

CALYX

PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL
Waldorf Education since 1980
Volume 39, Issue 2
Winter 2018



Ethan Zimmermann, Grade 8

COMING EVENTS

MARCH

- 16 Faculty In-service Day: No Classes
Kindergarten Morning
- 23 Alumni Parent Potluck
- 30 Spring Break Begins

APRIL

- 1-8 Spring Break Continues
- 9 School Resumes
- 11 PRWS Monthly Open House
- 14 Kindergarten Morning
- 20 Spring Concert
- 28 All-School Work Day

MAY

- 4 May Day Celebration
- 4-5 Eighth Grade Play
- 10 Pentathlon
- 25 Closing Day
Eighth Grade Graduation
- 29-31 Faculty In-Service Days

Bob Bezin

Bob Bezin crossed over on December 7, 2017, as the result of a stroke. Bob and Karen (now Philothea) were married in the Old Main Building in August of 1980. This article is reprinted from a Calyx issue. It not only captures the importance of a teacher's spouse, the universal qualities of early childhood, and the concerns of parents, but also the life-changing possibilities of volunteering at the school. The author, Lerie, who was then a Waldorf parent, became a student of Bothmer Gymnastics and Anthroposophy and is currently a valued colleague and teacher.



Each Friday since my daughter Nona began at Pleasant Ridge, I have come to help Karen Bezin (Ed. note: now known as Philothea Bezin) in any way I could.

The work at first involved observing Karen with the children, making snacks, cleaning storerooms, shopping downtown, etc.

Each time coming was more rewarding as I realized just what Karen encounters daily watching our children from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The teaching scale definitely surpasses any I have ever witnessed.

Karen teaches our children from her heart with tenderness and compassion. And when I evaluate motherhood next to Karen's role here in school, I feel her task is much more complicated than I realized in the style in which Karen teaches. Giving to our various children's needs and emotions really requires extreme patience and control within.

I know Karen's spiritual beliefs see her through and give her strength to continue this form of education as it definitely involves more personal care than our alternative of public school, always reflecting a spirit of kindness, thankfulness and compassion.

I am so very grateful Karen cares so much about all our children, to see this important need fulfilled, that the academic side of school is minor next to the total reverence for life which Karen incorporates in her teaching; and also to one patient husband Bob, who gives Karen support daily to continue this work.

I can only imagine at times Bob's desire to have a little more of Karen at their lively farm, but instead shares their light in the understanding that a change in the educational system is extremely necessary in this day and age, for our young and tender children.

Karen and Bob Bezin, may the Good Lord bless you as you bless us. Thank you for your combined energy in seeing Pleasant Ridge function.

—Lerie (Smith) Alstad, Movement Teacher

SCHOOL NEWS

Farewell to Our Korean Friends

Hard to believe it's already been four weeks with our friends from South Korea and now it is time to say good-bye.

Each January for the past several years, Yesook "Sumi" Huh (niece of former class parent Loma Huh) has brought a small group of her ESL students to experience life in small-town America and to have a taste of Waldorf education. Each student becomes immersed in American culture by staying with a host family and attending classes at PRWS, where bonds of friendship are quickly formed.



Our new friends left on their long trip home at the end of January—departing on a Sunday and arriving home early on a Tuesday morning (late afternoon in their country). Many thanks to the teachers who opened their classrooms to these students and to the families who opened their homes. What an amazing experience for everyone involved!

PRWS Board of Directors



Front row left to right: Joshua Ecklund, Jennifer Wade, Shelly Brenneman, David Levin. Back row: Mary Christenson, Stephanie Brown, Joe Lenarz, Amy Hazell, Mark Brudos. Not pictured: Aaron Schmidt, Alycann Taylor.

Growing For Good – Your Neighborhood Greenhouse



Growing for Good staff: (left to right) Heather Sage, Ben Dollhausen, Ed Lemar, Arwyn Wildingway, Angie Lemar.

It's warm in the greenhouses and the team is working nearly every day to be ready for the gardening season. Plants make great gifts all year round! Specialties available now: blooming rosebushes, blooming bulbs, jasmine hearts, money plants, heather, succulents, house plants, local orchids and more. See website for photos: www.growingforgood.org

Treat yourself this winter! Stop by, shed some layers, smell the earth. Want to get your hands dirty? Volunteer day is Tuesday—come be part of the GOOD! Fill out a GOOD CARD and for every 15 hours you volunteer you get 15% off a single purchase.

Open Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or by appointment. Open Saturdays starting March 24. Spring Open House on Earth Day weekend April 20–22; thereafter open every day to shop our Spring Garden Center.

Growing For Good is located at 520 East Terhune Street, Viroqua, Wisconsin / 608.637.8200

In Memory of Christopher Michael Mann

On February 7th Christopher Mann, longtime friend of Pleasant Ridge, passed away. He was a visionary dedicated to biodynamic agriculture and to building strong and vital communities. He was best known for co-founding the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute in East Troy, Wisconsin, and also for spearheading the first large-scale eurythmy tour in the United States. Those who want to better understand his generous spirit can watch *The Alchemists*, a film by Frigyes Fogel and Christopher Mann. The movie follows people throughout four continents whose mission is to heal and consecrate the earth. <https://vimeo.com/181737300>

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

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

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

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ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

From the Treasurer

Fiscal year 2016–2017 was a year of transition for the Finance Committee. Changes in the administrative staff, coupled with the exit of some long-time Finance Committee members, challenged the committee to focus its attention on stability. With that in mind, we successfully achieved three main initiatives.

First, we re-formed the committee to make it a place where all voices in our school are represented at the finance table. This newly formed committee is a smart and dedicated group of people full of talent and creativity. The committee is composed of parents of both full-tuition and adjusted-tuition families, alumni parents, alumni students, administrative staff, and faculty.

Second, we needed to address cash flow. Like with many businesses, at certain times throughout the year cash flow can be a problem. Introducing a discount for families who are able and willing to pay their tuition in full in advance proved to have a very positive impact on our cash flow.

Our third initiative was the implementation of a supply fee. It is imperative that Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School maintain the tuition adjustment process to meet the varying financial needs of our families. However, we recognize that all students need the same amount of supplies to receive this education. The cost of those supplies is not an adjustable number, so a uniformly applied supply fee for each student seems appropriate and effective.

As treasurer of the school, I want to thank each of you for your financial contributions and the extra efforts you give to Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School. With every raffle ticket bought or sold, every tuition check written, every Kwik Trip card purchased or donation received, you are helping us meet our financial goals. Each time you pick up a shovel, take a Holiday Faire shift, or attend a class fundraiser, you contribute to the financial success of the school. You are appreciated.

This Annual Report illustrates the collaborative work of us all to meet our financial goals. It's our shared effort that allows us to continue to bring this remarkable education to our children.

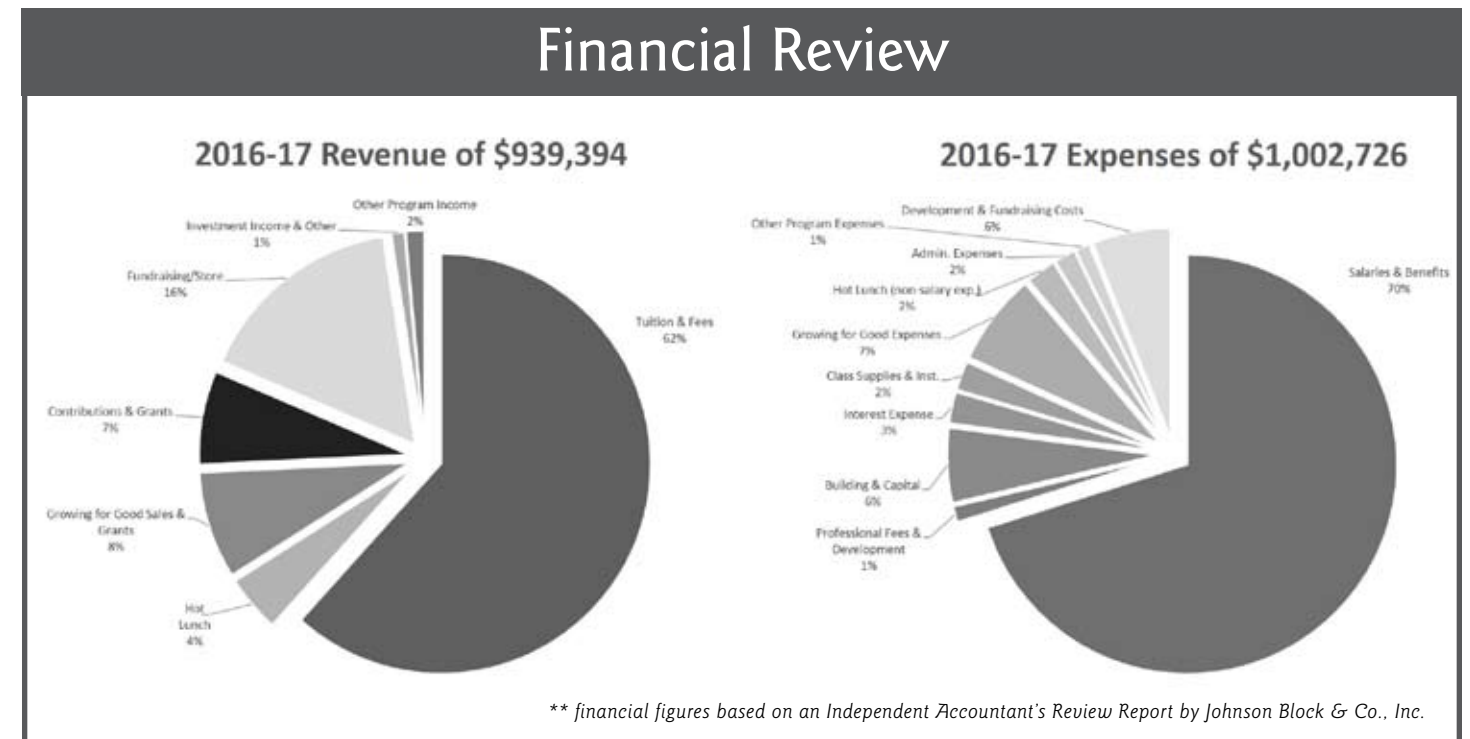
We are truly all in this together.

With gratitude,
Alycann Whalen Taylor, Volunteer Treasurer

Your contributions helped us to:

- Educate 138 remarkable young people in our school.
- Offer reduced tuition to 70 percent of our families.
- Expand the Parent-Child program to serve 28 families.
- Create the new Cherry Blossom Kindergarten classroom in the Landmark Center, with a paint grant from the True Value Foundation via Nelson Agri-Center, and carpentry by our parents.
- Enrich our nature education programs through field trips for Grades 5, 7, and 8 and the expansion of the outdoor play area for the kindergartens as funded by the Paul E. Stry Foundation, Robert and Susan Holmes, and volunteer hours from our parents.
- Launch new programs: Aftercare, Enrichment Days, Waldorf Open Wednesday tours, and regular Community Conversations.
- Begin a new recorder program with Stephanie Pedretti.
- Complete the Year 3 AWSNA Report.
- Launch the new PRWS website.
- Host visitors Bart Eddy from Detroit for an in-service in October and Ronald Koetzsch from California for a workshop and public event in April.
- Successfully raise \$78,542 in our annual raffle.

Waldorf Schools Fund provided Growing for Good with seed money to launch our new compost program, including the purchase of a truck.



DONORS

Many thanks to those who have supported our school September 18, 2017 – February 14, 2018

- | | | | | |
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A Special Thank You to These Ongoing Sponsors

Call Bill first when you are looking at real estate, whether you are buying or selling. Mention the school and we will earn a donation. To look at properties visit:

www.BillBrookeRealty.com

Thank you to all of our Holiday Faire Auction and Children's Raffle donors.

CURRICULUM

First Grade

What are the essential life lessons and skills a child could encounter and develop along the way to meet life as it reveals itself through and around him/her? The traditional Waldorf schooling spans kindergarten through high school. How do parents, teachers and caregivers wish an eighteen-year-old to step out into the world, taking hold of his/her life? And what are the foundations that are being planted for this in first grade, when the class community starts its journey of growing together—a community of parents, children, and family cultures in which each individual has the opportunity to meet the world and oneself through the other? These are essential questions I ponder as a first grade Waldorf teacher.

It is a wonderful gift, the opportunity to bump into each other, getting hurt, laughing with each other, experiencing different ways of engaging with the world. Throughout our life we get to know ourselves more and more and we learn with and through the people we meet. We know what a “blessing” and “curse” a relationship can be, what a true art form any dialog with the world can be. We learn to create a life together, to share a friendship, to work with each other, to argue, to discuss with respect, to clearly present our point of view, and to fully walk in someone else’s shoes.

Wouldn’t it be a great skill then to be interested and to wonder, and to radiate a quality that inspires others to want to draw near? Is this the kind of connection, that feeling of belonging, that opens opportunities to unfold one’s own and others’ potential?

In first grade the children learn to breathe with the rhythm of a school day and a school week. They learn to take hold of the habits that are being established, like double-checking one’s arithmetic problems before being “done,” or raising one’s hand to speak; habits from letting go and resting to waking up, eating, cleaning, getting dressed, listening, and so on. Once those habits are embodied, the children’s focus is freed more and more to engage with their surroundings with wonder, an interest coming from an inner well-being.

Yet good habits alone don’t feed a child’s well-being. Naturally the child’s joy to learn and practice arises from his/her joy to move and play. Here grows our first grade self, from the toddler who untiringly and playfully overcame gravity to stand up and who learned to speak, into the child who enters the first grade playground, where the joy to play becomes the practice to cooperate with others and to become robustly civilized.

Immediately the children find themselves in the drama of life: “Hans doesn’t... He always... He never... Nobody... She says I am stupid...” And we begin the journey: “What exactly is upsetting?” A simple “Please don’t yell next to my ear” might replace a “She is stupid.”

Even though this is a great practice, a first grader is not yet expected to always reach beyond his/her bubble of perception. Here lies the opportunity for the parents to build a community. This requires the vulnerability to reach out to each other

and to embrace challenges as a learning opportunity. It is touching to observe parents finding the courage to meet each other with interest, developing empathy to create a loving vessel in which each child can find belonging. In such a surrounding, the child feels valued rather than shamed for being by nature exploratory, and each one feels part of a community of learners, contributing to the variety of learning opportunities to refine and unfold potential.

—Davina Hemmer, First Grade Teacher

Eighth Grade Eurythmy

Here at Pleasant Ridge the eurythmy curriculum is completed in the middle of the eighth grade, and what better way to end our studies of a performance art than to share a performance of it! Therefore all of our time in eighth grade eurythmy class is spent preparing for this final performance.

Ideally the students, who have been through most, if not all, of the previous seven-plus years of eurythmy classes, have already learned the gestures related to the sounds of speech and musical tones as well as how to read a “form” (i.e., eurythmy choreography). This enables each student to receive their part confidently, similarly to the way an actor or actress would receive a part. When the students have the understanding that all those years in eurythmy class can give, they can each receive the coaching of the teacher as an impetus and then develop their own approach to the character.

The eurythmy teacher must find a suitable story (already a big job), cast it, choreograph it, find gesture suggestions, and do costuming and general stage management. But the greatest challenge to such a large task is the amount and quality of time needed to prepare for the performance. Eurythmy is not a daily class like main lesson, nor do we have the freshness of soul that the children bring in the morning. Instead eurythmy is often the last hour of the day, or perhaps is missed due to a class trip. These factors all make the endeavor much different than a class play.

This year the performance was moved from just before Thanksgiving to the Friday after Christmas break, extending the preparation time six weeks. This allowed quality work to be done without taking extra time from main lesson. September, October, and some of November were spent doing a lot of individual practice until we could begin to put it all together. By the Christmas break the piece was roughly in place, and after the break we worked with our costumes and refined it for the big day.

The story needs an audience to come to life, and younger grades are the ideal audience. We try to give three performances each year. We usually invite some class to watch our dress rehearsal; on Friday afternoon we perform for the whole school; and that evening we offer our public performance. This year’s performance was a rousing rendition of The Bremen Town Musicians.

—Joshua Ecklund, Eurythmy Teacher

ALUMNI

Births:

Cole (2002) & Dina Agar—
a boy, Sina Frank Agar, 12/24/17

AnnaJo Doerr (1991) & Shawn Lavoie—
a boy, Anson Sol Lavoie, 2/27/18

Hanna (Agar) (1999) &
Brendan (1999) Karlstad—
a girl, Emilia “Mila” Ruth, 2/10/18

Cedarose (Siemon) (1997) & Keefe Keeley—
a girl, Skyla Jane Keeley, 12/29/17



PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL



Sixth grade field trip made possible by a grant from The Paul E. Stry Foundation.

DEVELOPMENT

Spring Appeal

We want to thank all of you for supporting our fundraising efforts thus far this year!

With your support and interest we are blessed and able to offer a full Waldorf curriculum, taught by gifted and experienced teachers. We appreciate the fabulous group of parents who show their dedication through many hours of volunteering their precious time. We are also blessed to have you, our friends and family, who support our school through gifts, offering your time and encouragement, and supporting our events.

The Fall Annual Appeal has been quite successful although we haven’t yet met our goal for the year. We will be sending the Spring Appeal soon. We hope you enjoyed the Holiday Faire, or perhaps supported us through your purchases at the School Store in Ewetopia on Main Street or at Growing for Good greenhouse. Thank you if you have purchased raffle tickets or participated in the SCRIP program. These myriad ways of connecting your energy with the school bless the children each and every day. They are able to thrive by having a structure and rhythm that supports the unfolding of their unique human qualities and potential. We couldn’t provide all this without you.

Thank you.

—Mary Christenson, Development Director

A GIFT TO EDUCATION IS A GIFT TO THE FUTURE

*Receive the children in reverence; educate them with love;
let them go forth in freedom.*

Yes, I want to support the work of Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School

Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$1000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____

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Alum Parent Grandparent Former parent/faculty/staff Friend

In Honor / In Memory of: _____
(circle one)

Please call me about making a special gift of stock, or to include PRWS in my estate plans/will.

You may give online at www.pleasantridgewaldorf.org/donate or call: 608-637-8504 for more information.

Please make checks payable to:

Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School, 431 E. Court Street, Viroqua, WI 54665

Thank you for your support!

Your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. PRWS tax ID# 39-1357578



Missing those fabulous potlucks with good friends?
We miss seeing you, too!

PRWS Alumni Parents Potluck

Friday, March 23, 2018
5pm-7pm in the PRWS gym




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