

A Dandelion for My Mother

How I loved those spiky suns,
rooted stubborn as childhood
in the grass, tough as the farmer's
big-headed children—the mats
of yellow hair, the bowl-cut fringe.
How sturdy they were and how
slowly they turned themselves
into galaxies, domes of ghost stars
barely visible by day, pale
cerebrums clinging to life
on tough green stems. Like you.
Like you, in the end. If you were here,
I'd pluck this trembling globe to show
how beautiful a thing can be
a breath will tear away. *- Jean Nordhaus*

Grade ONE

Friday, September 8, 2010 ends our first three weeks of school as well as our first full block of form drawing. We have established our daily rhythm with confidence and fluidity and are ready to meet the upcoming challenges of capital letters during our Language Arts block.

Our forms have followed along with the adventures of Pierello, Mog Noddy, and Mother and Father Blackcap in our read aloud story, "The Wind Call". We have experienced the adoption of Pierello into the Blackcap family and moved with the images of this tale into our first twelve forms. We have found the forms in our bodies, along the coastal trail on our nature walks, in the classroom and around school. We have looked for signs of winter's arrival and for the call of the wind that indicates to all of the natural world that it is time to prepare for winter. As the voles and mice, butterflies and moths, birds and bees get ready for the winter in our story, so does the world outside our classroom. It has been a wonderful journey.

-Ms. Drinen

Grade TWO

Today in 2nd grade, freshly picked apples simmered all day in a crockpot.

We happily greeted Mr. Harmon with a "Dobre Utra!" on our first day of 2nd grade Russian class.

We drew a picture of the Town Mouse on his way from the city to visit his friend the Country Mouse as we heard in our story yesterday. We started to hear the story of St. Jerome and the gentle lion who protected the donkey as it traveled to town.

During math practice, we thought of over 20 things that come as sets of 2 (eyes, elbows, pant legs, twins...) We chose one thing from the list to draw pictures of for a chart of 2's. (Wings received the popular vote, closely followed by motorcycle tires and earrings.)

August/September Birthdays:

Ryanne (Aug. 3), Trethan and Cameron (Aug. 4), Adler (Aug. 10), Siobhan and Ms. Towner (Aug. 14), Khryo (Aug. 23), Johnathan (Sep. 6), Ivalu (Sep. 15), Sayora (Sep. 25)

We are thankful for...

Mr. Harmon's return today!

The beautiful summer weather last week.

The parents who have joined us on our nature walks and brought in food and supplies.

Our time spent learning and playing together.

- Ms. Towner

Grade Three

I hope to continue to instill in the children a sense of reverence and responsibility for the earth. It is important at this developmental age that the children have hands on experiences in working to transform raw materials into a product that they can use.

In this light, I am very pleased that we have had such an incredible show of parent volunteers, community volunteer and the grace of the weather to really do the salmon fishing block that is nearing completion.

We have observed and tried out spinning rod and fly rod silver salmon fishing. On our first Ship Creek Walk we saw 2 silvers landed. The children have all tried their hand at fishing with a rod at Ship Creek.... It was a gift that the day we fished at high tide we were not in anyone's way, we could just practice casting, the silvers were not in the creek! BUT the HOT COCOA was delicious and the cow parsnip raft creations kept everyone active in ways to experience our very local creek.

These events neatly led up to the first huge event for 3rd Grade.... My family's gillnet successfully caught 15 lovely red salmon on our recess hill, there has been huge excitement about picking the fish, filleting the fish, chopping the fish, brining the fish, smoking the fish.... Vacuum packaging the fish, and so on! ESPECIALLY eating the smoked fish with friends and family!

- Ms. Eggleston

Grade Four

March

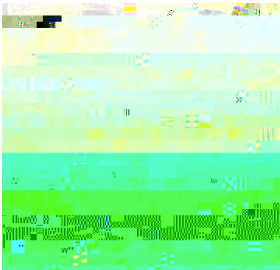
3rd: WPG Meeting 6pm @ Winterberry

4th: NO SCHOOL, In-service

5th - 13th: NO SCHOOL, Spring Break

14th - 25th: School Mentors Visit
George Ho! ecker &
Donna Burgess

19th:



Grade Six

Sixth Grade is off to a crisp start. After a week of unbearable heat, we have installed two fans, live with the windows open, and are quite comfortable in our cozy space. We are a full 27 students this year: we welcome the families of Magnola Edge, Jacob Rees, James Bolton, Amanda Heitsmith, Ray Van Deusen, Louis Garby, and Mosheh Machiyach. Already I feel that a new dynamic has settled on the class, and our new students are a big part of this. We are stronger, smarter, and healthier than ever as a class, thanks to some wonderful new energy!

Sixth grade, or the ages of 11 and 12, is a time of great polarities of

Seventh and eighth grade students will soon take a look at limestone and examine the lime cycle as an introduction to the properties of acids and bases. We will also be studying various gasses (hydrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide) along with the basic metals.

During the last few weeks of chemistry, seventh and eighth grade students will be investigating these major themes in organic chemistry: photosynthesis, carbohydrates, generating carbon dioxide and oxygen gases, examining alcohol, lipids, oils, and proteins. Throughout these last few weeks, we will be looking at sources, extraction, chemical properties, uses, tests, and comparisons/contrasts of carbohydrates, cellulose, fat/oils, and proteins. Without a doubt, organic chemistry will thoroughly deepen our understanding of health and nutrition in our daily lives.

Parent Reminder: Our next 7th/8th grade Parent Meeting is **October 6th @ 6:00 p.m.**

-Ms. Besh

Handwork

1st Grade~

"My hands are a bowl, they hold water just fine.
My hands are a shelter, a pillow, a line.
My hands are a hammer and a nail too!
My hands are my most important tool !"

Learning "reverence for the hands" is the predominant focus for these vibrant little children. They are already showing their desire and ability to "focus", whether it is learning the verse for handwork, tying a slipknot, the felting process or finger knitting. This class is well on their way to the all-important process of knitting. Following instructions and learning to be patient is so huge for this grade.

It's in the wonderful tradition of Winterberry Charter School that a parent or group of parents make the handwork bags to present to the class on that all important first day of knitting, so the children will have their bag in which to place their handwork project for safe keeping. Let me know if this is something that you'd love to have a part doing. I'm looking forward to working with your children as the year unfolds and invite you to come join us anytime as extra hands are always welcomed in these beginning stages. We're off to a really wonderful start and I am excited by the prospects ahead

2nd Grade~

I look at my hands with fingers so fine and I want to be proud that they are mine.
For deep in my heart lies a golden chest with secret treasures that no one can guess-
Unless, my hand do their very best, to work and work and open that chest.

This is truly a golden year for the second grader who's experience from the first grade was filled with baby buntings, flute bags, rainbow balls, and various animals so that they know what their hands are capable of doing. We are going to follow the "continuous thread" again this year in the knitting, stuffing and sewing of a little gnome, culminating in the introduction to crochet, which is how the gnomes' hat is made. This is almost a full years' project using the child's choice of color for clothes, hair, and hat. Rolling the bones (stuffing) will be revealing for them. "Firm not fat" or puffy is our aim so the body of the gnome holds its shape during the years of play following their creation.

We will be refining our work, so attention to detail will be important- learning to cast on and cast off will give them a lot of independence and not make them so reliant or have to wait for someone to help them. It's always about the "process" and when you're able to follow the continuous thread for knitting projects it sets the child up to be able to th

I look forward to opening up a "golden time" for your children and in that spirit I'll leave you till next time. As always you are welcome to second grade handwork when time allows for you.

3rd Grade~

We use our hands to fashion the feelings of our heart...
And we thank this beautiful planet, and all the stars above!
We ask for as a blessing from plant and earth and sky,
That I may do my handwork using hand and heart and mind!

Having followed this class from the 1st grade through now, our start to this year has been amazing as they embark on the finite stitchery projects heralding the ninth year a year of great change in which they are seeing their worlds in a whole new light. Making their own felted world sphere on which they will be stitching a design of their creation using the back-stitch and coloring their own world as they see fit. They are showing real divergent thinking in their

learning the anatomy of the sock. They each have written a story from the viewpoint of the sock. Ask your student to share it with you. We'll be learning songs and more prose about the humble sock. These will be fun and frustrating days for them. Please encourage them all you can. I know they can complete a pair of wonderful warm socks and from time to time they will be bringing them home as homework. There are some expectations around this, as they will need to keep up with me in a timely manner.

Drop in, as you are welcomed to attend a handwork class. Helping hands and encouragement are always appreciated. I look forward to bringing to fruition the work of their hands!

6th Grade~

While we're growing through the great warm earth,
As we're rising like stars in our own universe!
With fire in our belly we'll pursue the work of our hands,
The colors of our mind giving it viberance and life,
Bringing all to an artful finish.

The sixth grade is well into understanding the mammal they have chosen as their gusseted animal- three-dimensional

I couldn't ask for a better environment to be in and I am looking forward to an exciting year in both music and movement classes.

Students in grades one through three have been working on their musical skills through singing, partner games, and movement. We will continue to build our song repertoire and will soon be working with the Orff instruments.

Fourth and fifth grade students will be starting playing their violins in string class shortly. If your child does not yet have a violin, there is no need to worry. Violins can be rented from Petr's Violin Shop, Inc. for only \$19 a month. Go to <http://www.violinshop.net/> or stop by the store for more information. Students should have their violins by Monday, September 27 so we can begin our string adventure.

The sixth and seventh/eighth grade students have started the basics of choral singing and are off to a great start. Students will be working throughout the year on developing their voice and music reading skills. I have heard many compliments about the students' voices and am very proud of their work thus far.

- Mr. Vander-Schrier (Mr. V)

Cross Country Running: Grades 5 - 8

XC Running

Please come out and show your support for our 2010 Winterberry XC Running Team!!!

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"LIVING WALDORF PEDAGOGY: TIMELESS THEMES AND TIMELY CHALLENGES"

By: George Hoffeecker, Waldorf Educator & Winterberry School Mentor

Rudolf Steiner frequently pointed to the critically important role that vigorous scientific inquiry plays in

- Middle school children, especially, need to learn how to separate “the essential from the non-essential”, in their school work and to be able to organize in their thinking and written work what is objectively necessary. The adolescent needs to learn to discern the essential from the non-essential, the relationship between cause and effect and how to ever more mindfully apply learned skills and concepts to novel situation.
- Alertness, objectivity, precision and thoroughness are four key values the teachers of middle school children need to address. This is exemplified in the beginning of the sixth grade curriculum when the students are taught to use mechanical drawing instruments to create precise and complex geometrical forms. The science lessons and their careful and complete record of the experiments and their conclusions are further examples of the growing attention in the child’s studies, to detail, analysis, precision and understanding “weighted values”. This, all the time, being demonstrated by the students in an artistic and beautiful way.
- In the so-called “Conference Lectures”, Steiner spoke about home work from fourth grade onward in the following way: ...“What we must strive for is to master the material so well that we do not need anything outside of the school lessons....but the lessons, just are not always so interesting. Therefore, I do believe, that one must come to a kind of modified homework”.

Given the complexity of contemporary curricular content as well as multiple standards and expectations originating from within and from without the schools, it becomes clear that the teachers, as well as the students, need to be able to separate the essential from the non-essential and to make good use of the time allotted to them. In order for the students to learn what we think we are teaching, our teaching must be lively and artistic, rooted in practical interest and experience, and clear about each lesson’s intended learning outcomes.

- Corrections of the child's work and/or behavior need to be made after the teacher has first made a connection with the child. This can take place very quickly and seamlessly if there is the prerequisite strong relationship between teacher and student.
- Regarding discipline and the role of the teacher, Rudolf Steiner referred at one point to the teacher striving to be the "loving self-evident authority" as she stands before the class. Praise and rewards and punishments give way, in light of this image by Steiner, in favor of *encouragement* and clear communication of what the teacher wants (rather than what she doesn't want) and *celebration of the child's accomplishments* as truly the accomplishments of the *child*, (rather than judgments from the teacher that could diminish the child's ownership of the experience). A core value in Waldorf education is for the student to find the motivation for doing tasks *from within*. At another point Steiner notes that if the relationship is strong between the teacher and the student the child will also want to do the things asked of him "out of love and respect" for the teacher, another manifestation of intrinsic motivation.
- Bring movement into all lessons. Teach through movement as much as we teach through images.
- Bring the students into a more dynamic relationship with nature throughout the grades. This concept already has many applications in Waldorf kindergartens and again in the third grade curriculum, however nature awareness, and natural ecology are emerging as important elements to be included in all the grades. For several years "nature schools" have been thriving in Europe. These schools have

CONSENSUS AT WINTERBERRY

Assume goodwill from all involved...

Create for yourself a new, indomitable perception of faithfulness. What is usually called faithfulness passes so quickly. Let this be your faithfulness:

You will experience moments.... fleeting moments.... with the other person. The human being will appear to you then as if filled, irradiated with the archetype of his spirit.

And then there may be.... indeed will be.... other moments, long periods of time, when human beings are darkened. But you will learn to say to yourself at such times: "The Spirit makes me strong. I remember the archetype. I saw it once. No illusion, no deception shall rob me of it."

Always struggle for the image that you saw. This struggle is faithfulness. Striving thus for faithfulness, we shall be close to one another, as if endowed with the protective powers of angels.

-Rudolf Steiner

Consensus Process in action...

Unity, not unanimity...

Ask yourself, "Is the spirit of the action moving in the direction of the shared values?"

Discernment...Standing Behind the Principle vs. Personal Preference

Ask yourself, "Is having my strategy adopted important for the nature of this particular decision or is this more about steering the decision in a direction that is closer to my own personal preference?" Clearly identify if this about principle or preference before adding to the discussion.

Stand Aside / Step Aside...

Typically happens when a person realizes they are too attached to personal preference and are only holding the group process back. Once a person stands or steps aside he or she is agreeing to let the group move forward without them. In doing so they agree not to undermine group decisions. The aforementioned behaviors uphold the integrity of the body and its agreements.

Blocking (secular term) or Standing in the Way (Quaker term)...

This technique should rarely be used and has been estimated that a person who uses consensus consistently in their everyday life should use this no more than six times in a lifetime! In terms of an organization, it should only be used when a particular decision

Tools for Consensus Making...

Rule of Three...

If the group is going to make a major policy decision it should be brought to no less than three meetings. When there are time concerns special meetings can be called, but the format should be:

Mtg 1: Introduction of the issue and dialogue (20-30 minutes): Prior documentation should be provided to committee/board/group members. From here the issue gets sent to committee with the mandate to create/bring a proposal. This should be sent out to members prior to the second meeting.

Mtg 2: Full discussion of the proposal by the group (60-90 minutes): Send all recommendations back to committee for revisions after input. Once revisions are finished the new proposal should be sent out to group prior to the third and final meeting.

Mtg 3: Final discussion and decision (45 minutes)

Define the Role of the Mandate Team or Committee...

This can be anything the group wants it to be. One example is making clear that maximum representation of stakeholder input be solicited prior to a recommendation being made. Another is that the proposal be objective and principle based.

Documentation...

While time consuming to create, this is a total time saver in the life of a group's meeting time. At least one paragraph should be offered for every item to be discussed at the meeting. Each item on the agenda should have a sponsor who provides the history and documentation of the proposed issue. Good practice says no sponsor/no documentation equals no consideration by the group.

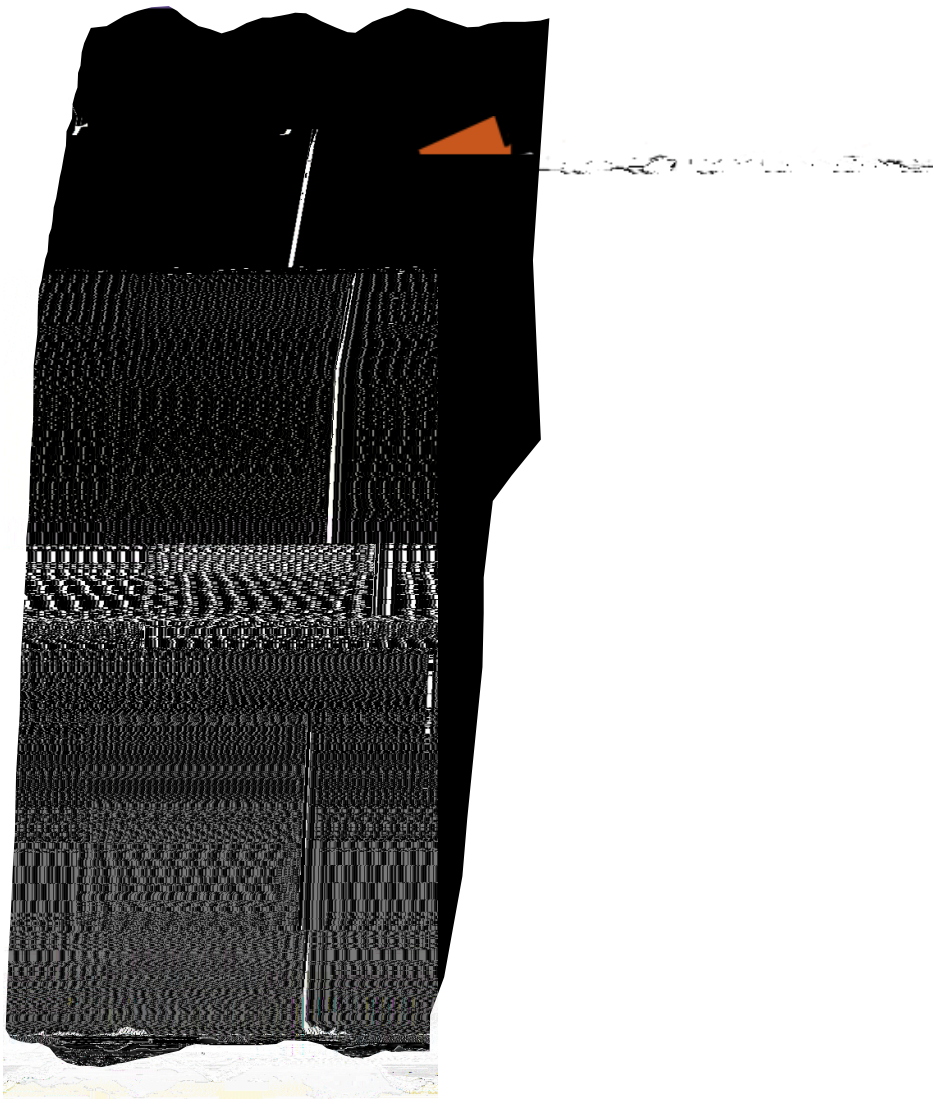
Timely Agenda...

The agenda should be sent out in a timely fashion and adequate time should be allowed for the topics at hand. A group should have a calendar of the year and its yearly goals should drive agenda topics when possible. There should be a good energy flow to the meetings and breaks or moments of silence should be taken when necessary.

Clear Minutes...

Minutes should not be a play-by-play representation of the meeting. The minute taker should strive to capture the key points and identify the "Minute of Decision" or the motion/unity of the group.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS DUE BY TUESDAY OF NEWSLETTER WEEKS
Please send all newsletter submissions to



Winterberry Charter Council Members (WCC)

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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!