

CALYX

PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
Waldorf Education since 1980

Volume 28, Issue 1
Winter 2006



*In darkest night
The earth shall be light
And shine like a star....
You and I, I and You
We shall give our light, too.*

K.H.

Kaegan Herndon, Grade 8

You are cordially invited to attend a

Pleasant Ridge Welcome Tour

VISIT CLASSES
SEE FOR YOURSELF
ASK QUESTIONS

DATES

January 18, 26
February 9, 14
March 6, 14, 23
April 5—Spring Festival
April 18, 27
May 1—May Day
May 9, 11

TIMES

Wednesdays 8:15 – 9:15 am
Thursdays 8:15 – 9:15 am
Fridays 8:15 – 9:30 am
Festival days 10:30 – noon



PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
431 East Court Street, Viroqua
RSVP Mary Christenson 608-637-8504

COMING EVENTS

December 23 – January 7

Winter Break

January 28, Sunday

Chicago High School
Eurythmy performance, 1 pm

January 30, Tuesday

Prairie Solar Power & Light, Inc.
Town Hall Q & A—All you want
to know about renewable energy, 7 pm

February 19 – 20, Monday – Tuesday

Parent-Teacher conferences

February 27, Tuesday

Prairie Solar Power & Light, Inc.
Town Hall Q & A—All you want
to know about renewable energy, 7 pm



Quiet I bear within me,
I bear within myself,
forces to make me strong.
Now will I be imbued with
their glowing warmth,
Now will I fill myself with
my own will's resolve.
And I will feel the quiet
pouring through my being,
When by my steadfast striving
I become strong,
To find within myself
the source of strength,
The strength of Inner Quiet.

–Rudolf Steiner

OUR NEW FAMILIES

This year another wonderful group of new families joined our school community. To help you find common ground with these folks, here is a brief introduction including their occupations, a few interests and their children's names. We hope that you will extend yourself to them in the spirit of welcome that has become characteristic of our school community.

Amy Arnold & Kelsey Sauber Olds

Jae Arnold (Violet Kindergarten)

Self-employed Artist (dancing, gardening, cooking, mental & spiritual growth, friendship)
Self-employed Artist (bluegrass banjo, soccer, hockey)

Rose Barlow

Sophie Rose Allsup (Grade 1)

Kindergarten Assistant, teacher of workshops on medicinal herbs & wild foods (cooking, canning, food preservation, quilting, basketry, beadwork)

Arthur Bernstein

Vedarose Bernstein (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Computer Programmer, Database Manager: Organic Valley (woodworking, construction, mathematics, music--guitar, piano, viola--football, sports, biking, photography, travel)

Michaela Lynn & Michael Chrisemer

Quinn Roselynn Chrisemer (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Homemaker (writing, raw food preparation, singing, dancing, spiritual study/practice)
Assistant Manager of Produce Warehouse: Organic Valley (writing, current events/politics, gardening, nutrition, music, alternative health, spiritual study/practice)

Joseph Dhara

Vedarose Bernstein (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Homemaker/Artist (creative/medicinal cooking, spirituality, healing, nature, music, reading, writing, poetry)

Steve & Teri Elfrink from California

Zoe (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Marketing Consultant (music, art, mandalas, didgeridoo, film)
Homemaker (sewing, natural building, gardening)

Kimberly Errigo from Minneapolis area

Nico Thær (Grade 4)

Life Coach (yoga, watercolors, flute, reading)

Adam Fogelson & Susan Hickey

Matthew Fogelson (Grade 5)

Electrician (theatre)
Homemaker (health, physical education, recreation, coaching)

Tanya & Jake Forkash

Gavin (Violet Kindergarten)

Chiropractic Assistant (sewing, hiking, swimming, arts & crafts, reading, music, camping, gardening)
Electrician: Bahr Electric (music, hiking, camping, fishing, rock climbing, carpentry)

Cameron Genter & Daphne Kingsley

from New York

Kaia Genter (Violet Kindergarten)

Landscape Gardener/Farmer (plants)
Homemaker (cooking, breadbaking, gardening, farming, bicycling)

Chris & Heidi Jackson

Liza (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Business Owner: Borah (bicycling, running, fishing, hiking, skiing)
Designer, Consultant (art, bicycling, running, hiking, skiing)

Katherine Koenig & Victor Straw

from Virginia

Curtis Westfall (Grade 5)

Educator, Counselor (child development, camping, singing)
Retired Property Assessor (home repair, hunting, fishing, camping)

Jenna & Daniel Krumenauer

Savi (Grade 1)

Teacher (reading, writing, cooking, gardening)
Carpenter (art, gardening, building)

James & Renee Lewicki

Sabrina (Grade 5)

National Director: Edvisions Inc., educator, consultant (biking, gardening, reading)
Massage Therapist (alternative healing, gardening)

Dan & Birgit Marko

Sofia (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Wellness Center Manager & Yoga Teacher: Vernon Memorial Hospital (nature, fitness, spirituality)
Self-employed Designer (art, photography, design)

Monte McPheron

Mari McPheron (Grade 2)

Baker, Marketer, Salesman: Macrotreats (music, tai chi, meditation, yoga)

Janelle Moco from California

Maya Pablo (Violet Kindergarten)

Massage Therapist (cooking, design, literature)

Erik Nordgren & Mary Beth Flurry

from Chicago

Annalise Nordgren (Grade 2)

Micah Nordgren (Grade 4)

Teacher (Spanish, music, bike-riding)
Nurse (Spanish, sewing, knitting, baking, canoeing, beach-time, travel)

Ambra & Robert Perry from Kentucky

Elijah (Grade 2)

Ayana (Grade 6)

Homemaker (animals, crafts, artwork)
Tile Contractor (playing music, golf)

Jillian & Curtis Petersen

Rhavenn Davis Petersen (Rosemary Kindergarten)

Cab Dispatcher (La Leche League, sewing, quilting, Rendezvous – pre 1840s)

Nurses Assistant: Bethel Home (hunting, fishing, Rendezvous)

Vicki & Sam Ramsay

Kele (Violet Kindergarten)

Teacher: Youth Initiative High School (science, botany, reading, drawing, carving, sculpting, biking, hiking, canoeing, camping, nature walks, trail running)

Electrician: Fogelson Electric; Baker: Madison Sourdough Company (biking, canoeing, camping, fishing, writing & playing music; drums, harmonica)

Teresa Schneiderman

Mari McPheron (Grade 2)

Office Worker: Krause Monuments (singing)

Aaron Schmidt & Jessica Hooper

from California; **Gideon (Grade 4)**

Sabine (Grade 6)

Waldorf Class Teacher (basketball)
Seamstress & Clothing Designer (cooking, yoga)

Joan Tromp & Paul Vina from Chicago

Ista Wanzi Francis Tromp-Vina (Grade 4)

Boutique Owner: Ananas (helping women start businesses, not taking life too seriously)
Private Investigator (teaching Spanish, playing with his children)

JulieAnne & Joel Turino

Lydia (Grade 3), from Onalaska

Homemaker (reading, organic gardening, making art)
Engineer: Rockwell Automation (woodworking, photography, sauna, camping)

Matt & Kay Vogel from Michigan

Luna (Violet Kindergarten)

Massage Therapist (cooking, belly dancing, reading, painting, art, music, running)
Teacher, Builder (yoga, basketball, gardening, reflecting, conversing about life)

FACULTY AND STAFF



Kristina Gullion

Familiar faces in the halls, Kristina Gullion and her husband Tom have been in the Pleasant Ridge community for five years this June. Kristina is a violinist by training, with a minor in violin pedagogy. She earned both a bachelor and a master's degree in music performance from Indiana University. She has been teaching violin since high school.

Tom and Kristina were married in 1990 while Kristina was finishing her master's degree. Soon after, they moved to New York to pursue the jazz scene. Kristina performed with various orchestras as a freelance violinist, including the Brooklyn Philharmonic and the American Symphony. Later they moved to Spain where Kristina had a position as a violinist with the Orquesta Sinfonica de Galicia, in La Coruna. Tom and Kristina lived in Spain for three years, but the call to have children, and be in the circle of family was strong, and they moved back to Chicago.

You may wonder how these two incredibly talented, internationally known musicians have come to live in the small town of Viroqua. Kristina and Tom found Pleasant Ridge while on a bicycle ride through town. They thought this was the perfect place to raise their family~ affordable, near enough to the city to access the orchestra, quiet enough for the children to run free, and grow up naturally. Kristina feels supported in the peaceful, low-stress lifestyle she and Tom have chosen for their children: Amalia, Gabriel, and Noah. There are many kindred spirits around.

Currently, Kristina has many private violin students, and teaches the fourth grade violin program at Pleasant Ridge. She teaches based on the Suzuki method, and also incorporates her own style. Kristina loves teaching children, because of the joy they bring to learning violin, which she knows to be a difficult instrument to master.

Kristina balances being a stay-at-home mother with her professional work, and

still manages to prioritize her hobbies, which include: Anusara yoga, cooking, and gathering with women friends.

She encourages other moms to nurture themselves. "You have to take care of yourself before you can take care of others!" she says, smiling. The stars in her eyes show the truth ~ we are truly blessed to have Kristina teaching our children.

*Kimberly Errigo
Parent*



Aaron Schmidt

First graders barely reach the knees of their new teacher, Aaron Schmidt, but it's plain to see that they look up to him with trusting eyes and hearts. His soothing voice, graceful presence, and ready smile comfort them as they explore the world of first grade. A natural musician, Aaron's classroom rings with song.

A native of California, it was a difficult decision to leave the west coast. He and his wife Jessica sought a home closer to nature, where their children, Sabine and Gideon, could grow up in an uncomplicated way. They have found a wonderful house in town and now enjoy walking to school as the seasons change. Aaron is adjusting to the Midwest by cultivating a new hobby—stacking wood. Coming from Los Angeles, he finds the driftless region very grounding, and the people refreshingly authentic.

Aaron was introduced to Waldorf education by his mother-in-law, a kindergarten teacher at the Highland Hall Waldorf School in Los Angeles. After working several years in various roles at the school, Aaron carried a seventh grade class to graduation. He felt called to inspire the children with something meaningful, beyond the popular culture so prevalent there. The wooden bench in his living room, created as a farewell gift by members of his class, is testament to what they learned under his guidance.

Aaron is busy with carpentry projects around the house, spending time with his children outside, and learning the piano and mandolin. He is thrilled to have found such wonderful classroom communities ~ both his own and those of his children.

Welcome, Aaron!

Kimberly Errigo, Parent



Heidi Burke

Heidi Burke moved to Viroqua last year with her husband, Dan, and their two children, Makenzie and Nathan, from Door County, Wisconsin. Heidi had worked as a kindergarten teacher for seven years before quitting to homeschool her daughter. Meanwhile she began searching for an educational philosophy that would work for her family. Waldorf education seemed to fit with Heidi's desire for a school which honored reverence and beauty and nurtured the soul while instilling a love of learning.

Heidi worked in childcare centers and served as a camp counselor before earning her degree in Early Childhood/Exceptional Needs. She began her teaching career in Milwaukee as a first grade teacher in an African-American immersion school, then relocated with her family to Door County.

Heidi has substituted in the Rosemary Kindergarten and assisted in the Parent-Toddler Program since last Winter/Spring. She is co-teaching in the Rosemary Kindergarten and the Parent-Toddler Program, has begun Foundation Studies through the Sophia Institute, and will begin the Lifeways training in East Troy next summer. Heidi looks forward to building strong relationships with the children, families and staff, and feels blessed to be part of our community. All of us at PRWS feel equally blessed to have such a talented and bright teacher join our faculty.

*Anne-Marie Fryer
Rosemary Kindergarten*

CURRICULUM

GRADE SIX

A South American Tale

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a poor village in South America near a majestic rainforest. The people here were hard working, sullen and cold. They were also not very believing people, hardened by hard work, disappointment, and crushed dreams. They had forgotten how to love, how to dream, how to hope. Fortunately, help was coming.

One hopeless day, a few farmers out in the field noticed one of their heifers had wandered off in the direction of the dreaded rainforest. I say 'dreaded' because for as long as people could remember strange and horrifying stories had been told about terrifying beasts and spirits that lurked there. The farmers cursed the cow, but hurried off after the confused heifer.

Presently, they found her lowing softly, with a newborn calf. Suddenly, a bright light blessed the clearing. A glowing figure appeared and as the blinding light dispersed the farmers could see a fairy sort of creature dressed all in different shades of green. She was the most beautiful thing they'd ever seen. Long flowing hair, black as night, graced her piercing blue eyes and rosebud lips. When she spoke her voice overflowed with an emotion the farmers had never experienced—Joy!

Her voice bubbled like water over stones, and the joy was contagious. The farmers were soon laughing and smiling. They enjoyed feeling like this and didn't want it to stop. Finally, the fairy spoke, "When I leave this feeling will leave, too, unless you always repeat and respect these phrases. 'I have joy in my heart, *Yo tengo gozo en mi alma*. I enjoy life, *Mi gusta la vida*.'

"Do not fear the people from the United States of America, if they really are, they will say '*Yo soy de los estados Unidos*.' Have generosity by saying '*Mi casa y su casa*' and do not fear the snow [because] it will end up helping you to have fun. So say, '*La nieve es bonita*.'"

The people of the little village by the rainforest never again feared the rainforest and always benefited from these five phrases.

*By Maria (Genevieve Breitbach) Spanish, grade six
The assignment was to find a way to incorporate the five Spanish phrases.*

GRADE FOUR

Yes We Can

On the pulse of a new school year the classes of Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School are dedicating their light to serve the greater community. Kindergarten through third grade are each giving ten hours of community service, while fourth through eighth grade are committing to twenty hours. Across our town songs are being sung to our elders. Each of the elder care facilities in our community has been adopted by a class, who will continue to make visits over the course of the year. New friendships form bridging up to eighty years of life. History comes alive in the faces of those who lived it.

The fourth grade is making a walking trail as a project of service on a land tract owned by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post. The children unite to remove tree trunks and branches from the trail, making it more accessible to hikers. Because of the children's work, the VFW has decided to open the new trail to the public. The children's efforts will benefit the whole community.

Children learn the soulful satisfaction of sharing their abundant gifts of art, music and strong arms to build a more joyful world. Their light is reflected back to them in the faces of those they serve. Blessings circulate.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

-Anne Frank

Steve Lawless
Class teacher, Grade Four



New to the Staff

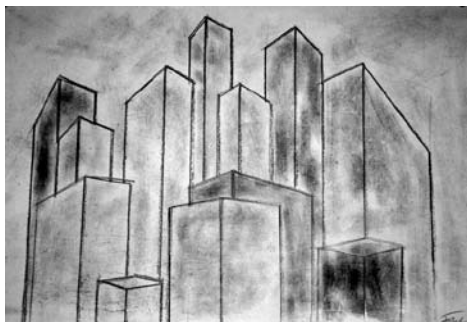
Heidi Burke *Rosemary Kindergarten teacher,
Morning Glory co-teacher*
Rose Barlow *Violet Kindergarten assistant*
Jean Beck *Lunch time relief K-Grade One*
Sarah Caldwell *Morning Glory co-teacher*
Annette Conlon *Eurythmy, lower grades*
Lara Roberts *Admissions coordinator*
Elizabeth Schandelmeier *hot lunch program*
Aaron Schmidt *Class teacher, Grade One*
Monika Sutherland *Music teacher*
Kristina Gullion *guest violin teacher*
Russ Siverly *custodial & maintenance*

Moving on

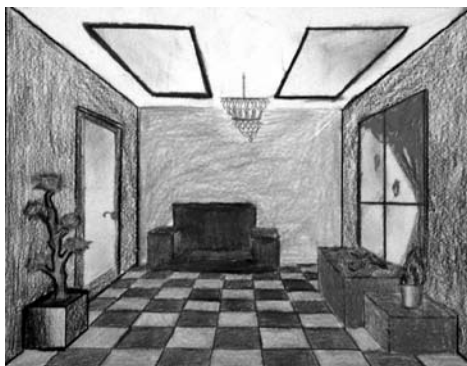
Alaric Anders *Viroqua Food Coop*
Diane Banner *retired*
Adrienne Caldwell *family business*
Christine Harrington *homeschooling*
David Kennedy *free lance consulting*

PARENT-TODDLER PROGRAM

Another session of the **MORNING GLORY PARENT-TODDLER PROGRAM** will begin on **January 19, 2007**. Please call **Lara Roberts** in the school office if you would care to join us. **637-7828**



Jared Hollingsworth, Grade 7



Glenn Sherwin, Grade 7



Misa Grenier, Grade 7

This fall the Morning Glory Parent-Toddler program began its second season, with Sarah Caldwell and Heidi Burke as co-leaders. The class met Friday mornings from 9:30 to 11, October thru November, in the Rosemary Kindergarten. It was a full group of infants and toddlers, only children and siblings, mothers and fathers. For some this was a totally new experience, being gently guided through morning activities, while others familiar with Waldorf philosophy enjoyed the shared community.

Continuing the theme from last year, parents performed simple acts of service for the Kindergarten while observing their children. While parents quietly worked, the children created their own work, exploring their surroundings through play. Heidi ironed and sang while children were invited to play with natural toys, have tea parties and climb the three-step wooden bridge. The parents and I cleaned beeswax crayons with warmed coconut oil and observed. A hand washing song was sung before snack, and we sang other songs while holding hands for blessing and lighting the candle for meal.

Movement came next, walking and holding hands, singing: "Here we go 'round the Mulberry bush", "I'm a tall, tall tree," and other songs. Balance between large and small motor activities is emphasized. Imitation is a theme throughout our morn-

ing. Parent participation is encouraged, acknowledging that small children may not always join, yet are certainly observing and listening. We hope to plant seeds in parents' imaginations that sprout into deeper understanding and new parenting skills. Parenting articles are shared weekly and discussed the following week.

After movement circle and finger play, parents and children were invited to share a short rest period. Shades were closed, lights turned out and kinder harp was played. Even a five minute rest period can restore a parent's weary soul.

Next, "Whisky Frisky," a squirrel finger puppet, captured the children's interest for story time. Draped in silks I represented grass, sky and a tall, tall tree. Whisky Frisky hopped up the tree, and to the toddlers' delight dropped an acorn right under their noses!

We stood and held hands for our parting verse:

*Merry have we met
Merry have we been
Merry shall we part
And merry meet again.*

*Sarah Caldwell
Morning Glory teacher*

Land Donation to Benefit School

This summer, one of our long-time supporters donated land at Dutch Hollow Lake near La Valle to benefit the school. We are now selling the land with the help of Tom Reuter of America's Land & Home Store in Westby (check out the listing at <http://www.landandhomestore.com/vacantland.htm> or call Tom at 608-634-4955). If you, a family member, friend, business associate or neighbor might be interested, please have them contact Tom--the sale will greatly benefit our school! Spread the word--it's a lovely site for a residence or vacation home. If your friends or parents are looking for land in the area, please tell them to call Tom.

Lot 477, Summit Point Drive
LaValle, Sauk Co. \$5,900
Priced to sell! **Beautiful offshore lake lot** with an elevated building site. **Rolling hills** abound in this great Dutch Hollow Lake community. Dutch Hollow Lake is a **200+ acre crystal clear lake** in NW Sauk County. Incredible water recreational area for your use. **Hiking, Biking and snowmobiling; horseback trails** weave throughout the lake and residential areas. **Great fishing** and a pleasant year-round and summer crowd. Please call Tom to find out more about association dues and protective covenants; 608-634-4955.

THE GREEK PENTATHLON ON THE WORLD STAGE



As an alumna of Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School, previous teacher at Three Rivers Waldorf School, and present teacher at Youth Initiative High School, I want to share the story of a recent week of my life volunteering for the 2006 Hands In Peace project in Lang Fang, China.

The Physical Education program within Waldorf Schools like the entire curriculum, aims to educate the whole human being, meaning body, soul, and spirit. There are often themes cultivated between the specialty classes and the main lessons all throughout the year. This complementary curriculum practice has been particularly developed in the fifth grade year. The children study the ancient Greeks in main lesson and spend their physical education classes learning the five disciplines of the Greek pentathlon: running, discus, long jump, javelin, and wrestling. The model of the multi-school pentathlon event familiar to many Waldorf schools was actually designed less than thirty years ago. The teachers instrumental in developing this event have been expanding the concept

over the last two decades to bring it out of Waldorf circles and onto the world stage.

There is now a non-profit organization called Hands in Peace committed to doing this internationally. In the original Greek Olympiads, a truce amongst the sometimes still warring city-states would be called so the games could take place. This truce, *Echekeria* in Greek, created a safe, respected place for the athletes to come together and show their strength, grace, prowess, and skill before the gods honored in that time. In a similar spirit, Hands In Peace brings together children from different schools, regions, and countries to participate in a pentathlon. The children are invited to experience a celebration of athleticism separate and distinct from a competition. Form, dynamic and measure are separately addressed in judging of the children's performance. The Hands In Peace project strives intentionally to bring together children with different ethnicities, cultures, languages, and religions. Inter-mingling diverse populations of children onto a single team and challenging them to improve their own collective performance

over the course of the pentathlon festival fosters a unique environment for friendship building. The friendships made under these circumstances may play a pivotal role in the future when these children grow up and have memories of friendships made outside of their socio-political-cultural sphere. Among their personal childhood memories will be one memory of having been a part of a truly diverse group of people who created and shared in an experience of athletic success.

On Monday, September 11, 2006, we flew over the top of the world and landed eighteen hours later in Beijing, China. We were more than thirty internationals gathering to facilitate the Hands In Peace Truce Festival in Lang Fang. We worked with 160 children for three days teaching them the five pentathlon disciplines, and coaching them on the optimal form and dynamic of each of the activities.

On Sunday, September 17, we held the Hands In Peace Truce Festival. All dressed in white kung fu silks with red ties and Hands in Peace caps, the students were



ready to show us their best skills after three days of practice. The students in this event were mostly from three schools: an orphanage basically run by the oldest orphans in it, a kung fu boarding school where the children are trained beginning at age four and are allowed only one visit every three months from their parents, and a regional public primary school. In addition there were seven students from the USA and Canada participating in this event.

More than forty volunteer university students helped bridge the language barrier between the facilitating teachers and the Chinese children. These volunteers accompanied the groups of children, traveled between the discipline stations and translated the instructions the various teaching teams presented.

The facilitating teachers were volunteers, the university students were volunteers and the children did not pay anything to participate. The project was accomplished by individuals opting to make life choices out of an internal sense of abundance and a belief in the power of teaching children.

Projects like this one in China happened because a large number of people started believing this was valuable. My believing in the worth of this project translated into my purchasing a plane ticket and volunteering as a teacher in the festival for a week.

Your believing in the value of this project also means something and can translate into something. It is what we give in life that transforms the world, not what we hold back. The Hands in Peace project needs support for the continuation of this work of bringing this special event outside the world of Waldorf Education. There is a vision for a 2007 event aimed at uniting children from all the countries of the Pacific Rim. It is my hope that this community where I was raised and have returned can collectively match the \$1000 donation I have already made to the Hands in Peace effort. Make contributions of any amount payable to Hands in Peace (registered non-profit) and send them to AnnaJo Doerr, 118 West Court Street, Viroqua, WI 54665. I will compile the regional donations and submit them to Hands In Peace.

Additional information can be found at www.handsinpeace.org

AnnaJo Doerr



ALUMNI PROFILE

As a new feature in the Calyx we would like to profile an alumna/us each issue. In addition to bringing us up to date on the activities of our graduates, we would include a current piece of her/his writing. Please let your loved ones who have graduated from PRWS know about our alumni profile and encourage them to share in this way.

AnnaJo Doerr lives in Viroqua, works as the baker at the Driftless Café, and finds time to teach. She co-taught a class at Youth Initiative High School with Julia Hundt and has taught at the Three Rivers School in La Crosse, a neighboring Waldorf school.

Since graduating from Pleasant Ridge, AnnaJo made a circuitous path in her adventures in higher education. Upon completion, she returned to this area two years ago to teach physical education at Three Rivers Waldorf School in La Crosse. She graduated last summer from the Spatial Dynamics Institute in Mechanicsville, N.Y. where she studied with Jaimen McMillan. She also recently received certification in Bothmer Gymnastics at the same institute.

This past fall AnnaJo and Julia Hundt co-taught physical education blocks in stilt-walking at the Youth Initiative High School, here in Viroqua. Currently she is co-teaching skating and hockey with Julia. Third term she will be co-teaching creative movement and partner dancing with Shawn LaVoie, who brought the circus classes to YIHS for the past two years during theme week.

In addition to all this, AnnaJo found time to go to China for a pentathlon and report the outcome for us in her article for the Calyx. Whew!!

CONFERENCE

Young Child in Nature

A Midwest E.C. Conference

"How often do you do this? How often do you take the time to breathe deeply?" Helle Heckman asked eighty of us lying on the Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School gym floor. She knew what our answers would be. Breath is one of the primary ways we humans stay connected to our center and our Source. Breath is what feeds our cells and nurtures our vital organs, yet most of us rarely give it a second thought.

"This is another way we can learn from children," Helle affirmed, nodding. "Watch an infant breathe."

We spent an hour on the floor that Saturday morning, feeling what it's like to be an infant. Ms. Heckman, a kindergarten director in Copenhagen, Denmark, guided us through the stages of infant development. Why is it so important for newborns to lie on their backs much of the time? "They have work to do!" The work is to develop the muscles of the neck, back, and arms to provide a strong core structure before the child begins rolling over.

Helle's statement, "They have work to do!" echoed throughout the conference. "We must respect the work of the young child," she insisted, and showed us by sharing a video of a typical day in her kindergarten.

We watched, as children arrived at outdoor work stations. Teachers shook hands with parents and children, while inviting children to work. We could feel the respect. The kindergarten has four teachers and approximately twenty-eight children, ages one to seven: four of each age, (sometimes more, as siblings are always accepted). Asked what she does when children want to stay with their parents, Helle said simply, "We do not often have that problem. The children know they are needed in the kindergarten, so they want to stay."

No wonder: Helle's goal is to make the kindergarten feel like a relaxed, secure home environment. The multiple ages

contribute to the familial atmosphere, as do the rhythms of the daily schedule, and the nature of the work, which is organized around the ten festivals of the year. Children are naturally brought into the work of the teachers and given a great deal of time to interact freely with one another. The work of each day has a real purpose. If Martinmas is coming, the older children spend their inside time painting what will become their lanterns. Teachers find they don't need to be directive, just highly present. They are constantly aware of what is happening with each child and respect that child's work as her necessary developmental task.

In the video, many older children raced ahead, during the walk to the park, where they spend their first two and a half hours of the day. A teacher kept up with them energetically, while the one-year olds toddled slowly down the wide lane with Helle. As we watched one little boy rock his foot back and forth, back and forth, over a large stone, Helle told us that she never hurries the children. "He is experimenting, and that is what he needs to do. He doesn't need to be in the park more than he needs to be rolling his foot on the stone." The children spend five of their seven hours at kindergarten outdoors, giving them ample opportunity to experiment with the natural world.

Even outdoors children are able to find a place to be alone. The teacher is always conscious of where the child is but does not interfere with his need for down time. "We work out of a consciousness of what is best for the child, which is a rhythm. The child gets into life through rhythm—breathing in and breathing out."

Teachers must take their own self-development seriously to be effective. "The more you love yourself in a real way, and the clearer you are, the more authentic you will be," Helle told us, "Be who you are, and you will not worry about making mistakes. Keep working on you. Be clear about what you want. Children learn through imitation. If you are not clear, the child will be confused."

Teachers in the kindergarten never use force of any kind. There is a gesturing

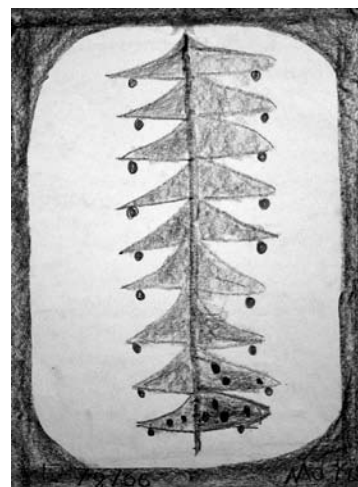
they have cultivated, beckoning the children toward something. This beckoning gesture is so compelling, the children immediately respond. When they help one another, they use a similar gesture of offering; a nod and smile indicate acceptance. It's not that words are eschewed: the gestures simply offer a way of communicating that is authentic and gentle.

Similarly, when children push boundaries with each other, a teacher will help the play progress by inviting children to become involved in a new game or new work. "See the girls sitting under the tree?" one teacher whispered to a group of restless boys, "They need food." The boys organized a "hunt" and tromped proudly into the forest. Respect. Always respect for the child's work, and clarity about one's own purpose.

There were many more insights during Helle's stay with us, and I highly recommend attending one of her lectures. If you missed the chance, Helle's beautiful book, *Nokken* describes her work in the kindergarten and is available in our school store. Please contact Mary in Development for more information.

Helle's lessons apply to all of us, whether we work with children or not. Stay clear, respect your work and the work of others, take your time, develop a rhythm, be who you are, and keep breathing. We have work to do!

Prudence Tippins, parent



Maris Bock, Grade 3

DEVELOPMENT



Summer Willis, Grade 7

Winter 2006

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather up the wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea."

– Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Anne-Marie Fryer, Kindergarten teacher and faculty chair, began the all school meeting in September with this quote. It provides a powerful image of what we want to impart to our children—of what we wish to keep alive in them. It is also what energizes the adults who are attracted to Waldorf schools; they wish to play an active role in forming the school. We believe in the power of this education to build a more peaceful world by nurturing the whole child.

Going into the school year we developed materials and events to help us build and nurture relationships with others—the strength of successful fundraising. These are just the highlights:

☞ Over the spring and summer a team of parents worked with a designer to develop new marketing materials including a logo, business cards, letterhead, envelopes, two brochures, and a Web site (please check it out). We deeply appreciate this work.

☞ In August we earned the distinction of Full Member school of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America after a three year process of peer mentorship and evaluation. Thanks to Sarah Mayer and Diane Mamroe who worked on the final document.

☞ At Grandparents Day in September we welcomed 60 grandparents! During our reception they had a chance to ask questions which demonstrated their own deep interest in the education as well as our community relations. Vince Hundt, our board chair (and grandparent himself), shared his passion for this school and stories of his family's nearly 20-year involvement.

☞ The Good Energy Raffle was launched at the all school meeting. Under the leadership of Vince Hundt, Missy Hughes and

a strong committee, we are learning how to "pass the torch" from one volunteer leader to another – also a measure of a sustainability. See details on the back cover.

☞ John Bloom of the Rudolf Steiner Foundation visited in October, and shared his thoughts about Waldorf schools stimulating personal development in the adults and the importance of nurturing that "school number two." It serves to strengthen relationships and bonds between a very important donor community – our parents.

☞ Welcome Tours are being held at least twice each month. If you wish to visit the school to see firsthand what goes on here, to have your questions answered, please sign up online or call the school. (see schedule on inside cover)

☞ We had a wonderful Holiday Faire at the beginning of December thanks to all the parents. This year's Faire coordinators were Paula Grenier, Sheila Sherwin and Susan Townsley – a heartfelt thank you! We are grateful to all who attended from near and far. This is always a special time for former parents, staff and alumni to reconnect and for all to begin getting in the mood of the season. Besides the wonderful artisan gifts one can purchase at the Faire, we receive many gifts from each other, e.g., as witnessed in the entertainment, live auction and food offerings.

☞ Business relationships in the community have once again become more conscious through the ad sales in our Parent Handbook Yellow Pages, as well as through the efforts of the Scrip Committee to make the program understood and utilized.

☞ Annual Giving letters have been sent; this year we seek \$108,000 in donations.

☞ The Alumni Reunion is set for December 29th this year – we look forward to seeing everyone and will carry their news in the next issue.

In case you are inspired to help in any way, a Waldorf school is that vast and endless sea. We need all hands on deck! Thank you to all who have been helping out and please consider how you might get engaged.

Mary Christenson
Development

Do you enjoy receiving our newsletter?

- Yes. Enclosed is \$10 for a one-year subscription (4 issues)
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- No. Please remove my name.
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For enrollment request—may we call or email you?

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

CALYX

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Winter 2006

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

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Our *Calyx* last spring was devoted to the Annual Report 2005-06, so this time we acknowledge all gifts received from **December 2005 thru December 4, 2006**. Some of you have given multiple gifts within that time. Thank you!

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You've got the power

...to build a **stronger** school

...to shape a **better** community

...to create a **healthier** world

...to bring us all a **better day**



2006-2007 Good Energy RAFFLE

GRAND PRIZE

A new hybrid car or a home energy system
Installed anywhere in the U.S. — Approximate value: \$23,000

SECOND PRIZE

Complete bicycle commuter package
Two Electra Amsterdam commuter bicycles complete with totes, lights, and helmets

THIRD PRIZE

Pedestrian power package
A pair of Keen walking shoes, a barley straw hat, and a handmade walking stick

FOURTH PRIZE

Greenspire Linden tree and a copy of *The Philosophy of Freedom* by Rudolf Steiner

FIFTH PRIZE

Handmade pinwheel patterned quilt


PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL

- Only 2,060 tickets will be sold
 - \$50 per ticket
 - Winners will be drawn at 9 p.m. on April 21, 2007 at the Springtime Good Energy Celebration
- Present your ticket stub for free admission
- Food, Music, Door Prizes
- Location near Viroqua, Wisconsin to be announced
- For more information or to purchase tickets, call Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School at 608.637.7828, or visit their website at www.pleasantridgewaldorf.org
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