

CALYX

PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
Waldorf Education since 1980

Volume 33, Issue 1
Winter 2012
Annual Report

Coax the writer's wary eye,
The one the Angel of death supplies,
The shriek, the call and the whisper heard
The start, the moral, the folk have learned
Where lies hidden excursion and fictitious lore
Quote the poet, ever more.

We see the sea on horizon far
We gaze in wonder at the fisherman's barge,
We see the fish that he has caught
For one's bread we savor in deliberate thought.

We see the fields of the farmer, gold and ripe,
The sorrow of his neighbor, his agricultural plight,
As the raven soared across field and marsh,
While soldiers survive climates, cold and harsh.

We see the mother with her child to bear
The lovers with their romance fair,
The baby with her face rose pale,
The elder, his hands cracked and frail.

The writer's eyes hold the fair and dim,
The sun, the moon, love and sin,
The young at heart, the aged, the ancient,
All find literature that meets their acquaintance,
But we the fond, found aching for more
Have found all desire, in bookshops and libraries,
those places we implore.

The Poet

Mia Morton, Grade 7


PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
 431 East Court Street, Viroqua

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

20-24 Faculty In-services—no classes

MARCH

- 3 Compassionate Communication Workshop
- 18 Raffle Drawing and Party
- 23 A Springing, Flinging Variety Show (sponsored by the 6th grade)
- 30 Spring Concert Festival

APRIL

- 2-6 Spring Break—no classes
- 28 Spring All-School Clean-up Day



As the acorn holds the Oak,

So does the Oak reveal

What the tiny acorn held in promise.

So seeds sown in the soul of a child

Metamorphose through the years

Into the sturdy Oak of adult life.

Barbara Peterson

Barbara Peterson celebrated her 95th birthday on January 7, 2012.

SCHOOL NEWS

New and Returning Families

Please join us in welcoming new and returning students and families who have enrolled since the fall issue of the Calyx.

The following children have joined the Kindergartens. They all have siblings already in the school. Zephyr LeMaire and Miriam Genter are now in the Rosemary Kindergarten. July Bond is in the Violet Kindergarten with her sister Julienne.

Ansel Brenneman has joined Ximena Puig's combined 2nd and 3rd grade class. Ansel's parents are Shelly and Jerry Brenneman. He also has a younger brother named Finn. The Brennemens moved here from Alaska by way of Fairfield, Iowa, to be closer to family. Shelly is a grant writer. Jerry is a commercial fisherman who spends half of his time up in Alaska. He is looking forward to a slightly shorter commute!

William Lowther has joined Jackie Kolenko's 7th grade. William moved here from Kentucky with his mother Tamara. His older sister lives in Westby with her family. Tamara works at Viroqua Children's House, a Montessori preschool.

Irie Unity, daughter of Rain Hayes and Jerrod Getz, has rejoined Barbara Danner's class, now in 4th grade. Irie's older sister, Gaia, is at Viroqua Middle School. Rain has jumped right into volunteering by helping out in the kitchen with the hot lunch program.

Ruby Magnan Elliott has joined Miss Ximena's class. Her parents are Emily and Mike Magnan Elliott. Ruby also has two younger siblings, River and Hazel. Mike works at Viroqua High School and Emily is a homemaker. Emily's interests include wild food, reading, and knitting. She is also taking a class through the Driftless Folk School and learning how to make pottery on a potter's wheel. Mike's interests include hockey and farming.

Paul Sebald, son of Juliane Kroitzsch and Thomas Sebald, has joined Drew Shonka's 8th grade class as a visiting student. He will be here for three months, through the end of March. Paul is from Darmstadt, Germany. His older sister, Clara, was a visiting student in Jackie Kolenko's first class. Paul is now staying with the Shonka family. His interests include soccer and trampoline. He is excited to be here and make new friends.

Jakob (grade 8) and Moira Halbauer (grade 6) spent the fall in Germany with their mother, Sarah Kamin. While there, Jakob and Moira attended school and were able to visit with their father who lives in Germany. We are happy to welcome Sarah, Jakob, and Moira back in the school!

—Maureen Karlstad, Enrollment Coordinator, for the faculty

New Kitchen Equipment

In December, Jim ("Jim the Cook") Hallberg received the last shipment of \$2,000 in kitchen equipment from the Chefs Move! program that is a part of Michelle Obama's Partnership for a Healthier America initiative. Monique Hooker, renowned area chef and champion of healthier school lunch programs, nominated our school along with 15 other area schools to receive this generous grant. The kit included a wide range of pots, pans, utensils, knives, and an induction burner. Thanks to Monique and the Chefs Move! program for outfitting our kitchen.



Jim the Cook and kitchen assistant Sol Jansen look over the new equipment from our Chefs Move! grant.

Festival of Light

The Festival of Light was short and sweet this year. Each grade performed beautifully and the mood that was created transported students, family, and staff into a wonderful winter break.



Painting the light in the darkness, by 4th grade students

Shepherd's Play

This year the Shepherd's Play went on the road, performing at Fair Haven, a local assisted living facility. The venue was cozy and the audience was captivated. Who knows where this band of merry players may find itself next year!

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Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School
 431 E. Court Street, Viroqua, WI 54665
 info@pleasantrydwaldorf.org
 www.pleasantrydwaldorf.org
 (608) 637-7828
 FEIN 39-1357578

Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School is a not-for-profit, 501(c)3 corporation supported through tuition, gifts to the school, and fundraising events.

Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School does not discriminate on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, economic ability, or sexual orientation.

In our efforts to reduce paper use, you may request an electronic copy by emailing cynthia@pleasantrydwaldorf.org.

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 dairylandprint.com



Holiday Faire The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

As coordinators, we are fortunate to know “almost” all that goes on in putting on the annual Holiday Faire. “Almost” because we are certain that many parents were creating magic behind the scenes that none of us even heard about. This is why one of the hardest parts of coordinating the Holiday Faire is figuring out how to properly thank all of you for making it happen. Where do we begin . . . by first thanking every parent and student who cooked, created, set up, took down, chaperoned, cleaned, took a shift, donated, sang, strummed, danced, sold, served, wore a cape, made calls, wrote a thank you—the list goes on and on.

Thank you to all those who made in-kind contributions—without you our fundraising efforts would be far less: Driftless Organics, Organic Valley Family of Farms, Kickapoo Coffee, Viroqua Food Co-op, and all silent auction, children’s raffle, children’s castle and pocket person donors.

Kudos to all who entertained us this year with their amazing vocals, instrumentals, puppetry, storytelling and dance. A special thank you to the Ridgetones, who grace us year after year with their presence.

—Paula Grenier, Julia Henderson, Missy Hughes

2011 Silent Auction Donors

Ellen Arndorfer & Bill Humphrey	Kim Hammer Rebecca Hendrickson	Jim Neidel Susan Nesbit
Amy Arnold & Kelsey Sauber-Olds	Erika Hodapp/ Blind Hen Designs	Chris Newlin Tammy Olson
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Pete Cozad Crystal Curley	Janna Kottke Lynn Kronschnabel/ Mariposa Natural Cleaning	Jen Shepard John & Sheila Sherwin
Dave's Pizza Bren Davis	Rick & Peg LaMartina Kathy Doerfer	Drew & Geri Shonka Kumari Sky
Dawg Tired Kathy Doerfer	Brie Lamers Shawn Lavoie & Anna Jo Doerr	Deneile Soltis Beth Stephenson Walker
Driftless Folk School Driftless Gymnastics	Steve Lawless Margaret Lenarz	Felix Thalhammer Prudence Tippins
Driftless Organics Rebecca Eby	Renee Lewicki Kathy Lofton	Joan Tromp Tulips
James Elliot Ewetopia	Susan Louise LuSa Organics	Nanette Tuttle VMH Wellness Center
Todd & Brenda Fagley Drew Fisher	Barb McNeal Robin Mari	Caroline Waters Monica Woody
Fizzleology Foods Adrienne Fox	Eric Meyer & Shawn Nadeau Mt. Borah	Luke Zahm
Anne-Marie Fryer Paul Grenier		

ALUMNI NEWS

Alumni Reunion

The annual Alumni Reunion took place on Thursday, December 22. The 40 to 50 alumni who came enjoyed themselves and also enjoyed the food from the new pizza establishment in town, Dave’s Pizza. Next year’s reunion will be on the same date, same place, so mark the date now and we’ll see you there!

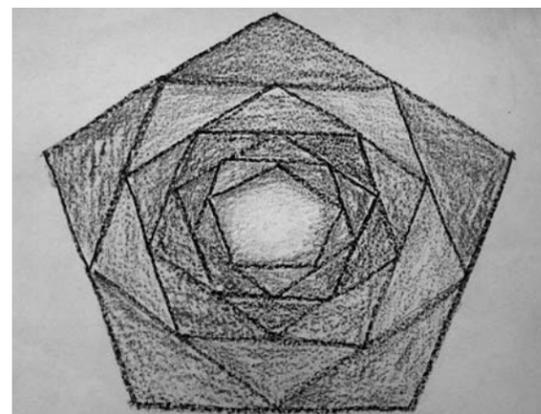
Zoe Coleman has been working with Teach for America for the past two years. She received an award at the Madison School and Community Recreation’s 2011 Awards Celebration held September 20, 2011, at Madison College. The event, sponsored by Friends of MSCR and Madison College, honors individuals and organizations for their contributions to MSCR. Following is a link to the video recording of the event; Zoe is introduced at 51:20 minutes into the video: <https://mediaproductweb.madison.k12.wi.us/node/690>.

Orion Coleman is happy in Portland, Oregon, doing arborist work—climbing trees and trimming them with chainsaws. He’s also performing at local venues around town, playing and singing his original music and songs.

Cora Lewicki is now living in Brooklyn, New York, where she continues to write and produce her own music. You can listen to some of her songs and find out more about Cora at her website, <http://www.corarose.com>.

Carolyn Carlson, a senior at Viroqua High School, received an honorable mention in the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra’s 13th annual Rising Stars Concerto Competition.

Katrina Christenson has recently returned from Thailand, where she taught English during the past school year. She is currently living in Viroqua and helping out in the first grade here at Pleasant Ridge.



The Calyx Newsletter Not Enough?
Then “like” PRWS on Facebook.

WORKSHOP REVIEW

Compassionate Communication

On November 5, 2011, I had the pleasure of attending a workshop with my colleagues Annette Conlon and Maureen Karlstad. The workshop’s title, “Compassionate Communication,” caught my attention. Let’s just say that as a teacher of 7th graders, you can witness a little attitude from one student toward another (or toward you, the teacher) that can come in a form, shall we say . . . that is not so compassionate. Knowing that this was also a topic of concern I see in the world at large (yes, even we adults could stand to learn a thing or two), and having an openness to learn more modes of compassion, I decided to give it a whirl.

The talk took place at the Three Rivers Waldorf School in La Crosse and the speaker’s name was Wade Britzius. Wade has been studying with Marshall Rosenberg, the international peace maker and psychologist, since 2003. Marshall has written a book entitled Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life.

Nonviolent communication, also known as NVC or compassionate communication, is an approach that involves recognizing that we have a choice in our interactions with one another, and finding compassion in ourselves and applying it to others through meeting and/or honoring the needs of others. If one can recognize the need of another, compassion can develop. Of course, determining another’s need or even your own can be a difficult task.

There was one exercise in particular that I found I could bring to my students to help them determine the needs of their classmates.

Imagine a phrase or a person you encounter which may or may not come with a charge, but nonetheless, you may feel attacked or hurt. Enter the jackal, a bit of a cackler, keeping his nose to the ground. The jackal has two ways that he receives the phrase and responds back. The first is when jackal hears the blame and then automatically turns it back on his offender. The second is when jackal hears the blame and instead

turns it in on himself. My students and I recognized that neither of these approaches reaches resolution.

Now enter the giraffe, with his big heart, higher perspective, and his vulnerability from “sticking his neck out.” He does his best to determine the need of the other person. It is important to note that you do not have to know what the other person needs. What is important is to truly listen (which often is what the person really needs) and attempt to guess what the other needs. Giraffe’s first approach is to do just that—to take in what he is hearing and project it out gracefully. He observes to the best of his ability what the person needs and verbalizes his guess as a question. He does not start his statement with “I think you need . . .” or end it with “Do you need me to . . .?” The former can sound like a judgment and the latter slips you right back into the second jackal.

The second giraffe approach is to receive what the person is saying, to go inside to determine his own feelings in response to what the person expressed, and to voice his own need. It was interesting to note that my students and I had the hardest time with this last attempt. I found it interesting that it was so difficult to voice our own needs. Indeed, my students noticed that it was much easier to be the jackal than the giraffe. And, even as an adult, I have to agree with them.

We have tried the giraffe approach in our classroom, and it has been a useful tool to resolve conflict. Just to ask what another needs shows compassion immediately and often softens the tension.

Perhaps the most useful advice I learned from the NVC workshop was to truly listen and breathe first before responding. Too easily we can have our response ready before the person is even done speaking. It is also helpful to know that feelings are not caused by external sources, but are generated by our own needs. In a way, that famous cliché that “No one can make you feel a certain way” rings true.

*Now enter the giraffe,
with his big heart,
higher perspective,
and his vulnerability from
“sticking his neck out.”
He does his best to
determine the need
of the other person.*



So the next time someone comes at you, above all, listen, breathe, and ask yourself, do I want to respond as a jackal or a giraffe?

—Jackie Kolenko, grade seven class teacher

CURRICULUM

Eighth Grade Chemistry

The study of organic chemistry in eighth grade is all about food. The word organic does not imply that we spend more to buy our materials at the Co-op, or that the foods are locally raised, without pesticides. In this context organic means living, or once living. It's organic as opposed to inorganic, mineral, or man-made.

When we study organic chemistry, we look closely at the parts of food, including sugars, starches, cellulose, proteins, and fats and oils. Much of what we do involves tasting, cooking, and even creating delicious recipes in the classroom. Other experiments are less than edible, and need to be performed outside.

In one demonstration we observed the dramatic reactions that comes from pouring pure sulfuric acid over granulated sugar and powdered sugar.

We found the reaction was similar in both cases, but faster acting and more productive with the powdered sugar. This was due to a higher surface-area-to-mass ratio (more surface exposed) with the powdered sugar.

The sulfuric acid removed the H₂O from the sugar—that is, dehydrated it—leaving a mass of pumice-like carbon. While the reaction was happening, there was great gurgling and churning coming from the jars.



Dr. Shonka is joined by Professor Wilhelm von Scherwin, from the Universität von Boaz. Together they observe the dramatic result that comes from pouring pure sulfuric acid over granulated and powdered sugar.

Plumes of noxious fume rose up and spread among us, and we were all very glad we were outside.

You may ask, what does it smell like? I liken the burning sugar smell to the taste of a raisin that falls off a loaf of bread and lands on the bottom of the oven. If, like me, you just had to eat it, you know what that black bit of formerly sweet fruit is like. Now, imagine tasting that raisin while standing amid Mammoth Hot Springs at Yellowstone National Park. There the air is full of hot sulfur gas. The flavor of it lingers in your mouth, even as you watch another geyser erupt.

If you want to know for yourself, ask to join an eighth grade chemistry class for some of their demonstrations, or eat a burnt raisin while standing next to Old Faithful.

—Drew Shonka, grade eight class teacher

A unit in organic chemistry presents proteins, carbon, and sugars, and their role in nutrition, in addition to the role of chemistry in the Industrial Revolution.

The curriculum in the eighth grade deals with organic chemistry, specifically sugars, starches, proteins, and fats and oils. It is discussed how these substances are created in plants through the process of photosynthesis and then are distributed throughout the food chain. Tests that are conducted include observing the behavior or these substances under the influence of water, fire, acid and base. More tests verify the presences of these substances in various types of food. Industrial application of these substances is discussed. The students are given the opportunity to make various products such as soap, cold cream, lollipops, paper, pudding, and cheese.

The organic chemistry block focuses on the nature and function of carbohydrates (sugars and starches), oils, fats, proteins and cellulose. Students learn how to test for the presence of various substances in food. Food additives, nutrition and synthetic products are discussed. The class may distill wood to get products such as acetone and alcohol. This block relates to the care and delicacy required to balance and nurture our bodies and the recognition that the students are old enough to take responsibility for their bodies. Some teachers incorporate drug education as part of this block.

The eighth grade science curriculum seeks to give the children a picture of the human being as a microcosm of the kingdoms of nature. The teacher now talks about the human being in the terms of physical science and human physiology. The study of physics concentrates on hydraulics, aerodynamics, and meteorology. The teacher demonstrates how the discovery of mechanical principles contributed directly to the development of our modern technological society. The chemistry curriculum introduces organic chemistry, focusing on those processes by which organic substances are formed (e.g., photosynthesis) and transformed (as in digestion). The students discover how the classical substances of earth, air, fire, and water can be understood and observed in physical processes.

ANNUAL REPORT

Gifted, Capable and Devoted

For the past six years, as I had the pleasure of wearing the “School Administrator” hat, I’ve seen our school achieve a stability that comes with inner growth.

Our faculty and staff are capable and devoted. We have had a steady core group of teachers who have easily welcomed new colleagues. They have worked together, deepening their pedagogical understanding; creating the healthy daily, weekly, and yearly rhythms and beautiful classroom spaces which support the children’s education.

The Board of Directors, also, has deepened its work together. I experienced a building of trust and appreciation of each other that gives this group a reliable basis from which to meet the challenges and decisions for which they are responsible.

Financially, we have been blessed with operating within a balanced budget for the past several years. One year, when employees voluntarily took a small wage reduction rather than cut positions, we were very happy to find that donor response and fundraising efforts (along with frugal operating decisions) enabled us to not only repay the wage cut, but also meet our yearly seniority wage increase.

A gifted group of volunteers have carried our major fundraising events. Volunteers have also contributed to the success of the organic hot lunch program, as well as the maintenance of our physical spaces, and the support of the library.

Our Development office continually provides outreach both to our local community and to the international Waldorf community, and we are enriched by the interest that comes back to us.

The love and interest that our parents bring to every aspect of their children’s experience here is a source of warmth and encouragement.

In our country’s present economic climate, we know there will be more challenges. I personally believe that the more alive a school is, the more vulnerable it is to be damaged. However, I have daily experienced how people of good will can meet and resolve differences. Crises that have arisen have been met with an inner calm that arises from our shared values and purpose. I look forward to seeing the new impulses that will enliven our school community in the coming years.

—Diane Mamroe



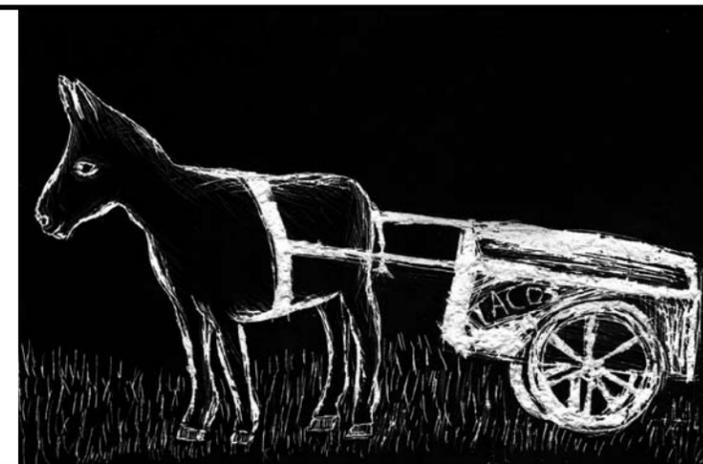
Annual Report Note

These pages celebrate the philanthropic support received by the Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School during the fiscal year that closed June 30, 2011. Each donor is important to us and we strive to be accurate and complete. Still, errors may occur. If your name is not listed and you believe it should be, or if your name is listed incorrectly, please bring it to our attention. You may write, email, or call our Development Office:

mary@pleasantridgewaldorf.org,
(608) 637-8504

Kwik Trip Support

Please support PRWS by electing to donate your rebate from Kwik Trip/Kwik Star credit card when you apply for the card. Twenty current and former families and grandparents use this method—and they earned \$1,130 for the school last year alone! Alternatively, people may stop by the school to purchase gas cards for Kwik Trip that return 10 percent of the sale to the school.



DEVELOPMENT

The world issues challenging our society [need] to be addressed by people who [can] see the 'whole system' and have the moral courage to make a difference through their work and lives.

With the quiet beauty of the Festival of Lights in our hearts, we went home to enjoy the winter holidays. However, a few of us returned to provide a warm space to “welcome home” several alumni, former teachers, and parents who came to the reunion that evening. This event has been held on December 22 for the past three years. Keeping it a regular date lets former students and friends mark their calendars early and plan to meet again that night any year they are in the area. We all have such intimate relationships while actively in the school, but after high school, it's harder to simply “run into each other.” We can nurture our past friendships by coming to the reunion.

Forty to fifty guests attended, mostly former students and teachers. It is especially wonderful for us staff and parents to see the young people, to hear what they are doing in the world, and what they feel about our school and community after being away. It is common to hear that they feel their education prepared them for what they are doing and that Viroqua is a pretty neat place. They appreciate the community that they have known through those school years—and often make plans to spend more time with each other during the holidays.

One alumnus told me that at his college he could immediately tell if a classmate was also a former Waldorf student. He said he can recognize them in how they carry themselves, engage in the group, how they think and are self-confident. Of course we parents and teachers love to hear these reflections because we wondered just how Waldorf education would serve them. I remember being told that one must wait until the child is about 30 years old to really see the gifts of Waldorf education made manifest. That seems right.

Over the winter break a review on the cover of a new book, *Eco-Mind*, by Frances Moore Lappé, caught my attention and immediately my mind jumped to Waldorf alumni the world over, and the hope that they will be recognized as these people:

“A small number of people in every generation are forerunners in thought, action, and spirit who . . . hold a torch high for the rest of us. Lappé is one of those.” —Howard Zinn

The founding parents and teachers of Pleasant Ridge felt strongly that education is the key to helping our children become confident adults with the inner strength to meet the future. At that time in 1980, people thought that the world issues challenging our society needed to be addressed by people who could see the “whole system” and have the moral courage to make a difference through their work and lives. Waldorf education was chosen because of its holistic approach, its integration of the arts and the promise to allow children to be raised as free human beings.

Each year we grapple with that challenge: what does it mean to be free? Free human beings develop purpose and direction. These are also ingredients for a healthful life. How do we keep this core principle relevant to this generation, this time, this place? They will need to be problem solvers, adventurous, strong, creative. We stay true to the curriculum which is our guide while also being interested in the world today, interested in the challenges of parenthood, and the opportunities that are of our time.

This year we will take on a school-wide study of *Compassionate Communication*, by John Cunningham, which provides a wonderful foundation for healthy dialogue and conversation. It is in such a space that we find our freedom—to listen and to speak from our hearts. When we adults are able to meet each other with respect and openness, then the children learn to do so as well, and they carry that into their lives as a life skill.

We thank all of our friends and donors who have shown their interest in our work. The gifts that you send to us are essential to our achieving our mission. Thank you for your financial, in-kind, and volunteer gifts, and for gracing us with your presence.

We are always open to providing tours for prospective parents, for visiting grandparents, alumni, donors and people in the community who wish to get a closer look at how we work with the students and each other.

“The world issues challenging our society [need] to be addressed by people who [can] see the ‘whole system’ and have the moral courage to make a difference through their work and lives.”

—Mary Christenson, Development Director



ARE WE IN YOUR WILL?

Name the Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School in your will or trust to leave a lasting legacy of support for the school.

A bequest can be for a specific dollar amount or for a percentage of the remaining balance in your estate after other bequests have been fulfilled.

Our tax ID is #39-1357578. Call Mary Christenson at (608)637-8504 if you'd like to find out more, or if you'd just like to let us know about your bequest.

DONORS

Many thanks to those who have Supported of our School
September 22, 2011 – January 11, 2011

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My Aquarian Sisters
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Viroqua Area Chamber of Commerce sign grant

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Loma Huh
John & Maureen Karlstad
Nancy Rhodes
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Receive the children in reverence; educate them with love; let them go forth in freedom.

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Address _____

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- Annual Giving
- Barbara Peterson Children's Scholarship Fund
- Endowment

Please accept my/our gift or pledge of:

- \$1,000 \$100
- \$500 \$50
- \$250 Other _____

Please circle one: In memory of / In honor of

 PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
431 E. Court St., Viroqua, WI 54665

WINTER

To carry spirit light into world-winter-night

My heart is ardently impelled,
That shining seeds of soul
Take root in grounds of worlds
And Word Divine through
senses' darkness

Resounds, transfiguring all life.

Calendar of the Soul

Your chance to see the world...

Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School
Annual Raffle

GRAND PRIZE

Costa Rica—One of the Most Beautiful Places on Earth

Includes a flight for two from anywhere in the continental USA (from an International Airport) to Puerto Jimenez, in the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica, six nights at Finca Exotica resort and organic farm, tours, and 3 meals per day at the resort. Grand prize winner may specify time of travel (12 months to redeem). Winner may specify \$4,000.

\$20 PER TICKET

Raffle drawing held Sunday, March 18, 2012, 7:30 p.m.

To purchase tickets, call Pleasant Ridge Waldorf school at 608.637.7828, visit www.pleasantridgewaldorf.org, or contact any Pleasant Ridge parent.

License #R0009463A - 12761

Visit us online at
pleasantridgewaldorf.org

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