CALYX

PLEASANT RIDGE WALDORF SCHOOL

Waldorf Education since 1980

Volume 28, Issue 3 Summer 2007



Grades One and Eight beginning the Maypole dance

The plant-seeds spring in the womb of Earth And Waters rain from Heaven's heights. So does Love spring in human hearts And Wisdom water the thoughts of men.

—Rudolf Steiner



COMING EVENTS

June 15, Friday
Information Evening, 7 pm

June 24, Sunday

Garden Party & Potluck, 5:30 pm

July School Closed

July 15, Sunday

Garden Party & Potluck, 5:30 pm

August 9, Thursday

Garden Party & Potluck, 5:30 pm

August 27-28, Mon-Tues

In-Service Meetings

September 5, Wednesday

Opening Day

September 14, Friday

In-Service—no school

September 28, Friday

Michaelmas festival

& Grandparents Day

November 2-3, Fri-Sat

Working with Parents, workshop led by Martin Novom



Volume 28, Issue 3

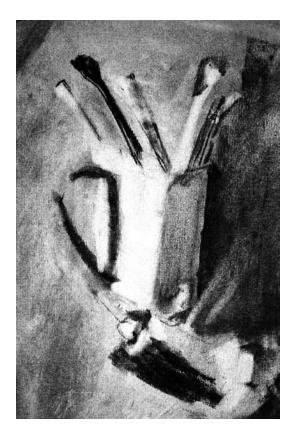
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To wonder at beauty
Stand guard over truth
Look up to the noble
Resolve to do good
This leadeth us truly
To purpose in living
To right in our doing
To peace in our feeling
To light in our thinking
And teaches us trust
In the workings of God
In all that there is
In the widths of the world
In the depths of the soul

-Rudolf Steiner

Drawing by Caera Herndon, Grade 7

CURRICULUM



VIOLET KINDERGARDEN

Nature offers generous experiences for adults and children to "stop, look and listen." Highlights of our year together include:

Go our first day of kindergarten a baby goldfinch fell from its nest in Lady Maple and landed into our good morning ring. The children beheld the bird's smallness with stillness and quiet voices.

In winter the icicle fairies sing on sunny days, "drip, drop, drip."

In spring we sat quietly under an ash tree for 12 minutes (a long time for young children) and watched and listened to a flock of cedar waxwings eating rowan berries – their birdsong like a cricket chirping and a cat purring.

at Sidie Hollow we searched for the golden eyes of frogs. We moved slowly, quietly and gracefully at pond's edge. And at the creek side we moved quietly but quickly to net crawdads so we may look closer, touch and then release them back to their home.

I hope these experiences will nurture in the children's souls a love and respect of nature. And I hope these early beginnings to observe, listen, and move with mindfulness will extend to their relationships with their families and friends.

Miss Shannon Violet Kindergarten teacher



A Tribute to Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School

Atop Pleasant Ridge, Happily celebrating, Flowering beauty.

Raising character, Through heartfelt yearning, For a joyous life.

Conscious devotion, Nurturing development, A wholly design.

With playful spirit, Guiding nature of one's self, Growing life force.

A sanctuary
Of balance and harmony,
Music of the spheres!

Joe Rising October 15, 2005





Building a Brick Oven with Grade Four

GRADE FOUR

The Crew Returns. The Job is Done.

We stood resolute with hands on hips like the number 4 for our purpose was to know thyself and the good land we call home.

We ventured out into the Norske hollers and rousted up the oldest living Viking, Hans Peterson. We feared not for he bequeathed to us a courage and bigness of heart to enter the cave and face the fear within.

And with an adventurous soul we meandered down the misty Kickapoo and felt just how many times its song carried us this way, then that way.

With awareness and cunning we tracked the wild hogs of Crawford County and saw the tundra swans on their Mississippi flyway leaving the gray December ice to spread.

We felt the stories of our land as we knapped flint and conjured up mastodons. We stood on the very spot where Lucy Stone fell off the stage in her fight against slavery, but got right back up again and finished what she had to say.

We marveled at the map of Wisconsin and our state's rich cultural landscape. We asked ourselves what did we do to change the map for the better? Indeed all hands and hearts felt the deep joy of a job well done as the ribbon was cut opening the John O. Lund Memorial Nature Trail, that we helped to create right on the edge of town.

We heard the words of Viroqua's own Governor Jeremiah Rusk who after a lifetime of service to country simply said, "I seen my duty and I done it."

We answered that call to duty and made this land a little better place to live, with our smiles, our songs, and our physical work. We rose from our work, gave praises for the bounty of our good earth, and at the very end we did the Polka.

> Steve Lawless Class teacher, Grade Four

GRADE TWO

The second grade did careful work together planting our row at the school garden behind the Flower Basket greenhouse.

We are raising three plants that grow so well together they are known as the Three Sisters: corn, squash, and beans. The bean plants will climb the corn stalks, so we will plant the beans in a few weeks, once the corn has a head start.

On a cool morning in the last week of school, our class walked to the school garden where our row was already tilled and divided. Children put their markers in their own small plots. With the help of our master gardener, Arwyn Wildingway, and a grandparent, we showed the children how to plant squash seeds in mounds on one side of their plot, and corn in holes on the other side.

The mood of the children was eager and joyful as they smoothed their plots with their fingers, removed clumps, made mounds and holes, and planted seed. We said our hopes out loud while I planted the seeds.

"There! I've finished," said one. "Who can I help now?" And that child found another who was glad for assistance. Children took their time, arranging their rows of holes and their mounds like a form drawing in soil. "I'm thinking of a good prayer," explained one, patting the soil around the seeds.

All seemed glad to work with Mother Earth and to help grow vegetables for our school lunch program.

Peggy Abbott Class teacher, Grade Two

Alumni Profile

Champion Essayist



March was National Women in History Month, and the Vernon Area Business and Professional Women (BPW) sponsored an essay contest for all high school age students in Vernon County, "to help students recognize the importance of women in history." Claire Champion, who graduated from PRWS in 2006, wrote the winning essay. Claire is a student at the Viroqua High School.

The BPW provided a list of 10 subjects to choose from, including such diverse women as aviator Beryl Markham, artist Mary Cassatt, labor activist Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, lawyer Patricia Roberts Harris, and dancer Martha Graham. In their essays students were to state why they chose that woman, how her contribution was important to the advancement of women, and how it influences the student's goals in life, both now and in the future. Essays were judged on content, style, grammar, and spelling.

Here is Claire's winning essay:

Harriot Stanton Blatch, Suffragist

Harriot Stanton Blatch succeeded in bringing public awareness to women's suffrage. Her work, combined with the work of many others, ultimately resulted in the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution. This Amendment was passed in 1920, giving women the right to vote.

Harriot's struggle for women's suffrage began many years earlier than 1920. In 1907, Harriot formed the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women. The purpose of this group was to recruit working-class women into the suffrage movement. The group was comprised of about 20,000 laundry, factory, and garment workers. They achieved significant political power and together they organized the New York Suffrage parade in 1910. The Equality League of Self-Supporting Women used their political power to their advantage and lobbied for a state constitutional amendment to give women the right to vote. In 1917 their goal was achieved when women in New York were granted the right to vote. Women in South Dakota and Oklahoma were also granted suffrage that year. In 1920, it became the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Almost 90 years later her efforts still affect us today. Because of this we are able to realize that there are many reasons to admire Harriot Blatch. We are able to celebrate her at times like this, National Women in History Month, and every time a woman steps into the booth to vote. She accomplished so many of her dreams in her lifetime. She persistently fought for women's right to vote, which will greatly affect me when I'm 18 and also affects me today. That a woman is now the speaker of the house and can run for the presidency were both made possible by the work of Harriot and many others. That a woman is running for the presidency is inspiring. I once nurtured the goal of becoming the United States' President and that goal, that dream, was realistic. It was realistic because of these women who worked tirelessly to gain the right to vote for all women. Without it my goal would simply have been an idle dream, wilting into the shadows. She shows me how one woman, or man, can affect many other women and men. How they can reach for their dreams...and achieve them.

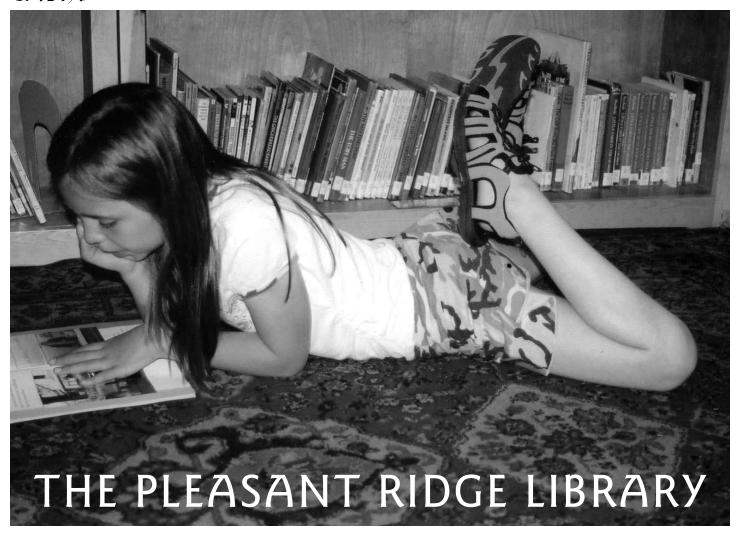
COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

continued from back cover

Our service included visiting and singing for elders at Fairhaven, Parkview, Vernon Manor, and Maplewood elder care facilities. For many of the children there were multiple visits and a chance to develop real friendships through conversation and arts and crafts projects. Other community service offerings were neighborhood and Earth Day clean-ups, orchestra and singing at the hospital, hosting a blood drive, constructing a community walking trail on the edge of town, conducting a coat drive for Living Faith Food Pantry, raising funds for Good Shepherd Church's food pantry through a play based on the Norse rule of hospitality. building a bike trail at Sidie Hollow Park, spreading wood chips and maintaining flower beds at city parks, eradicating garlic mustard at the Wooded Acre, and planting trees for the city.

The mayor of our fair city, Larry Fanta, attended our closing assembly and acknowledged the children's work by presenting a framed resolution from the Viroqua City Council. The school community greatly appreciated his visit and his sincere words to the children. It was also an opportunity to show Larry our appreciation for living in this beautiful Kickapoo watershed and to tip our hat to those who have gone before us and given their service in making this such a nice place to live.

Steve Lawless Class teacher, Grade Four



Our library has grown from a small collection of used books residing in each classroom to a beautiful space filled with books, tables, chairs, and a dedicated staff of professional librarians and volunteers. Our school is blessed with an amazing library that has more books per child than many other libraries, both public and private. It is a bright and encouraging support for the Waldorf approach to reading. This literary treasure has been built up over the years through many generous gifts and donations, and through sacrifice and aweinspiring devotion.

Our library is not just an extra component of our curriculum. As with all of our specialty classes, it is integral to what the students are doing in the classroom with their main lesson teacher. While some people may feel that the slow and careful approach to reading used in Waldorf schools will produce poor readers, our librarians know differently! They have had the opportunity to work with students in all the grades and

report that most Pleasant Ridge students are vigorous and enthusiastic readers. They want everyone in our community to know that reading is just as important in Waldorf schools as in any other school.

This spring, on a warm and sunny afternoon, several members of the Faculty Council met in the library with the school librarians, Anne Tedeschi and Janie Tippins, to talk about their work and their plans for the future. They have been working on their long-range plans for the library and wanted to meet with the Council to gage the level of real commitment that the faculty has to the library program. We are always telling them how wonderful the library is and how much we appreciate all that they have done. But this was a meeting to pin us down to a solid plan for the continuation of the work that they have done. They were not looking for accolades—they were looking for help!

Anne and Janie have plans to retire from their "retirement jobs"—Anne will con-

tinue to help out in the coming year as a volunteer and Janie plans to relinquish her role as head librarian after the 2007-2008 school year. Both have volunteered countless hours of their time and expertise to create a professional library that is not just a collection of books—it is a fully cataloged and processed library, with a card catalog by author, title and subject as well as a computerized database! They want to make sure that the library has the funding that it needs to continue without them. To that end, they have created a list of needed supplies as well as a job description for a part-time librarian. In the coming school year, we will be making plans to ensure that their work continues.

Many individuals and even classes have been generous in their donations to the library of money and time. The school's budget has also provided minimal amounts for library supplies. We are now approaching an era in which regular additional financial support will be needed to replace

worn out and lost books, to make improvements in the use of the space and for hiring a paid librarian. Continued volunteer help will be needed as well.

There is financial equity in the library, in the sheer number of books (with a significant replacement value), and even in a number of rare materials no longer published or unusual in nature. The work hours represented by the professional standard of our library must total many thousands of dollars. It is time for us to acknowledge the equity—the monetary value—that the library has built up over the years. The best way for us to show our support is to make a financial commitment to the equity, in books and expertise, which the library has gained.

At our meeting, Anne and Janie also shared many ideas for publicizing the incredible work of the library and for helping our community understand the importance of the library as part of our Waldorf curriculum. They would like to see the faculty and administration be more vocal about the educational merits of the library. We have taken their suggestions to heart and plan to include mention of the library in our brochure, on our website, in our long range plan, and at our information evenings and morning tours.

Please join the Faculty Council as we honor the library and the work that Anne and Janie have done by taking up their proposals for the further development of this important facility within our school.

Maureen Karlstad for the Faculty Council





In the Library

The library plays an important role in our school's quest to help children flourish in our world, through sharing literature, building confidence in the use of libraries, providing books of interest, and extending classroom learning. Following are some examples of the enjoyable and beneficial experiences shared in our younger grades' library classes this past year.

Second graders listened as Ms. Tip read the hilarious adventures of Pippi Longstocking, laughing at her bold and imaginative escapades while also learning about author Astrid Lindgren, Swedish customs, and other parts of the world Pippi visited—and discovering that reading can be a lot of fun!

Folklore was our focus in third grade. We read about the African trickster Anansi the Spider, Middle Eastern tales of Sinbad's voyages and the adventures of clever Scheherazade from The Arabian Nights, as well as American legendary heroes like John Henry. Third graders learned to use indexes in nonfiction books, to find books using the card catalog, and were introduced to encyclopedias and biographies.

The fourth grade began the year by sharing the diary of a pioneer Wisconsin child and comparing her life with theirs. Other history-based literature included *Journey to Cohokia* and American Indian legends like "Coyote and the Fire Stick," which explained how Indians obtained fire. Fourth graders acquired research skills by playing games such as "Look-It-Up," in which they were given questions to answer, using encyclopedias. They also reported on a variety of books they had read, including biography and poetry.

In the fall of the year, several grades were privileged to hear local author Ben Logan read from his book, *The Land Remembers*, and to listen as he talked about writing.

To sum up, we loved working with the children, and we believe their development was enriched by their experiences in the library.

Anne Tedeschi and Janie Tippins, Librarians



REFLECTIONS ON EURYTHMY

This year in Eurythmy all of the classes from fourth through eighth grade contributed artistic presentations at assemblies and festivals. The eighth grade graduated from eurythmy with a well-attended performance of *The Clown of God*, which they offered at a special assembly.

Eurythmy teachers Sarah Kamin and Annette Conlon shared several artistic performances during the year, including a fairy tale performed for neighborhood play groups, the kindergartens and the early grades at Pleasant Ridge.

Another new experience this year was the voluntary co-teaching of grades four and five by Ms. Kamin and Mrs. Conlon. The two teachers shared class preparation and, often with playful spontaneity, led different aspects of each class. While one was teaching, the other assisted individual children and was often able to slip into the role of student herself, participating in the class from the students' perspective. This was a very fruitful experience for students and teachers alike and confirmed for the instructors how essential it is to teach out of joy.

Interview with Sarah Kamin, Eurythmy teacher

Carol Kozminski, Parent

Book Review

The Fourfold Path to Healing

by Dr. Thomas Cowan with Sally Fallon and Jaimen McMillan, published in 2004, New Trends Publishing.

Thomas Cowan's book, *The Fourfold Path to Healing*, is a beautiful guide to conscious living. Cowan's work in family practice medicine is enriched through his study of nutrition, herbal remedies, homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine. In his book he describes his approach: "Right diet for healing the physical body; beneficial medicines or therapies for the Life-Force Body; healing movement and exercise for the Emotional Body; and effective thinking activity for the Mental Body, activity that moves the human spirit forward in its evolution toward meaning, service and health."

Cowan describes Rudolf Steiner's picture of human development as a foundation of his medical thinking. This is also the foundation of the Waldorf school movement, and Cowan's presentation gives us a lively explanation of this multidimensional view of life.

With sections by Sally Fallon and Jaimen McMillan, *The Fourfold Path to Healing* suggests choices in food, physical exercise and thought, to support health. These steps can bring our lives to a place of harmony. The four elements of this path to healthy living are nutrition, therapeutics through nontoxic remedies, movement, and meditation.

"The Art of Medicine" section discusses 14 major areas of disease in humans, with suggestions for food, remedies and lifestyle alterations that can lead to beneficial changes in health. Dr. Cowan presents such a knowledgeable and reverent understanding of the functioning of the human body and its relation to the universe that I find myself feeling reassured that life, full of miracle and mystery, really can be lived in a balanced and harmonious fashion.

His stories bring life to his message, and the message is delivered with the humble reminder that for all we know, we still really don't know. And yet, in the unknowing, we can move with confidence along the path. "The purpose of this book," he writes, "is to provide, for each of the four realms of the human being, rules and guidelines that work, and to stimulate the Mental Body, dwelling place of the human spirit, to become its own wise physician through the exercise of that activity that makes the human being uniquely human—focused meditation, which is deliberate and objective thought."

Sally Fallon, citing Weston Price (1870–1925, doctor of dentistry, pioneer in the study of nutrition) as a major influence, finds wisdom in traditional diets of peoples of the world. Her work in nutrition opens the book and her opening words are strong:

"The degradation of (our) ... food supply from factory farming to industrial processing—is so pervasive that it requires some effort to find good quality foods, and the same effort must be applied to avoiding foods that are overly harmful. This list of harmful foods begins with refined sugars and white flour, which provide plenty of calories but which have been shorn of the nutrients that naturally occur in sweet foods and in grains."

She describes the "Pandora's Box of unpleasant conditions—from allergies to depression" that can result from an unwholesome diet. Fallon holds a bigger picture, as well, recognizing the need for all parts of our being to be nourished:

"The challenge to modern men and women involves melding a certain amount of time for food preparation and meals into a busy life-style along with recognition that the way we cook and eat has a profound effect on the quality of our life, our state of health and the nourishment of the mind and soul."

Jaimen McMillan, founder of Spatial Dynamics, has worked with thousands of people worldwide, helping them feel better through the way they move. Taking inspiration from sport and a multicultural study of movement traditions, McMillan continually works to develop and teach movement activities that encourage balance and health. Hard as it is to write about movement exercises, McMillan has done it. His written reminders of ways and reasons to keep moving toward an upright and flexible stance work. He presents explanations and drawings of movement exercises and visualizations designed to encourage vitality.

McMillan writes, "[Visualization] includes the whole human being in a given activity. When it comes to changing our movement, however, visualization is not enough. We need to do more than visualize—which is based on the sense of sight and is intellect-centered. We must both visualize and create the space around ourselves that we need in order to accomplish a particular gesture or goal."

In his section, "The Art of Medicine," Cowan includes what he calls a postscript titled "How to be a patient."

"Many years of practice," Cowan writes, "have taught me that I have no cures for any disease, nor does any form of medicine. What I strive for is the ability to listen and unlock the wisdom and magic of each person's inner healer. This means listening without interference, without judgment and without preconceptions. In other words, listening with love. I invite all to join me in this quest to remold the practice of medicine into an image of compassion—an image of true healing."

I invite all who are interested in feeding this vision of compassion and true healing on earth to take a look at this beautiful book on the fourfold path.

Kate Walter Waldorf School class teacher and parent



FROM DEVELOPMENT

About this time last year at our annual board retreat we challenged ourselves to find a theme or phrase to help guide and focus our schoolwide efforts toward a common purpose while also sending a message about what our school values and stands for. Over the summer we chose "Good Energy," which captured the spirit of what we wanted to achieve in our community relations over the course of the year. We all found meaning or inspiration in that phrase.

Thus, the Good Energy Raffle was born. It was very successful in terms of providing community education and earning money for our operations. Thanks to the class captains and Missy Hughes and Paul Grenier for providing leadership for that group, we came close to selling all of the 2050 tickets. We thank all of you who participated! (Raffle winners' names are posted on our website, www.pleasantridgewaldorf.org)

"Good Energy" drove other areas of our collective efforts, too. For example, the school year began with a wildly successful conference, "The Young Child in Nature," with guest speaker Helle Heckmann from Denmark. Our Scrip program earnings topped the \$11,000 mark thanks to the all of our participating businesses and to the parents and staff for remembering to support them. Our Holiday Faire and Jamboree events were also successful.

All of these activities had the essential ingredients: dedicated coordinators, hard-working volunteers and enthusiastic attendees.

Annual Giving has been steadily climbing toward its goal. This year we had a couple of monthly gifts, as well as gifts of property, jewelry, appreciated stock, and a bequest gift. One of the biggest surprises was the \$1,000 gift to the Endowment Fund given by the eighth grade class at their graduation! We thank all of you who have made this a successful and bountiful, good energy year. Also, we wish to remind everyone that it is always possible to give a gift to the school via our Web site through PayPal.

The faculty also worked with a theme that complemented "good energy" and that was "kindness." This theme pervaded their work with the students in many ways; the most visible manifestation may be the Community Service Project (see story in this issue). In such ways we spread our gifts throughout our community and provide ways for the children to learn about the need and beauty of giving.

We are grateful once again for you, our friends, family and supporters who send your good energy our way via well wishes and gifts of time, talent and financial support. Have a great summer!

Mary Christenson
Development Director

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- ☐ Please send me enrollment information.
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1		

For enrollment request—may we call or email you?

Email





Sweet Goodbyes

This year we say goodbye to Robert Caldwell, Sarah Kamin and Karen Reckinger and wish them many thanks and best wishes as they take up new work in their lives.

Robert Caldwell began teaching at Pleasant Ridge in the fall of 2002, taking the third grade class from Sorel Haruf, who had decided to leave class teaching in order to raise a family. This class has recently graduated and is on a journey into the world of high school. Thus, we now bid Robert farewell while he takes a break from teaching to return to his work of organic farm certification.

We will miss this warm-hearted man who was so devoted to his students. He relayed to us at the graduation ceremony that the difference between a job and a vocation is that a job is something that one chooses to do in life in order to make a living, while a vocation is something that chooses you. Teaching was Robert's vocation; no doubt about that if you heard the testimonials of appreciation that evening by his students and their parents.

Robert gave his students gifts that we hope for all children: the ability to think for themselves, to be open and trusting, creative and positive, clever and strong, and to be kind and forgiving. He often said that "life is the school and love is the lesson."

Sarah Kamin joined the faculty in the fall of 2002, coming to us to co-teach in the Rosemary Kindergarten with Anne-Marie Fryer. Sarah brought many wonderful skills and a beautiful presence to the kindergarten as she had been a Eurythmy teacher before beginning her work with young children. She filled this role for three years.

Then, in the fall of 2005 Sarah's interest in teaching eurythmy, and Diane Mamroe's decision to step back from teaching eurythmy, led her to leave the kindergarten and begin collaboration with Annette Conlon and Carole Hanlein to carry the school's eurythmy program. In these two years we have seen a blossoming of both Sarah and the program. This year

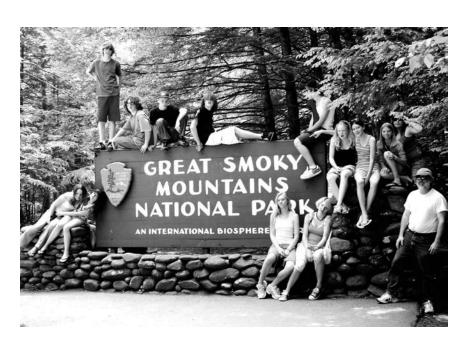
the seventh and eighth grades presented dramatic eurythmy performances which brought a new depth of understanding of eurythmy to the school community.

Now Sarah begins a new chapter by opening an Early Childhood program in her home, Sarah's Kinderhaus Garden, where she will work with children age two and up.

Karen Reckinger came to the Rosemary Kindergarten as an assistant in the fall of 2004. Over these three years Karen's devotion to working with young children was obvious to all. She has been a steady presence and wonderful assistant. Karen said she appreciated the time working with the children because the children so freely gave their smiles and that meant she was able to smile a lot, too!

We wish Karen well as she helps to build her family's new home and tend the garden this summer before diving fully into her studies in homeopathy.

Mary Christenson Development Director







We are very grateful to our donors for the gifts received since the March 2006 Calyx. This list acknowledges gifts received from March 1, 2007, to June 10, 2007. Thank you!

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Endowment

Prudence & Steve Tippins Class of 2007

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People's Food Coop/ CCTY-School Garden Wal-Mart Organic Valley

GOOD ENERGY Raffle/Jamboree

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Beth Walker Stephenson
Wyatt Sutherland

Jamboree & Cake Auctions

Thank you to the over 100 donors of items for the auctions (space limitations prevent us from listing every name).

Good Energy Workshops & Prizes

Chris Schneider, Honda Motorwërks Rich Bannen & Staff, Prairie Solar Power & Light John & Sheila Sherwin Byron Shepard

In Kind

Jean Beck Anna Rodriguez The Chocolate Shoppe, Madison Michael John Victor, Madison Organic Valley Geri Shonka





CLASS OF 2007



Community Service Project

YES WE DID

As the year began we asked, during our Michaelmas festival, would the dragon hoard the gold in its lair or might we liberate the gold and give it away—the gold being the universal currency that is human kindness. The school responded to this call with a community service project that drew from the kindergarten through the eighth grade and reached across our town. Our goal was for grades K through 3 to give 10 hours each as a class and for grades 4 through 8 to give 20 hours each, for a total of 150 class service hours. The "service thermometer," our gauge for tracking the hours, nudged its way up over the year and then pitched a fever of 155 hours on the last day of school.

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