



Sprouting Cedar

• November - December 2014



photo by Kirsten Andrews

Mushroom hunters: Grace, Jerome, Bronwyn, Abby, and Katie of Class 6-7 proudly display their bounty after an afternoon of mushroom hunting in the rain!

A beautiful puppet play will take place several times throughout the day, and the magic of the gnome village is not to be missed.

This year, along with our own array of market items – needle felted creations, beeswax crayons, silks, felt crowns and more – we have invited a handful of vendors from around BC to bring handmade wooden toys and specialty items perfect for gift-giving.

“For children it’s always a day filled with excitement and light heartedness – and for the parents it’s a great way to connect with the community and share in the beauty and creativity of what Waldorf brings to the season.”

– Gabriel Alden-Hull

“We’re delighted that Jalu Toys will be returning to the market, among other favourites,” said Alden-Hull.

As always shoppers will relish in the opportunity to buy non-commercial gifts which will feature many handmade decorations for your tree and home.

There will be fun hands-on activities such as making a felt ball ornament for the tree, creating a Yule log to put on the table, rolling beeswax candles (more appropriate for the little ones than candle dipping) and then experiencing a taste of Christmas with a cinnamon apple.

The festive CVWS Café is there for when it’s time to enjoy a hot beverage and a sweet homemade snack while taking in live caroling. Or if you prefer, head outside and eat a hearty lunch at the BBQ around the open fire.

Keep an eye out for our sign-up board as well, many volunteers are needed to make this event happen.

Christmas Fair just around the corner

By Kirsten Andrews

Save the date for Saturday, Dec. 6 from 11 am to 3 pm when Cedar Valley Waldorf School throws open its doors and welcomes all of Squamish to experience the beauty of the holidays – Waldorf-style!

While people gather outdoors around a hot fire enjoying the best of traditional German fare and fresh sourdough pretzels, the fragrance of hot mulled apple cider and spiced cookies from the Enchanted Cookie House will be hard to resist. But it’s not just all about the food.

As always, children’s activities are front and centre and even the adults will be

able to get in on the action with wreath making and candle dipping with warm and fragrant beeswax.

“For children it’s always a day filled with excitement and light heartedness – and for the parents it’s a great way to connect with the community and share in the beauty and creativity of what Waldorf brings to the season,” said Gabriel Alden-Hull, business administrator and fair co-organizer.

“It’s pure magic.”

Our café will feature incredible homemade confections, coffee, tea and seasonal music to set the mood for the entire day.

PRINCIPAL/
PEDAGOGICAL ADMINISTRATOR
Christine Martin

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Astrid Lackner
Judy Roberts
Shannon Johnson, Afternoon Care

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS
Begoña Cid, Lauren Baldwin
Kelsey Lovell, Assistant

CLASS 1/2 TEACHER
Christine Martin
Meghan McCrone, Support Teacher
Sibylle Wuethrich, Special Ed. Asst.
Emily Ormerod, Special Ed. Asst.

CLASS 3/4 TEACHER
Ralf Hoerger (Handwork)

CLASS 5/6/7 TEACHER
Fritz Bindseil (German)

SPECIALTY TEACHERS
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Carrie Griffin, French

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
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MARKETING & ENROLMENT
Kirsten Andrews

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PIC CO-ORDINATOR
Pip Parr

Sprouting Cedar is published
4 or 5 times a year (September to
June) for the families and friends of
Cedar Valley Waldorf School.

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photo by Carrie Griffin

Dates to remember

NOVEMBER

3	Mon	PIC Meeting at Lewis Residence, 40448 Ayr Drive 7:30 pm
4	Tues	CVWS Board Meeting (contact the office if you'd like to attend) 3:30 – 5 pm
6	Thur	Craft Bee 7:30 – 9:30 pm
7	Fri	Craft Bee 1:15 – 3:15 pm
8	Sat	Comedy Night and Auction at the Ledge doors at 7:30

10	Mon	Professional Development – NO SCHOOL
11	Tues	Remembrance Day – NO SCHOOL
12-14	Wed-Fri	Parent Teacher Interviews – NO SCHOOL K/Grades , preschool on

13	Thur	Craft Bee 7:30 – 9:30 pm
19	Wed	Lantern Walk Brackendale Fair Grounds 6 pm (rain date Nov. 20)
20	Thur	Craft Bee 7:30 – 9:30 pm
21	Fri	Craft Bee 1:15 – 3:15 pm
26	Thurs	School Tour 9:15- 10:30
27	Thur	Craft Bee 7:30 – 9:30 pm
28	Fri	Craft Bee 1:15 – 3:15 pm
28	Fri	Grades Assembly, everyone welcome noon
30	Sun	Advent Garden Preschool 2 pm Kindergarten 3:15pm Grades 4:30

DECEMBER

2	Tue	Tree Trimming and Decoration 7:30 pm
4	Thur	Craft Bee 7:30 – 9:30 pm
6	Sat	Christmas Fair 11 am – 3 pm
11	Thurs	Santa Lucia Festival
15	Mon	Grades Caroling at Hilltop House 11 am
16	Tues	Art Raffle Draw noon at CVWS
17	Wed	Kindergarten Parent Night 7:30 pm
19	Fri	End of Term Carol Sing noon

December 22 to January 2, Christmas Break – NO SCHOOL

JANUARY

5	Mon	Beginning of Winter Term
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OUR MISSION

Cedar Valley Waldorf School provides a holistic education that addresses the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical aspects of the child. The school develops confident, independent thinkers who have a strong social and environmental conscience and who respond to the world with compassion and creativity. The school community honours the child, fosters harmonious relationships and celebrates the wonder of life.

Cedar Shavings

Art raffle

Four local artists (three of them talented CVWS parents) have donated artwork to our first ever art raffle. This is an exciting chance to win a beautiful original work for your home just in time for Christmas! Featured artists include:

MARK RICHARDS

Fall in Whistler Village

www.markrichardsgallery.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Fall-in-Whistler-Village.jpg

ARTURO ARCOS

New work

www.arturoarcosart.com

MARY MARY (Stewart Hughes)

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www.ponyandrider.com/marymary

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Tickets will be on sale starting in November and the draw will take place Tuesday, December 16 at noon. Taste in art is very personal, and we have structured the raffle to take this into account. The first place winner will have the first choice of the four artworks, the second the second choice and so on. Please help us make this

a success by selling tickets at your workplace or among friends and family.

Santa Lucia

*Santa Lucia, thy light is glowing
Through darkest winter night,
comfort bestowing...*

The festival of Santa Lucia is a celebration of light around the winter solstice. According to legend, when a terrible famine plagued the country of Sweden around the year 300 A.D., a woman named Lucia braved the winter waters on a lake in a large ship. Dressed all in white, with a wreath of twigs lit up upon her head, Lucia came bearing food and clothing for the starving population.

Here we celebrate the festival with a candle-lit procession of students from our senior class dressed in white, who wind their way through the classrooms bearing special bread for all the children. Santa Lucia will visit classrooms on Thursday, Dec. 11.

Crafting for Christmas

The Christmas Fair planning committee will be sending home craft kits to every family to complete this year. Can't blanket stitch? Consider swapping kits or trading for holiday baking with someone who can!

There will be a range of projects requiring different skills, all of which

Next Parent Initiative

Committee (PIC) Meeting

Monday, Nov. 3 | 7:30 pm

Location: Michelle and Mark's house, 40448 Ayr Drive.

Everyone is welcome!

contribute to the special atmosphere of this festival. If you need help completing your kit, or want to enjoy the company of fellow crafters, come to one of the crafting bees on Thursday evenings and Friday afternoons. We encourage you to get creative to fill your commitment.

Christmas Fair craft co-organizer and crafter extraordinaire Pip Parr will lead a series of crafting bees every Thursday night from 7:30 to 9:30 pm at the school before the fair on Dec. 6. Come and learn wet and dry felting and a host of other skills.

Meghan McCrone, handwork teacher and artist, will lead crafting bees on Friday afternoons from 1:15 to 3:15 pm beginning November 7. You will be amazed at what you can create!

cont'd page 8



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Roses of thanks

🌹 Acres of roses to NaTai and Emily for all their work around the school: building shelves, fixing the rain barrel, securing the bridge across the creek, fixing furniture in the preschool, installing doors, mudding ceilings... The list goes on and we are so thankful for your tireless assistance.

🌹 A chalkboard drawing of roses to Jia Condon and Mike Dobbin for working on the solutions for the blackboards in the grades.

🌹 The last roses of the season to those who have assisted on our grounds: Stewart, Pip, and others.

🌹 A truck full of roses to Judy for all the recycling/dump runs, and pick-ups that your little truck, strong arms and volunteer time have so generously allowed.

🌹 Big bouquets to this year's cleaning crew: Leah, Joanne, Rich, Arturo, Ernie, Monica, Darlene, and Jen. Thank you for your consistent hard work.

🌹 Roses going once... twice... sold to our dedicated auction and comedy night organizers Kaz, Pip, Kirsten, Gabriel and Angela!

🌹 Tangled woollen roses to our handy handwork helpers: Pip, Joan and Juliette.

🌹 Cobwebby roses to Pip for the spooky celebration for wee folk on Halloween.

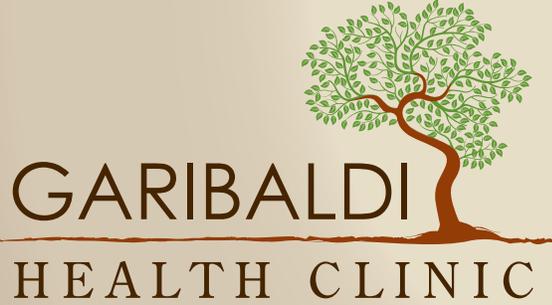
🌹 Files stuffed with roses for our office helpers – thanks Christine Blake and Marcia Delves.

🌹 Roses at every window to our poster crew for helping spread the word all around town.

🌹 Roses to Nesters for once again donating the turkeys for our Thanksgiving potluck.

🌹 A deskful of roses to Allister McCrone for building the new desks in my class and to the dear sponsors who donated money through our annual giving campaign last year to pay for them. Also, a coat-rack full of roses to Paul Filippelli for designing and fashioning such a sturdy place for my class to keep their things every day. ~ Fritz

Do you have a bouquet you'd like to send someone? Email kirsten@cedarvalleyschool.com with Roses in the subject line and we will get your comments in!



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“When children relate what they learn to their own experience, they are interested and alive, and what they learn becomes their own. Waldorf schools are designed to foster this kind of learning.”

– Henry Barnes, longtime Waldorf teacher and former AWSNA chairman of the board

photo by Kirsten Andrews

A WINDOW INTO

Waldorf

Developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1919, Waldorf Education is based on a profound understanding of human development that addresses the needs of the growing child. Waldorf teachers strive to transform education into an art that educates the whole child – the heart and the hands, as well as the head.

When you enter a Waldorf school, the first thing you may notice is the care given to the building. The walls are usually painted in lively colors and are adorned with student artwork. Evidence of student activity is everywhere to be found and every desk holds a uniquely created main lesson book.

Another first impression may be the enthusiasm and commitment of the teachers you meet. These teachers are interested in the students as individuals. They are interested in the questions:

- How do we establish within

each child his or her own high level of academic excellence?

- How do we call forth enthusiasm for learning and work, a healthy self-awareness, interest and concern for fellow human beings, and a respect for the world?
- How can we help pupils find meaning in their lives?

Teachers in Waldorf schools are dedicated to generating an inner enthusiasm for learning within every child. They achieve this in a variety of ways. Even seemingly dry and academic subjects are presented in a pictorial and dynamic manner. This eliminates the need for competitive testing, academic placement, and behavioristic rewards to motivate learning. It allows motivation to arise from within and helps engender the

capacity for joyful lifelong learning.

The Waldorf curriculum is broad and comprehensive, structured to respond to the three developmental phases of childhood: from birth to approximately 6 or 7 years, from 7 to 14 years and from 14 to 18 years. Rudolf Steiner stressed to teachers that the best way to provide meaningful support for the child is to comprehend these phases fully and to bring “age appropriate” content to the children that nourishes healthy growth.

This article originally appeared in the AWSNA publication, Windows Into Waldorf: An Introduction to Waldorf Education. Many thanks to author David Mitchell. Windows Into Walddorf may be purchased in the office for \$5. They are useful and helpful glossy booklets - ideal for sharing with grandparents and friends.

'Tis the season for merry making (and crafts!)

Parents, family and friends are invited to take advantage of free crafting classes, good company and the warmth of the season

by Meghan McCrone

Over the next week class reps will hand out Christmas Fair craft packages to every family in the school. If you have more than one child in the school your craft package will be coming through your eldest child's class. The success of our Christmas Fair depends upon the effort and participation of our whole school community.

Each family is responsible for the completion of one crafting package. These items will be sold on our craft table or by the pocket lady. Families are also asked for at least one baked item to be sold at the café. If you have a special flair for one and not the other, by all means feel free to swap with someone so that you complete two of the same – two craft packages or two baked items. However, all packages need to be finished and accounted for.

There are many packages to choose from that include all levels of skill and ability. Including “no sew” packages as well as sewing machine packages. All packages are to be completed and returned to your class rep by Monday, Dec. 1.

We have done our best to include all the materials needed for the number of items to be crafted. If you notice that you might need a bit more felt, thread, beads, etc. to complete the package please feel free to come to Meghan McCrone, Pip Parr, or your class teacher and we will supply you with more of what you need.

The more items we have to sell and the higher quality they are the more successful the fair will be. These crafts are representing our school so please craft with care and attention. If you are unsure about the instructions, would like guidance in developing your crafting skills, or would just like to sip some tea and have company while you work, please come join in the crafting bees!

CHRISTMAS CRAFTING BEES

Crafting Bees are a place where you can find support in furthering your crafting skills and a place where we can gather and enjoy crafting our school community creations together. As Christmas approaches often people tend to get overwhelmed with the expectations and responsibilities of the season, which is why we are starting the craft bees soon. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to come and be able to finish your packages without feeling rushed. Craft bees will be held on Thursday evenings at the school from 7:30 to 9:30 pm and on Friday afternoons from 1:15 to 3:15 pm. This time is meant to be for adults only so you will need to find childcare for your children. We will be able to provide a sewing machine, glue guns and irons as well as other notions.

During some of the bees there will be group projects everyone is more than welcome to participate in, or of course you can continue working on your package. For example, there may be a larger wet felting project and making silk and felt scarfs. We hope to see you there!



THURSDAYS

Thursday, Nov. 6, 13, 21, and 27 from 7:30 to 9:30 pm in the auxiliary Class 1-2 room off the library.

FRIDAYS

Friday, Nov. 7, 21, and 28 from 1:15 to 3:15 pm in the auxiliary Class 1-2 room off the library.

Please note that there will be no Friday afternoon craft bee during the November Pro-D/Parent-Teacher interview week.

Lighting our way through the night with lanterns

Before Remembrance Day, the date November 11 has long marked and celebrated the burial of St. Martin of Tours (316-397 AD) and been known as St. Martin's Day, also known as the Feast of St. Martin, or Martinmas.

Saint Martin began his career in the Roman army, but realized that was not the life he wanted and asked for a discharge. Legend has it that when he was then accused of cowardice, he offered to stand unarmed between the opposing lines of battle.

St. Martin is remembered particularly for an incident that occurred while he was still taking instruction in the Christian faith before being baptized.

While serving in the army at Amiens, Martin met a poor beggar at the city gate, who shivered half-naked in the cold. Drawing his sword, he cut his warm cloak in two and gave one half to the pauper. As the story goes, the following night, Christ appeared to Martin, dressed in the piece of cloak that the young officer had given away. It is this gesture of compassion that is carried this time of year with a lantern walk, which lights our way during the long dark nights.

According to customs at that time, as the days become shorter and the stars appear earlier, children walk with lanterns through the streets singing. As the world grows darker, the inner light of man wants to shine forth into the dark world.

In Europe today younger grades children and parents participate in lantern walks often led by a rider cloaked in red upon a white horse. Music is also at the heart of this festival, and there are many wonderful lantern songs that are sung during those lantern processions including *The Sunlight Fast is Dwindling*, *Glimmer Lantern Glimmer*, *Father Sky* and many, many others.

After walking, families will sit together for a feast that had at its center a Martinmas goose (it is said honking geese gave St. Martin away when he was hiding from people who wanted to make him bishop).

Like so many other Christian celebrations, St. Martin's Day coincides with pagan rituals from the pre-Christian era. This falls at the same time as early winter festivities of light and fertility celebrated by the pagans. It is also around the time of harvest, the Festival of Light in Thailand, Diwali in India, Hallowe'en, Samhain, The Day of the Dead in Mexico and other light related celebrations.

Grades and kindergarten families – please join us for our lantern festival on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at the Brackendale Fall Fair grounds on Government Road just past the Art Gallery. It will begin at 6 pm. Our rain date is Thursday, Nov. 20.

We will be going for a candle lit walk through a forest path, followed by a social time around the bonfire with apple cider (please bring your own mug for the apple cider).

Please ensure that your children are dressed appropriately for this event. If it is raining lightly we will still go out, if it is heavy rain the event will be moved to the following night.



Children will be making lanterns in class for the event. We also encourage parents to make lanterns at home and bring for our evening walk. Please do not bring flashlights, recording devices or use cell phones as they all affect the ambiance we are trying to achieve.

The children will be learning lantern songs leading up to the event; and sheet music is available from Gabriel.

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Cedar Shavings continued

Tree trimming

Gabriel's famous eggnog will be served and local minstrels will lead us in the old time carols as we trim the tree and deck the halls in preparation for Christmas fair on Tuesday, Dec. 2 from 7:30 to 9:30. We keep this an adult event so children can be amazed by the transformation when they come to school the following day.

Parent criminal record check

All parent volunteers must complete a criminal record check in order to drive for field trips and work around the

school. Checks are free and easy to complete.

Go to justice.gov.bc.ca/eCRC/. Access code: GS2LSWZVRL. Thank you for participating!

Parents say no to too much homework

An excellent article in the Washington Post discusses what Waldorf educators have known for a long time. Here's an excerpt: "We know from decades of research that the amount of homework our children do in elementary school has no effect on how much they learn. Competent teachers can get their messages across during class. Homework in that age group does little more than make parents feel better about the school." Read the Washington Post article from Sept. 28 (2014) on our Facebook page.

Tiny shavings...

- We are looking for a weekly helper in the office to cut painting paper with our large paper cutter. Ideally this person could commit to a half hour a week on a regular basis one day a week.
- Rainbow Preschool is looking for a diaper change mat for our parent and child class. Please let Astrid or the office know if you have one to donate.
- We are looking for screwdriver donations, particularly multi-headed ones.
- Three bedroom house for rent in Brackendale, available Jan. 1, 2015. Please contact Astrid at 604-898-1338.

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The arts and practical skills

IN WALDORF EDUCATION

Arts and practical skills make their essential contribution, educating not only heart and hand but... the brain as well.

Waldorf teachers believe that the human being is not just a brain – but a being with heart and limbs – a being of will and feeling, as well as of intellect. To ensure that education does not produce one-sided individuals, crippled in emotional health and volition, these less conscious aspects of our human nature must constantly be exercised, nourished, and guided. Here the arts and practical skills make their essential contribution, educating not only heart and hand but, in very real ways, the brain as well.

The sixth grader who, as part of the class study of Roman history, has acted Cassius or Calpurnia, or even Caesar himself, has not only absorbed Shakespeare's immortal language but has learned courage, presence of mind, and what it means to work as a member of a team for a goal greater than the sum of its



parts. The ninth grader who has learned to handle red-hot iron at the forge, or the senior who caps years of modeling exercises by sculpting a full human figure have, in addition to a specific skill, gained self-discipline and the knowledge of artistic form.

Students who have worked throughout their education with colour and form; with tone, drama, and speech; with eurythmy as an art of bodily movement; with clay, wood, fiber, metal, charcoal and ink, (and, ideally, with soil and plant in a school gardening program), have not only worked creatively to activate, clarify, and strengthen their emotions, but have carried thought and feeling down into the practical exercise of the will.

When the Waldorf curriculum is carried through successfully, the whole human being – head, heart, and hands – has truly been educated.

Revised for use on Why Waldorf Works, this article by Henry Barnes, former Chairman of the Board of AWSNA, originally appeared in the October 1991 issue of Educational Leadership Magazine.



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SUNFLOWER PRESCHOOL

The Squirrel

*“Whisky, frisky, hoppity hop,
Up he goes to the tree top!
Whirly, twirly, round and round,
Down he scampers to the ground.
Furly, curly, what a tail!
Tall as a feather, broad as a sail!
Where’s his supper? In the shell.
Snappity, crackity, out it fell.”
Autumn – Wynstones Press*

It is hard to believe that we have moved into autumn already and it is time for muddy-buddies, boots, hats, and mittens.

The children have been busy exploring our nearby forest and we continually look for Mrs. Squirrel. She has occasionally revealed herself to us, and is always busy running off somewhere – my we are indeed fortunate to be living in the midst of a rain forest with the Little Stawamus Creek just beyond the fence.

We have also wandered down to my home to pick sage for our Thanksgiving dinners and will be searching in the garden for pumpkins in the near future. The children are curious about my home and we are chatting about the possibility of having a garden party there in the spring.

On our walks we are learning to stay together as a group, caring for one another and being mindful of where we are at, for example when we come out of the woods we stop and look to be sure that everyone is together before we carry on.

The children are also learning about where their bodies are in relation to another person. Being in front of someone, behind, when to hold hands and when to not. If we are on rough ground it is best to have ones arms free for balance. There is always the offering of a helping



photo by Kirsten Andrews

Noemie Cozens and dad Scott dig into the sandbox.

hand if needed. More often than not the children are quick to say, “I can do it myself.”

And indeed they can do so many things – self help skills are building each and every day that we are together. The children are encouraged to help one another with boots, shoes, zippers, and buttons. There is usually someone other than myself who knows what to do and it is such good role modeling for them.

Their friendships are a pleasure to witness and it is an honour to be a part of the children’s lives.

~ Miss Judy

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RAINBOW PRESCHOOL

*The farmer he rose at
the break of the day,
he saddled his horse and he
galloped away,
he galloped away..*

The cooler weather has arrived and with it the colours of fall and the wet season. The Rainbow Preschool will still be playing outside, digging, raking, and going for our adventures into the woods. All these outdoor activities require proper clothing: rain pants and boots are important, but also necessary are a couple of layers under a raincoat. A toque and mittens will complete a rainy day outfit. Young children can not properly gauge yet if they are cold or not – we have all experienced children with purple lips and chattering teeth at Alice Lake insisting they are NOT cold! The organs and brains of young children are still developing and need warmth to grow and be healthy.

When we come inside, a warm pot of tea and a nutritious snack is waiting for us.

As a group, the children are growing together nicely, and it is lovely to see them looking out for each other, helping a friend pull off a boot, or pass the apple bowl to a classmate.

We began our circle time this year with a “farmer” who had to rise at the break of day and go about his work. And so we went to visit farmer Ferdinand. He did not arrive on a horse, but revved up the big tractor for us, and to the delight of the children, they were allowed to sit on it.

Then off we went to feed the horses and look for eggs in the chickenhouse. My favourite were the curious cows with their wet noses. We had a picnic, wandered through fields to a magic tree house by the river and each received a handful of garlic to plant in our gardens. Many thanks to

Ferdinand to make this magic happen!

Also thanks to Miss Tanya and Miss Gabriel who helped make this transition into a new school year a smooth one.

~ Miss Astrid

Anthroposophical Study Group

The Anthroposophical study group meets weekly to study the writings of Rudolf Steiner.

Contact Astrid through the office at 604-898-3287 if you are interested in attending.

jennifer sale

experience. sold.

For each referred sale through our community Jennifer Sale will make a donation to Cedar Valley Waldorf School.

Jennifer is a long-time member of the CVWS Board of Directors and past parent. Over the years she has donated thousands of dollars to our school through her generous referral program, and assisted with the purchase of the school property.

www.jennifersale.com



Cedar Valley Waldorf School
Member of the Board of Directors

MORNINGSTAR & HUCKLEBERRY KINDERGARTENS

After a dry start to the school year we now find ourselves fully soaked in autumn weather. The children of the kindergarten are enjoying building rivers and dams in the sandbox and the “firefighters” are busy pouring out fires with the liquid sunshine that keeps filling up the rain barrels. It’s a great season to be a child!

With the dark clouds hanging around we’ve really noticed the change to cooler, darker days. The fire fairies now light up our snack table a little more and the children need more clothes to keep warm outside. They’re also talking about the approach of the “dark” season and how Christmas is getting closer.

Autumn is such a fun time for children and as we enter November we look forward to annual school community events such as the lantern walk and advent garden that celebrate the inner light that shines brighter and brighter as nights get darker.

The first two months of school were about getting to know the routines and new faces in kindergarten. Now we’re seeing the children settle into more co-operative and elaborate play indoors, balanced with focused tasks such as stitching and finger knitting. It’s also a time of year where the adults head out into dark nights to meet with others and share in heart warming social activities such as craft bees for the school and in preparation for Christmas Fair.



photo by Kirsten Andrews
Kindergarteners Pema Miller and Owen McCrone share a laugh in the morning before school.

With that in mind, we’ve planned our next kindergarten parent evening for Wednesday, Dec. 17. We look forward to every child being represented so that we can work together on something all the kindergarten children can enjoy.

~ Miss Begoña and Miss Lauren

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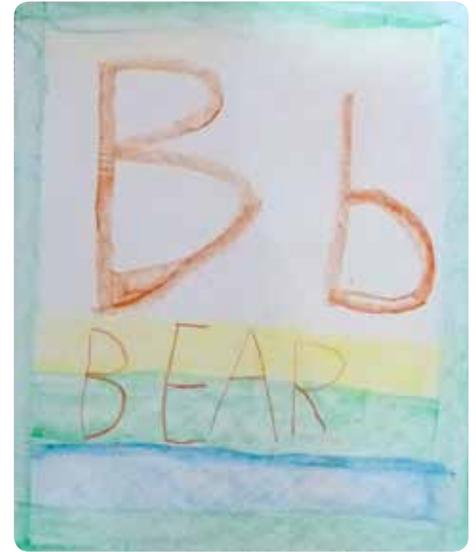
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CLASS ONE/TWO



Student artwork by Jonas Casey and Quinn Filippelli
Bobbi the Bear eating blueberries has been a beautiful and imaginative introduction to the letter B for the students in Class 1.



We are currently finishing up our first language arts block of the year. The Grade 1 children are learning the letters through rich stories and images that metamorphose into letters. Each letter of the alphabet is introduced as a symbol; representing an element from a story the children were told. The first story the children heard in the language arts block was about baby bear and Bobbi picking blueberries on blueberry hill. The next day the children recalled the story (which strengthens memory capacity) and then they drew baby bear sitting against a tree eating blueberries. On the third day, the bear over a number of pictures transforms into the letter B. In this way the child develops a living relationship with each letter and the written word. It is not dry and abstract. Writing and reading is taught in a way that engages the child's imagination.

Class 2 listened to stories about vowels and consonants and how they differed. There were also stories about the magical wizard 'e' that make the vowels say their own name when it is at end of the word. There were also stories about the vowel teams which came together because vowels works so hard, they are in every word! When the vowels go walking, the first one does the talking and says its name.

Woven through the language arts block have been fun exciting folktales, traditional stories where the female is the hero of the story.

I am currently teaching two main lessons, one for Grade 1 and a separate one for Grade 2. Each evening I memorize two different stories, and over the course of this year I will tell over 280 stories.

"Storytelling has been around for many generations and is found in all cultures. In today's world where we are bombarded with visual images and pictures it is crucial to give our children the gift of storytelling."

Why would I bother memorizing so many stories? There are many reasons. One is simply, they love to listen to oral stories and the more engaged they are the better they learn. The oral approach to storytelling, as opposed to reading, stimulates the child's engagement, interest and imagination. This provides an empathetic basis for future reading and appreciation

of literature, which depends on the readers' ability to recreate the content of the text in their own imagination in a fluid and unhurried way.

Listening to a story and creating inner images is the foundation of creative thinking. The area of the brain where images are created is also the area of insights and intuitions – a person with imagination can think of many possibilities.

Creating images is also the foundation of reading. In listening the children also acquire a sense for narrative structure and sense of style. There is also an interaction which occurs between storyteller and listener. Since the teacher is not focused on reading from a book she/he can observe and be present with the children. Story telling sharpens listening skills; with so much stimulation in the world around them children's ability to listen with focus is decreasing.

Storytelling has been around for many generations and is found in all cultures. In today's world where we are bombarded with visual images and pictures it is crucial to give our children the gift of storytelling.

It is not surprising that storytime is the quietest time of day in the classroom.

~ Ms. Christine

CLASS THREE/FOUR

Class 3-4 finished its shelter block and the children are now waiting for better weather to build a shed for the toys on our playground. Hopefully this project can still happen before Christmas.

The class has now moved onto a block about grains. We are exploring the seven major grains: wheat, barley, oats, millet, rye, rice and maize (corn). The children heard about the origins of each of those particular grains, what they were used for and how they are being used today. We highlighted the differences in appearance, growing conditions and taste.

Last spring we planted with the intention to harvest it in the fall. Unfortunately the weather played a trick on us and the largest part of our harvest was rained out and spoiled. This led us to a spirited discussion of how farmers knew when to plant their crops and – most importantly – when to harvest.

We also examined many more of nature's occurrences and how farmers had to deal with them. Drought, hail storms, locusts and other insects were only some of the things we talked about. The general consensus among the children was that a farmer's life today, and especially in olden times, was a difficult one and that a farmer has to be very much in tune with the weather and all of nature around him.

While we talked about all of these aspects of the farmer's life, the children also did numerous exercises in creative



photo by Kirsten Andrews

Class 3-4 students (right to left) Freya Dobbin, Callie Stephenson, Azul Herrera Guherrez and Myron Schutt work on their main lesson books.

writing. They had to describe another child in the class, an animal and several shelters. In the context of that we reviewed our grammar, particularly the use of adjectives and adverbs.

Just before Christmas we will then move on to the stories of the Kalevala. These wonderful myths of the Finnish people will form the background for more language arts work.

~ Ralf Hoerger

CLASS FIVE/SIX/SEVEN

I still see myself in our car driving across Canada with my wife, yet already two months of school has passed by. A lot has happened during this time. In just a year, my little but no less wonderful class has grown from four to 10 students. So, welcome Abby who joined us late September, and Finn who came to us in October. I am very pleased!

The additional students provide increased social opportunities, and it also makes the process of learning much more interesting and probably more relaxed for all the students.

Lots of different elements and skills came with the new students and it is wonderful to watch how this influences the quality of learning in a very positive way. All the new students are doing great!

We have already finished two blocks: perspective drawing and our first math block. The students wrote their first test of the year in math. Everybody did very well, so we are on a promising path.



photo by Kirsten Andrews

This chalk board drawing was the work of the entire 6-7 class and Mr. Bindseil.

I am confident that we will reach the same high level of academic skill that we reached with our students who graduated in past years.

Besides our main lessons we dove into our weekly painting sessions, are playing the flute and strings, learning German and French, and are going

mushroom picking (it was tricky to find many at first but now they are here!), we do mental math daily, each child recites their special verse on the day of the week they were born, and each week one student presents the Squamish news.

~ Fritz Bindseil

Advent's celebration of light spirals inward

By Lauren Baldwin

As we move through autumn, the days grow shorter and we're met with more darkness outside. It is a time to find our inner light and also connect with others.

On Sunday, Nov. 30, we invite families from the school to join us for our annual advent spiral. It is a quiet afternoon affair where we transform a dark school space into one filled with wonder and light.

This date marks the fourth Sunday prior to Christmas. Borrowing from traditions that go back well beyond the chocolate advent calendars that we now enjoy, we count down the weeks as we approach Christmas.

Each teacher brings advent into the classroom in their own way; some may light another candle in the wreath each week, while others may have an angel or Mary travel to a new star along the path every day. Still others will borrow from Rudolf Steiner's work and celebrate the mineral world one week, the plant world the second week, the animal world the third week and humanity in the fourth week.

Advent is derived from Latin which means, "to come into being" and carries the mood of expectancy and hope. In Waldorf schools all around the world we celebrate the Advent Festival in the following way...

Gentle music will play as children and their parents silently enter a room designed to elicit a mood of wonder and quiet anticipation. In the centre of the room a large spiral path of evergreen boughs, sometimes adorned with rocks, plants and flowers, will have been placed by teachers. In the middle of the spiral is a large white or golden candle on a pedestal decorated with twinkling crystals, stones and soft moss. As the candle shines the stones and crystals twinkle like stars on a dark night. Along the edges of the green spiral path will be various golden stars lying flat on the ground and the room is completely quiet except for the music.

Each child in turn will be given a red apple with a small, unlit candle inserted into it. They will slowly and quietly follow the spiral path into the centre and light their candle from the larger candle. As they return along the path carrying the apple with the lit candle they will place it on one of the golden stars at the edge of the path. Each participant adds to the collective light and when all have had a turn, the garden path is aglow.

As we experience the 'light overcoming the darkness' we can appreciate how each person in our community can add their own light to the whole. All of our individual lights shining together are brighter than what any one of us could achieve alone.

Whether you're counting down to Christmas, winter solstice,



or time with family, we hope to share the start of the season with you! Our Advent Festival will take place in the kindergarten room. We will be walking the advent circle in three different groups. The first group (preschool) will commence at 2 pm. The second group (kindergarten) will commence at 3:15 pm. The third group made up of the grades will commence at 4:30 pm. We ask that you arrive 10 minutes early for each session so that we can be seated and begin promptly.

For families who have children in multiple grades/classes we recommend that you go down to the youngest family member – for example your grades-age children can join the advent celebration in kindergarten or preschool if there is a younger sibling in the family. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Lauren or Begoña.

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