

CALYX

PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
Waldorf Education since 1980

Volume 30, Issue 1
Fall/Winter 2008



Phoenix, Ayana Perry, Grade 8



PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
431 East Court Street, Viroqua

COMING EVENTS

December 22–January 4

Holiday break

January 22,23

Inservice

February 16–18

Parent/teacher conferences

February 19–20

AWSNA conference, teacher prep days

March 20

Inservice

April 3

Spring Festival

April 6–13

Spring break

May 1

May Day Festival



Child Play

The mind of a child
Is wrapt in nature;
How it is a theater
Of reaching proportions
With plays performed daily
Under angular trees;
Their seed-wings spinning
Like sibilant snow.
The world of a child
Is droopy-soft caterpillars
Thoughtfully placed
In peach jelly jars,
Unfurling like stars.
It's robins that sing
And fairies that flatten
The grass into rings.
It's boats of bark floating
On child-made moats
Dew-dropped myrtle
And flower-daubed turtles.
It's hedges and honeysuckle
With flowers to sip,
Red herring that yodel
As they swim the great sea,
Beyond the Blue Heron
With their PhD's.
The world of a child
Is a play of the mind:
Ships sailing out-bound
With merchants and cattle.
It's where happiness flows
From head to toe
It's so good to remember:
It was once mine, you know.

Elizabeth Mastin

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Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School

431 E. Court Street, Viroqua, WI 54665
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www.pleasantrydewaldorf.org
(608) 637-7828
FEIN 39-1357578

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501(c)3 corporation supported through family pledges,
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.

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NEW FACULTY/FAMILIES

New Teachers & Staff

Five new faculty and staff members have joined Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School this year. We are happy to have these very capable and talented people join our faculty.

Barbara Danner

Barbara Danner is the class teacher for the first grade. She and three of her daughters, who all attend Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School, moved to Viroqua from Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, this August. Ms. Danner is a graduate of Marquette University in Milwaukee, where she received a bachelor of arts degree in theater arts. She also has a Waldorf Teaching Certificate from UW-Milwaukee.

Barbara brings a variety of teaching experiences with her. She was a class teacher for two years at the Prairie Hill Waldorf School in Pewaukee, Wisconsin, as well as a long-term substitute at the Tamarack Waldorf School in Milwaukee. She has also written, cast and directed plays and taught speech, movement and singing.

Carrie Treviranus

Carrie Treviranus is the class teacher for the second grade and came to us from Milwaukee this August. Ms. Treviranus is a graduate of Northwestern University with a bachelor of music degree. She is currently continuing her M.A. in education from Mount Mary College/ Great Lakes Teacher Training for her Waldorf Teaching Certification.

Carrie has been an early childhood and kindergarten assistant at the Tamarack Waldorf School in Milwaukee. She has professional experience as a singer and actor and has been involved in children's music and theater outreach through the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus and Orchestra and the Solstice Theater. As an avid cyclist, she looks forward to living in this area.

Leah Houk

Leah Houk is the Assistant in the Rosemary Kindergarten and comes to us from Necedah, Wisconsin, with her daughter, who is in the Violet Kindergarten. Ms. Houk is also pursuing a career as a Waldorf class teacher and is enrolled in the Great Lakes Teacher Training in Milwaukee. Leah also has a certificate in Internet Graphics from Maui Community College.

Jean Westerhoff

Jean Westerhoff joins the office as the Admissions Director. She is a graduate of UW-La Crosse and has lived in Viroqua with her family since 2002 when they enrolled in the school.

Lauren Hunt

Lauren Hunt joins the office as a part-time secretary. She is a graduate of Prescott College and has lived in the area with her family since 2003.

New Families

The families joining the school this year have lived in many places both near and far, including Massachusetts, Minnesota, Washington, Wisconsin, Alaska, and Hawaii! It has been such a pleasure to meet these unique and wonderful people. Welcome, everyone!

Sincerely, Jean Westerhoff

Beth & Con Blake, Minnesota

Will – Class Five

Alice – Class Three

Stay-at-home Mom (handwork, quilting, cooking)

Consulting Engineer (reading, riding motorcycle, woodworking)

Reese & Tony Brenengen, Coon Valley

Nate – Class Five

Lucia – Class Two

Stay-at-home Mom (outdoor life, land stewardship, social justice issues)

Auto Sales (anything with a motor)

Lisa Fanning, Kenosha

Byron – Class Six

Graphic Designer – Print (traditional printmaking, vegan cupcakes)

Anna Lisa Bookstrom & James Gimurtu,

Washington

Evelyn – Class Two

Homemaker (ceramics, cycling, Nordic skiing, knitting, food preserving)

Biodiesel Equipment Manufacturer and Consultant (alternative energy, Sasquatch research, cycling, Nordic skiing, Amish culture)

Taryn Greendeer, Viroqua

Stella – Class Seven

Human (education, art in all its varied forms, nature, multiculturalism, localism)

Bill Greendeer, Tomah

Stella – Class Seven

Self-employed, Construction, Art (build motorcycles, bicycles, art, cars, native ceremonies)

Leah Houk, Necedah, previously Hawaii

Althea – Violet Kindergarten

Kindergarten Aide, Graphic Designer, Coconut Tree Trimmer, Aspiring 1–8 Grades Teacher (photography, knitting, biking, swimming, singing, reading)

Vicky Eiben & Randall Kahn, Viroqua

Jesse – Class Five

Spanish Teacher/ Graduate School Teacher at Walden University (Driftless Folk School, gardening, herbal studies, spinning, weaving, skiing, kayaking)

Psychotherapist (building projects, motorcycling, hiking, skiing, kayaking; Randy has been building their home near Avalanche on the weekends)

Monique Miller & Bernhard Kuhn

Tangwyn Kuhn – Class One

Alicia Leinberger, Madison

Maiela and Zirelia – Rosemary Kindergarten

Marketing, Graphics, Business Administration, Full-time Mom (small agriculture, great food, geology, insects, spiritual and political musings)

Andrea & Aaron Lundebrek, Minnesota

Murial and Sophie – Violet Kindergarten

Esthetician (reading, cooking)
Truck Driver (fishing, travel)

Stacey & Charles Mehr, Minnesota

Katherine – Class Five

David – Class One

Homemaker, Bookkeeper (delicious local food, family, biking, the land and nature)

Corporate Conferencing Manager at USBank (football, basketball, family)

Eugenia & Michael Nordskog, Minnesota, previously

Alaska, New York, Cape Cod, Scotland

Jasper – Rosemary Kindergarten

Cole – Class One

Graphic Designer, Typesetting for Translation

Agencies (cooking traditional foods, repairing toys, knitting, sewing, drawing with the kids, quiet moments in the canoe, especially when on the water!)
Attorney, Editor, Writer (carpentry, gardening, fishing, guitar, camping)

Julie & Dwight Polglaze, Massachusetts

Dolan – Class One

Sophia – Class Three

Maggie – Class Five

Mother (knitting, nutrition, community-building)

National Color Specialist (drumming, computers)

Rain Hays & Andrew Anderson, Viroqua

Gaia Unity – Class Three

Irie Unity – Class One

Midwifery Assistant, Work for Lusa Organics,

Multimedia Artist (gardening, landscaping)

Work for Lusa Organics (south Asian languages and cultures)

Elizabeth and Matthew Voz, Readstown

Otto – Violet Kindergarten

Server at Driftless Café (growing food, fiddle, guitar, dance, handwork)

Teacher at Youth Initiative High School (growing food, nonfiction)

Barbara Danner, Milwaukee

Margaret – Class Five

Clara – Class Seven

Christine – Class Eight

Teacher at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School (singing, handcrafts, writing, study)

James Zinky, living in Milwaukee

Margaret – Class Five

Clara – Class Seven

Christine – Class Eight

Stagehand at Milwaukee Repertory Theater (reading, projects around the house)

SCHOOL NEWS

Eurythmy

This autumn, our students were able to see two wonderful eurythmy programs at the Old Main Building. Our eurythmy teacher, Annette Conlon, selected "Four Scenes from the Life of Joan of Arc" for the 7th grade to perform. The students skillfully moved in eurythmy choreography, bringing before us courtiers, armies at war, fierce flames, and angels.

For the 8th grade performance, Annette choreographed "The Donkey," a story by the Brothers Grimm. Speech and music came alive as the students moved with confidence and drama, bringing sadness, laughter, imperious royalty and tender affection. Students provided all the music, and several parents helped assemble imaginative, colorful costumes.

We are so grateful to have such a good eurythmy classroom in the Old Main Building, a room which easily becomes a performance space, too. We are also grateful that our students have brought the fruits of their years of eurythmy in the gift of these performances.

—Diane Mamroe, Administrator

Practice Your German



The 8th grade has a special guest until December 12th this year. Anna "Clara" Sebald is a visiting international student from Darmstadt, Germany.

Clara's visit was initiated by her older sister, Lisa, who visited our school when she was a college exchange student in Wisconsin a few years ago. After several communications and many arrangements, Clara has joined Ms. Jackie's class for four months. Clara is living with Shawn Nadeau and Chenoa Moore in their home in Viroqua. Clara is having a wonderful and enriching experience here! Thanks to Clara's mother, Juliane Kroitzsch, and father, Thomas Sebald, for making this opportunity possible.

New Life for Old Main

This has been the year to bring new life to our Old Main Building. Prior to July 1995, when we moved to our newer home on Court Street, it was simply our "Main Building." Two classrooms shared the main floor, the office was the 8' x 10' cloakroom off the foyer, and violin and movement classes were held in the basement. Since 1995, it has been our performing arts building, used for eurythmy and dance classes, upper grades class plays, the Advent Garden, recitals, and many public conferences, workshops and study groups. It is also rented for a variety of cultural events. The beautifully painted main room with its wooden floors, large windows, and stained glass is a unique meeting place in our local community.

Although the building became "old" for us in 1995, it has been old for a long time. Construction of the white clapboard structure was completed in 1886, and it was moved twice before coming to its present location. This year, spring storms made a roof repair necessary, which sparked a Board review of whether to let the building go or begin to upgrade the whole structure.

We decided to upgrade the building beginning with the roof and basement. Historical authenticity is an element in our planning, so we decided to install a new steel roof. New gutters emptying into new storm drains (constructed as part of the town highway improvement) have done much to direct water away from the basement. A generous gift from an alumni family has enabled us to install a whole-building air purifier, to help eradicate the stuffiness from old wood and foundations. We are deeply grateful for all the gift and volunteer help that have enabled us to improve this space already.

We have a long list for future improvements: to repair the windows, update bathrooms, add main floor chair storage, improve acoustics, and install a quieter heat system and better lighting. With our 30th anniversary coming soon, wouldn't it be wonderful to find a way to complete these upgrades? It is a soul-filled building and we find many, many good uses for it.

Diane Mamroe, Administrator

Conservation Speeches



The Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, Inc., sponsored its 51st Annual Statewide Conservation Speaking Contest this fall. Students around the state prepared and presented conservation speeches in their counties; those speeches judged to be most effective advanced to state competition in Stevens Point on November 8, 2008. Students at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School in Viroqua presented many deserving speeches, from which 8th grade student Rose Bruce's speech on Factory Farms and 6th grade student Noah Carlson's speech on Bee Pollination and Colony Collapse were selected to move on to state competition in their respective age groups. Both students represented Vernon County and their school very well, and Noah earned a third place trophy for his speech. Rose is the daughter of Sara Tedeschi and David Bruce. Noah is the son of Lara Roberts and Ken Carlson.

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'Tis the Season to Have Shelter!

During the heart of this past summer, I joined several talented members from our community in building a longhouse shelter for the Rosemary Kindergarten garden. Apple Corbin, Donnie Rogers and Katie Hafner, our visionary leaders, led us through this wonderful building project. We began by collecting willow branches out at the Bill and Taryn Greendeer property, then soaked the branches in the Rogers/Hafner creek, peeled the bark, bent the branches, tied them together, and finally placed the canvas over the structure.

My thanks go to Apple, Donnie and Katie for their perseverance and expertise, to nature's bounty, to the Amish gentleman who sewed the ties onto our canvas, and to the collective talents of the parents in the Rosemary Kindergarten. We now have a new shelter, not only for the children in our garden this year (which was much needed) but also for the kindergarten children at Pleasant Ridge for many years to come. I am grateful to have been part of this life-sustaining project and to have worked with so many wonderful people.

Here are some photos of our collective work. Many thanks and Happy Holidays from the Rosemary Kindergarten!

Blessings,

*Ms. Heidi
Rosemary Kindergarten Teacher*

PHOTO CAPTIONS

- Apple begins cutting down willows 1**
- Katie and Heidi snip young branches 2**
- Kay peeling off the bark 3**
- Bending and tying branches 4**
- A closer look at tying willow bark 5**
- The new floor boards 6**
- Parents tying the canvas 7**
- It fits! 8**

Photos taken by Apple Corbin and Cynthia Olmstead



ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008

We at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School have, from our inception, understood that a school can have a profound effect not only on its students, but also on its community and on society as the students take up their work in the world. Attention to issues of sustainability has also been with us from our beginning, for to operate an independent school in such a small rural community requires it.

We have tried to operate within our means, slowly and organically growing our organization and our Waldorf program, balancing the needs of the teachers and staff with the abilities of the parents to pay tuition and fund-raise. We also know that the “hidden curricula” of schools convey values that are important for the school. Examples of this are our hot lunch program, summer school gardening, outdoor classrooms for the kindergartens, walking to the park for games, and parent volunteerism throughout the whole management and maintenance structure.

For all these years, these organizational principles have been practiced as a matter of survival. In the past decade sustainability has become more than a buzzword, and is now a stated goal for many schools and businesses. It is not unusual these days to read that a university has hired a “sustainability consultant” and is developing new programs to teach these principles.

An organization in California, the Center for Ecoliteracy, has been a leader in developing curricula for K–12 schools. They write that the most effective schools are often communities that model the traits of sustainable societies. It is interesting to note that these effective schools often incorporate one or several of the following practices:

- They connect children with the natural world through programs and projects outside the classroom, such as school gardens, habitat restoration, and communicating their experience in nature through painting and poetry.
- They practice place-based education that teaches students about the people, history, culture, and natural features of their local community and region.
- They practice environmental project-based learning, involving students in local projects that are meaningful and make real contributions to their communities.
- They integrate in-class learning with hands-on experiences and with all of the activities of the school (including, for example, lunch preparation and serving).
- They address the whole child, recognizing that children’s ability to learn is affected by their health and well-being, and that these are in turn affected by such factors as nutrition, exercise, and the health of the natural environment.
- They employ the best current understandings of how brains and minds develop and how children learn. They attend to children in all their dimensions, including cognitive, emotional, and aesthetic. (Quoted from www.ecoliteracy.org)

We can find the activities of our classes at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School throughout this list. Thanks to the generosity of a large circle of relations and friends, we have built a school that takes its place in contemporary society, sending students into their work and life with these very important sensitivities and values. All gifts to the school are sustaining gifts, and we appreciate each and every one.

Mary Christenson, Development

From the Board

The Board met in July to review the 2007–2008 school year. At this meeting we also began the process of revisiting the mission and values of Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School and articulating how we are manifesting in the world. This is a soul-filled journey, allowing each of us to clarify why we are here, and why our families are joining together to create this wonderful community of PRWS. We found that each of us has a story to tell and a passion for sharing our stories. We know we have a wonderful thing going for us at PRWS and in Viroqua. We’re proud of who we are and want to share it.

Throughout this current school year, we will be gathering with faculty, parents, and community members to share and expand our passion for our mission and values. As we join together in this process, we will be seeking words to summarize our journey thus far and to guide our ongoing path. Please let us know how you see yourself and your story in the mission and values of Pleasant Ridge.

As members of the Board, we recognize that each person and each family in our community contributes greatly to the health and well-being of the whole. We look for your help in working toward one of our greater goals: to attract, retain and develop the children, parents, faculty and staff of PRWS.

We also recognize that all those who came before us played an important role in setting the course of this school, leaving a legacy of generosity and an open heart. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank you for your contributions as well. You’re important to us!

In gratitude,

Jenelle Boyer, Board President

The Paul E. Stry Foundation

We would like to thank the Directors of the Paul E. Stry Foundation for their outstanding and continued support of our Nature and Environment activities for all classes at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School for many years. In the past year, the Stry Foundation has supported new structures for our Rosemary Kindergarten outdoor classroom (shed and long house); 3rd Grade trips to Aldo Leopold Nature Center, Effigy Mounds and area parks; 6th Grade trips to Waswagoning (historical Ojibwe village) and Eagle Bluff Nature Center; and gardening supplies for the 1st Grade. These generous funds have allowed our teachers to expand our outdoor learning areas on campus as well as explore the wonderful parks and nature centers in the Driftless region we call home, and to develop community partnerships around Viroqua as outdoor service learning projects.



“If a tiny child has been able in his play to give up his whole living being to the world around him, he will be able, in the serious tasks of later life, to devote himself with confidence and power to the service of the world.”

—Rudolf Steiner

Activities for the Year July 1, 2007–June 30, 2008

- Twenty-four new families joined our school community.
- Grandparents and Special Friends Day was celebrated September 29th with 52 guests on the Michaelmas Festival Day. Special guest speakers were alumni Julia Hundt (1997) & Brendan Karlstad (1999).
- The Martin Novom workshop, “The Role of the Parent: Joining Forces with Your School,” in November was attended by 53 people from eight school initiatives in the upper Midwest.
- The parents led another successful “Good Energy Raffle” raising almost \$94,000. The Grand Prize of a hybrid car went to our very own Joe Rising and Kay Fandel family.
- Miss Christiane Babb’s Class 8 celebrated spring with an ethereal production of Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. At their graduation, they announced they would donate \$1,000 to Pleasant Ridge and during the summer they decided on \$3,000.
- The students performed 2,198 hours in service projects throughout our community, including planting trees (Class 8), raking lawns at the Sherry-Butt House and Foreaker School (Class 4), taking oral history stories from elders at the Fairhaven assisted living facility (Class 6), shoveling snow around fire hydrants and delivering Christmas cookies to police, ambulance and fire squads (Class 5), and picking up trash around the neighborhood (Kindergarten and Class 1). Thank you to Steve Lawless for coordinating the service-learning program.

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DEVELOPMENT

Happy New Year Greetings to All!

As we bring to a close a wonderfully full fall semester, I reflect on the many celebrations that bring a special warmth and joy to the day-to-day work in the classes. Behind these offerings there are a few people who take on extra duties of planning and preparation so that the rest of us can experience the magic of the moment. Sometimes their work goes unnoticed as they thank others, so I want to applaud them here.

The festivals of the school year began with **Michaelmas** on September 29. Aaron Schmidt and the lower grade teachers created a presentation with a new look for the old dragon. Darling third graders donned pointy red caps and poked their heads through the back of the dragon.

Grandparents and Special Friends Day was moved to October 10 this year, allowing Monika Sutherland to work with the students to prepare a rich music-filled program. Sheila Sherwin and Cynthia Olmstead organized the lunch, invitations, packets and volunteers to assist. I also want to acknowledge the grandparents and special friends, who make the special effort to be here bright and early that day, some traveling halfway across the country.



Leo Klein, master teacher from the Netherlands, celebrated his 80th birthday with us at a special evening gathering that was organized by Anne-Marie Fryer. It was held in the gym, where we viewed over 25 paintings by Leo. Anne-Marie spoke about her new book, *Cooking for the Love of the World*, followed by Leo speaking about the role of art in a child's life. We were treated to music, folk dancing, and even a birthday cake that was aflame!

Día de los Muertos was a very special event this year as Betsy Farrell created

a touching way to involve not only each class, but also Jessie, our Guatemalan guest. Jessie visited our Spanish classes most Fridays this fall and, through her own being, brought a beautiful authenticity of her culture to our children.

The **Enchanted Forest Walk** is presented annually by the 8th grade, thanks to Paula Grenier who guides it and finds those extra parents with special skills to help bring it into form. This year's story was Peter Pan.

Martinmas was to be celebrated at four private homes this year, but the weather did not cooperate and plans were cancelled that afternoon. Still, we thank the people who offered to host and had prepared their homes: Paul and Paula Grenier, Drew and Geri Shonka, Radha Crawley and Aaron Schwaller, and Maureen and John Karlstad. The next morning the students walked through the hallways with their lanterns, singing the songs.

The **All School Potluck** in November was graciously hosted by Kathy O'Rourke on behalf of the Parent Council. It was very well attended and helped us get to know one another better. We all hope there will be more social times like this.

The **Holiday Faire** was very successful under the skilled and creative leadership of Paula Grenier, Meg Hoversten, and Penny Lindstrom. While it takes all of us to make the Faire happen, the coordination and guidance of these fine leaders made it a weekend to remember for a long time! Thanks to all!

St. Nicholas visited the younger classes on December 8 and brought memorable moments for the children. Annette Conlon, Carole Hanlein, Sarah Kamin, and Wyatt and Monika Sutherland all helped.



Santa Lucia, in another 8th grade offering, visited the classes on December 12 under the guidance of Catherine Young and Julee Caspars Agar. The beauty of light, aroma of beeswax candles, and taste of golden saffron breads fed our souls.

The **Shepherds Play** was directed by Barbara Danner and enacted by a "traveling troupe of actors" (a.k.a. teachers and staff) as a gift to the children and community. Thank you, Barbara, for so graciously sharing your wisdom and experience.

The **Festival of Lights** was organized by Steve Lawless and Monika Sutherland. Again the weather intervened and gave us a snow day, but the children were nourished by their sharing during their dress rehearsal the day before.

All these ways of celebrating and appreciating each other's gifts help to strengthen our community spirit. We are reminded that it is important to take time to nourish the children and ourselves by creating these memorable events.

We want to thank each reader for your good will as well as financial gifts which are integral to our work of fulfilling Pleasant Ridge's vision and mission. Over these past 28 years, the celebration of this community has expanded far beyond our geographical boundaries, and we are blessed by that. If you are able to extend an offering this year, please use the form on the next page. Thank you!

Mary Christenson
Development Director

We are very grateful to our donors for the gifts received since the last Calyx, August 2008. This list acknowledges gifts received from August 14, 2008 to December 11, 2008. Thank you!

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