterberry Charter School unless otherwise stated & advertised.

### Winterberry's Dress Request...

In order to reduce classroom distractions, continue our commitment to upholding Steiner's views on materialism, and respect the needs of all students, families, and staff, we respectfully ask that student attire be comprised of:

- \* solid colors,
- \* stripes,
- \* polka dots,
- \* or patterns.

We also ask that all outerwear and accessories (including indoor shoes and lunch boxes) also follow these guidelines. Please choose plain shoes that do not include electronic lights, sounds, wheels, or commercially produced pictures.

When students come to school with items that do not meet these guidelines, school staff may ask them to alter the clothing so it is not distracting (turn a shirt inside-out, for example), give the student an alternative item to wear instead and/or work together with families to find an alternative within a reasonable period.

Our goal is that we can come together on this issue out of respect for all community members knowing that while such items may not distract one, they do distract another. Thank you for your commitment to creating and maintaining the highest quality environment for our children.

As always, thank you for your willingness to grow and work together to create a culture of caring and respect at Winterberry!

### Winterberry Parent's Guild Members (WPG)

Julie Pepe, President	<a href="mailto:pepehelps@yahoo.com">pepehelps@yahoo.com</a>
Tiffany Mamae, Vice President	<a href="mailto:tiffanymamae@yahoo.com">tiffanymamae@yahoo.com</a>
Sarah Rygh, Treasurer	<a href="mailto:sara.rygh@gmail.com">sara.rygh@gmail.com</a>
Christina Eubanks, Secretary	<a href="mailto:christinaann58@hotmail.com">christinaann58@hotmail.com</a>
Lynne Jablonski, Fundraising	<a href="mailto:lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com">lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Vacant, Kindergarten</b>	
Mike Rehberg, Grade One	<a href="mailto:mike@rehbergs.net">mike@rehbergs.net</a>
<b>Vacant, Grade Two</b>	
Peter Smith, Grade Three	<a href="mailto:petersmith@as.net">petersmith@as.net</a>
Dave Swartz, Grade Four	<a href="mailto:ddswartz@mtaonline.net">ddswartz@mtaonline.net</a>
Louke Ellenbroek, Grade Five	<a href="mailto:louke_ellenbroek@hotmail.com">louke_ellenbroek@hotmail.com</a>
Sarah Robicheaux, Grade Six	<a href="mailto:sarahr@alaska.net">sarahr@alaska.net</a>
Rebeka Edge, Grade Seven/Eight	<a href="mailto:edgefam@yahoo.com">edgefam@yahoo.com</a>
Shanna Mall, Principal	<a href="mailto:mall_shanna@asdk12.org">mall_shanna@asdk12.org</a>

Monthly Meetings: 1st Thursday of each month, 6pm, second floor of