



winterberry
charter school

A humble life dedicated to a great purpose becomes great.
- Paul Brunton, *Perspectives*

A WORD FROM MS. MALL

Dear Winterberry Families,

As autumn comes to an end and the snow moves down the mountains it is time to pull out all of our toasty Alaskan gear! Please make sure your child comes to school dressed for spending a minimum of 1 hour outdoors each day.

Timeliness continues to be oh so important in more ways than you can imagine. First of all, getting your child to school on time or early if possible allows them to slowly integrate into their classroom environment. For some children this means the difference between a wonderful day and one where everything seems to go wrong. Having your child to school on time means they are able to access the rich Waldorf curriculum offered each day by their teacher. Lastly, it just feels good to your child. When I was shaking hands with the children early last week a child came skipping up the walk with a huge smile on her face. When I asked how she was she said, "Great! I am finally on time to school so I know it is going to be a good day!" There you go, from the mouths of babes.

Another issue that needs attention from many of us is that of attendance. Being present at school each day is essential for learning. This is true in all school settings, but especially true in one inspired by Waldorf Education. There are no textbooks or easy ways for children to make up the lessons they miss. Please make sure that unless your child is ill he or she makes it to school. This includes planning vacations that correspond with holidays already reflected on our school calendar. I know that travel at this time is often more expensive however, choosing this enables your child to get as much out of their learning as possible. Thank you for your continued work and support to have your child here and ready to learn.

Our **7th Annual Harvest Dance** is just around the corner and I hope every family (and their friends) will join us at on **Friday, October 21st @ 6:00pm** for a called **family dance and shared potluck, location TBA!** Another wonderful event for your family (and as many friends as you would like to bring) will be our **1st Assembly of the Year on Monday, October 24th @ 6:00pm at Bartlett High School Theatre (1101 N Muldoon Road).**

Blessings,

Shanna



Tuesdays with Ms. Mall in the
Front Lobby 8:45am - 9:30am &
2:30pm - 3:15pm.

October

- 10.6.11 WPG Meeting, 6pm @ Winterberry
- 10.14.11 NO SCHOOL, In-Service
- 10.20.11 WCC Meeting, 6pm @ Winterberry
- 10.21.11 7th Annual Harvest Dance @ Location TBA, 6pm
- 10.24.11 1st Assembly @ Bartlett High School Theatre, 6pm
- 10.25 - 27.11 Parent Teacher Conferences with 12:30 Early Release
- 10.28.11 NO SCHOOL, In-Service

November

- 11.3.11 WPG Meeting, 6pm @ Winterberry
- 11.10 - 12.11 Waldorf Teacher Training
- 11.14.11 NO SCHOOL
- 11.17.11 WCC Meeting, 6pm @ WBerry
- 11.18.11 7th Annual Lantern Walk 6pm @ Goose Lake
- 11.24 & 25.11 Thanksgiving Holiday!



Alpen Glow Garden News



Kindergarten's Morning Circle Song

Come let us gather
 'round to sing
Sing from the heart
Great joy you'll bring
Everybody altogether
 Come, let's sing!

Down is the earth,
 Up is the sun.
I reach out my hands,
 To greet everyone.
 Good morning.

Looking through star windows,
 What do you see?
 You are here,
 I am here,
 And WE are WE.



Grade One

Wednesday, September 14, 2011 ends our first three weeks of school as well as our first full block of form drawing. We are establishing our daily rhythm with confidence and fluidity and are more than ready to meet the upcoming challenges of capital letters during our Language Arts Writing Block.

Form Drawing

The simplest and perhaps most straight-forward reason [that form drawing is good for children] is that it develops the fine motor skills as a preparation, and later a support, for writing. It strengthens eye-hand coordination, giving the eye practice at being coachman for the horses, the hands. Form drawing also works in the other direction: The movement of the hand also educates the brain. Furthermore, it is part of the evolution of art and, as such, develops the aesthetic sense and a feeling for form. It also teaches thinking, but in a non-intellectual way; it trains the intelligence to be flexible, able to follow and understand a complicated line of thought. The more human beings are trained to think flexibly, the greater the world is strengthened in intelligence. Finally, form drawing really supports the development of the whole being of the child, guiding it in a healthy way with certain types of forms brought to the child which are appropriate for his age in the various grades. Laura Embry-Stein and Ernst Schuberth, *Form Drawing: Grades One through Four* (Fair Oaks, CA: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1999). Rudolf Steiner, *Practical Advice for Teachers* (London, U.K.: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1970).

Our forms have followed the journey of an old man from northern Japan and have moved with the images of this tale into our first eight forms:

Once upon a time, long, long ago the whole world was filled with music. Each lake, valley, mountain, every stone, tree, plant, and animal had its own melody and with in each person was a song to be sung.

Over the years the people gradually forgot to listen for the music and the songs within their hearts became lost and forgotten. As the music in their hearts disappeared, the people were no longer able to hear the songs and music around them.

The land became dark, the wind blew stronger, and the people forgot how to dance and sing with each other. The people of the village gradually fell into sadness and began to bicker with each other.

One old man, however, remembered fondly the light of his childhood and when people stood upright and happy. He watched his people going about in darkness, arguing with each other and becoming very sad with their heads and shoulders curled down. He decided to go on a journey to the top of a mountain to find a way to help his people regain joy for life again. On a gray, windy and rainy day, the old man set out on his journey up to the mountain...

We have found the forms in our bodies, along the Costal Trail on our Nature Walks, in the classroom and school.

We have also discovered that all our letters are made up of straight and curved lines. Our rhythm strengthens each day as we take part in our responsibilities within the classroom. Our day begins with greeting in song, our morning verse, attendance in song, mental math, and the following morning song, Time to Rise

A birdie with a yellow bill
Hopped upon my window sill,
Cocked his shining eye and said:
Aren't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head!
Aren't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head!

Once we push our desks back for circle, we form our circle with the song:

Two eyes to see, two ears to hear, two feet to
walk and run — Here is my hand, give yours to me, Good morning
eve — ry one — good morning eve — ry one.

Our circle is lit up with laughter, singing, counting, rhyming, and dancing. A few favorite poems are Elephants Walking, Tall Trees in the Forest, Little Dwarves so Short and Strong, Chip-chop, and Hickery Dickery.

One, Two, Three, Four, Five, once I caught a fish alive //
six, seven, eight, nine, ten, then I threw it back again.
Why did you let it go? Because it bit my finger so.
Which finger did it bite? This little finger on the right.

A few favorite songs are: Old King Glory.

Old King Glory of the Mountain
The Mountain rose so high,
it rose up to the sky
and it's one, two, three follow me.
And we'll all bow down to the mountain.

and Alouette

Alouette, gentille Alouette
Alouette je te plumerai //
Je te plumerai la tete (head)//
Et la tete, et la tete
Alouette, Alouette

As we end circle to put our desks away, we love to recite the verse:

Stamp! Stamp! Heavy and slow;
That's the way the giants go.
Thump! Thump! Clear the way,
Giants are going to town today!
Poppety! Poppety! May we pass?
Fairies are dancing on the grass.
Trippety! Trippety! Here we go,

Dainty fairies on tippety-toe!

Main Lesson is going beautifully as all first graders are fully present and eager to learn. I look forward to our Writing Block Wednesday!

- Ms. Besh

Grade Two

9.10.11 Second Grade has just completed their first introduction of lowercase letters and are moving on to the Language Arts block themed by “golden legends”. With story content that focuses on selfless people doing virtuous deeds, our class will work on forming sentences using punctuation, lowercase letters and beautiful writing. Our morning circle includes handclapping games, rod work, tongue twisters, singing games and fancy footwork. It seems there isn't enough activity in the world that can tire this energetic and creative group. Their imaginations are blossoming and their academics are reaping the benefits. The year has started with quite a bit of exuberant momentum.

9.24.11 The second grade has spent the first part of the year applying their new knowledge of lowercase letters into short sentences that describe the artistic rendering of the weekly stories. We are moving into our first math block where we will review the four operations of math as well as dive into an imaginative story that will bring us on the journey of place value. Our work with rhythm and verse, skip counting and play-acting continues. Mother Goose, Saint George and the Dragon, tongue twisters, riddles and rod work continue to enliven our day and bring light to our lessons.

- Ms. Drinen

Grade Three



We are having a great time in 3rd grade! We are happily settled in our new room upstairs. Our year began with a few days of form drawing followed by a 3 week block on Farming. We took an amazing trip to the valley to

meet Farmer Arthur from Glacier Valley Farm and see the farm exhibits at the state fair. At Arthur's farm, we tasted strawberries straight from his field and learned why they are so sweet! We saw broccoli being harvested, visited the huge, chilly potato barn, and had a close up tour of his heavy farm equipment. You can find produce from Glacier Valley farms at the South Farmer's Market on Saturdays or purchase CSA boxes directly from the farm during the summer and early fall.

We are happy to announce the hatching of 5 chickens in our classroom! (Six actually hatched, but one died the next day). Their names are: Mrs. EGGleston, Mr. Vander-FRYer, Backflip, Chirpy, and Mr. Fluffikins. Many thanks to John's Mom, Emma, for providing the eggs and the incubator for this project!

I would like to welcome the new families to our class. We have five new students: Tabitha, Amy, Sarah, Alexis, and Faith. Please help me welcome them to our class and school community!

- Ms. Towner

Grade Four



It hardly seems possible that we have 4 weeks of school accomplished. The days have flown by, busy and full. I am grateful for each day and am amazed by the ever-changing task of teaching, as the children grow before my eyes.

It has been a joy to welcome our new students ~ Anna, Brian, Tolkien and Tyler. And it is great that Joseph has been able to return to his class!

Our study in this first block has centered around the geography and history of Anchorage. The gold fever of Hope, Girdwood, Sunrise and Crow Creek are top on the list. I know the children are living into the study by their obvious disappointment when we had to postpone our gold panning field trip due to potential small creek flooding in Girdwood. Think sunny skies for us this Wednesday!

The resilience that lives in 4th grade is remarkable. The students were so able to shift gears and start their study of the Alaska Railroad in the wake of the trip being postponed. All is well!

-- Ms. Eggleston

Grade Five

In 5th Grade we are beginning our Botany block! In Botany we will start by learning the parts of the plant, and then studying fungi. We will focus on some Alaskan botany in particular to enhance our block. We will be learning about measurement and data, as well as prime and composite numbers in our Math Practice Period. In the Language Arts Practice Period we will begin reading *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George. On Thursdays we will be creating beautiful watercolor paintings based on our botany study. Our recorder practice is helping us grow musically as a class at each of our individual ability levels. Through our 'Respected and Connected' curriculum we have learned a great deal about working together, empathizing with others, and solving problems peacefully. It has been wonderful getting to know each other and welcoming all of the new students to our class community! Thanks to all of you that were able to attend our first Parent Night. Many thanks to all of the parents who have helped out by donating items, helping us set up the classroom, and by reaching out to new parents. Thank you!

-Ms Parry-Childerley

Grade Six

Our sixth grade geometry block has just come to an end. Throughout the block, I found myself increasingly impressed with the precision of the sixth graders' geometry work. They have grown into careful and thorough workers. During the block, the sixth graders learned to use only their compasses, straightedges, and sharp pencils to divide circles' circumferences into 6 and 12 parts, to bisect line segments, and to create perpendicular and parallel line segments, squares, and equilateral triangles. They concluded their geometry study with an exploration of the Pythagorean Theorem.

And then, on Friday, we took a leap into our study of Geology with a fossil-collecting field trip!

Ms. Johnson

Grade Seven



9.8.11 Seventh grade is off to a great start! We have been studying African Geography, singing (yes, Mr. C is singing with his class!) songs from Africa, and working on achieving a new level of quality in our Main Lesson work. Much is new in seventh grade! A point system for keeping track of the work we do, afternoon classes in English Literature and Math, and regular class meetings during which we discuss class agreements, fundraising, and other topics of interest. Also new: Painting with Ms. Mall! Wonderful things are happening during this weekly 90 minute session, and I have heard, and seen with my own eyes, good things from the class and from Ms. Mall. We have started a monthly class newsletter, with an eye towards starting a school-wide newspaper later this year, and our first edition was a lot of fun to put together. Fundraising for our eighth-grade trip is a focal point as well—check out our display in the school store for some of the goods we are offering, from tie-die to coffee. Also of great excitement is the beginnings of our Circus Arts training: currently we are honing our jump-rope skills and learning to ride unicycles. It's hard to believe that all of this has happened in the first month, but it's all true—and only the tip of the iceberg!

It's great to be back in the swing of things—I have really enjoyed seeing all of the familiar, and the new, Winterberry faces!

9.27.11 Seventh grade is going strong. We are studying geometry, which is actually studying the movement of the universe come to rest for a moment so that we can see it. This year we are dealing with proofs: with going back to the most basic elements of things and building up from there. We are learning, as well, about some of the mathematicians from antiquity: Pythagoras, Euclid, Plato, and Archimedes. They were an interesting group: not only did they bring math to a new level that would not be reached again in the West for 1500 years, they did so while living in either fear or ignorance of some key concepts: they never really accepted pi, for example, because it was an irrational (unending and irresolvable) number, and zero was not part of their mathematical understanding. All of the work the ancient Greeks did was done with whole numbers and fractions—and even fractions were viewed with suspicion. Beauty and perfection and symmetry fascinated the ancient Greeks, and their geometrical work is stunning to this day. So, we are very inspired by this in seventh grade, and our study is infused with an admiration for what these thinkers accomplished so long ago, with nothing more than string compasses and straight edges. Currently, meaning this week, we are busy finding a proof for Pythagoras' theorem that in a right triangle the sum of the area of the shorter sides squared is equal to the square of the longer side, or that $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$. It seems pretty dry . . . until you do it, and then it is really quite engaging!

In English class, we are reading Kipling's "Jungle Book" as a class study, visiting Loussac Library on a regular basis (every three weeks), and enjoying literature circles to discuss what we are reading. Our library trips have yielded books on Africa and on Classical and Renaissance biographies, and we are beginning independent projects on those topics. In pre-algebra, we are studying the proofs and formulas for the area of various polygons, and are moving into volume equations. These formulas, when arising from visual and geometrical understanding, are an excellent gateway into algebraic expressions.

As a postscript, we have learned that to join Pythagoras' school, you had to vow to not speak for five years, to never touch a white rooster, to never stir a fire with an iron rod, to never leave ashes on a pot, to never wear wool (he was not familiar with Waldorf education), and to never eat beans or meat. In light of this wisdom, we are currently reviewing Winterberry's admission standards. Perhaps we have been focusing on the wrong things?

Sincerely,

Mr. Crawford

Grade Eight



During the past month the eight eighth graders have walking down our country's memory lane to learn about American History. They have been discovering how we come to be where we are through non-fiction, historical fiction, and poetry. After writing some poetry of their own they were pleased to share their work with others during "Author's Chair". One of the most enjoyable parts of the day is their charcoal drawing class with Ms. Lois where they are developing great artistic skill. We've been to the museum to look at paintings in the gallery (including one by Ms. Lois' daughter, Ruth Sorensen) and to a café to hear a guest

speaker (Ed:) bring stories of our nation's history from Philadelphia come alive. The eighth graders are gearing up to open the Capital Café which will have breakfast treats available in the mornings. The funds raised from the café will help support the students in their class trip to Washington D.C. this coming May.

Ms. Silcox

Handwork

The school year has begun with a whirlwind of productivity and creativity in Handwork class. Recently your child's class teacher sent home a letter from me in which I introduced myself. Attached to the letter was a "Parent Contact and Volunteer Information Form" to help inform me of your Handwork expertise and your availability to help with Handwork in and outside of school. Thank you to those who have already filled out the form and returned it. Please check with your child's teacher if you need another copy of the letter or form. I want to express my gratitude to the parents who have already been volunteering their time and expertise, and those who have made donations. Thank you! Your contributions are truly appreciated and make Winterberry what it is! Check in frequently for posts on the Winterberry blog about progress on Handwork class projects!

Ms. Lower

Russian

After a long summer break, all of the classes grades 2-8 are reviewing old material and preparing to transition to new studies very soon. Fourth grade is having an especially exciting time, making the transition to reading and writing Russian after three years of learning orally. We use the many songs and verses they've memorized in grades 1-3 to help us learn to read and the class is surprising me with how quickly they are picking it up.

Russian for the first graders has been very interesting—the first few months are a magical time that I really treasure being a part of. Who is this man who comes into the classroom twice a week and speaks in such a funny way? I try to speak little or no English with them in class or in the hall. Several of them asked me to speak "normal language." When placed into such a situation, people usually either get curious, trying to figure out what's going on, or they get nervous, adopting a "wait and see" attitude or laughing. All of these responses are natural and the nervous reactions will dissipate as they live in to the rhythm of the lessons and become more comfortable operating in a different language.

Russian group tutoring is meeting weekly in the 6th grade room on Thursdays between 12:30-1:30. All students in grades 4-8 are welcome, but I'd like to especially encourage students from families that are new to the school this year.

I have been so happy to see so many of the “old” faces come back and to meet all of the new families as well. If you ever have and questions or concerns about Russian class, please do not hesitate to contact me at harmon_arthur@asdk12.org.

Mr. Harmon

Movement

Students started the year off playing many of their favorite games from this past year such as Octopus-Octopus, Park Ranger, Cranes & Crows, Skipper May I Go Across?, and too many types of Tag to name. Our fifth grade class began their training for the Pentathlon that they will be participating in at the end of the school year. The students will go outside in all types of weather this year from rain to snow, wind and cold, and hopefully many, many sunny days. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather so that they are safe from the elements and can fully participate in our movement classes.

Mr. Vander-Schrier

Music

It has been so wonderful to hear the halls of our school filled with the sounds of the students singing! This year in music class, the students will be devoting their time to choral singing and recorder playing. Starting in the third grade, students will begin learning the fundamentals of music through singing, recorder playing, and dance. As they progress through the grades we will build upon these fundamentals so that by the time the students are in their final years of school they will be singing in four-part choral literature. All students will start with a soprano recorder and as they progress through the grades they will be incorporating other sizes of recorders including the sopranino, alto, tenor, and bass recorders. Our students have already embarked on this journey singing in rounds up to three parts, reading printed music, and singing in Latin, Hebrew, German, and Zulu.

Mr. Vander-Schrier



Winterberry Dress Request

In order to reduce classroom distractions, continue our commitment to upholding Steiner's views on materialism, and respect the needs of all students, families, and staff, we respectfully ask that student attire be comprised of:

- * solid colors,
- * stripes,
- * polka dots,
- * or patterns.

We also ask that all outerwear and accessories (including indoor shoes and lunch boxes) also follow these guidelines. Please choose plain shoes that do not include electronic lights, sounds, wheels, or commercially produced pictures.

When students come to school with items that do not meet these guidelines, school staff may ask them to alter the clothing so it is not distracting (turn a shirt inside-out, for example), give the student an alternative item to wear instead and/or work together with families to find an alternative within a reasonable period.

Our goal is that we can come together on this issue out of respect for all community members knowing that while such items may not distract one, they do distract another. Thank you for your commitment to creating and maintaining the highest quality environment for our children.

As always, thank you for your willingness to grow and work together to create a culture of caring and respect at Winterberry!

Winterberry Charter Council (WCC)

Melissa Janigo, Chair	janigo_melissa@asdk12.org
Tara Smith, Vice Chair	taramarlene@gmail.com
Erin Fleischer, Secretary	erininak@gmail.com
Della Swartz, Treasurer	ddswartz@mtaonline.net
Arthur Harmon, Staff	harmon_arthur@asdk12.org
Franny Hall, Community Member	frannyinak@yahoo.com
Todd Robicheaux, Parent	ericandmeggan@gmail.com
Bob Steinmann, Parent	bsteinmann@live.com
Lynne Jablonski, WPG Rep	lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com
Meg Eggleston, Faculty Chair	eggleston_margaret@asdk12.org
Faculty Seat, Vacant	
Shanna Mall, Principal	mall_shanna@asdk12.org

Monthly Meetings: 3rd Thursday of each month, 6pm, second floor of
Winterberry Charter School unless otherwise stated & advertised.

Winterberry Parent Guild (WPG)

Craig Lyon, President	ak3csand@gci.net
Eric Judge, Vice President	ericandmeggan@gmail.com
Christina Eubanks, Secretary	christinaann58@hotmail.com
Sarah Rygh, Treasurer	sara.rygh@gmail.com
Lynne Jablonski, Fundraising Chair & WCC Rep	lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com
Mike Rehberg, Volunteer Coordinator	mike@rehbergs.net
Jeremy Crawford, Faculty Rep	crawford_jeremy@asdk12.org
Vacant, Grade Eight Rep	
Karie VanDusen, Grade Seven Rep	
Emma Allen, Grade Six Rep	
Dave Swartz, Grade Five Rep	ddswartz@mtaonline.net
Brian Sarka, Grade Four Rep	
VACANT, Grade Three Rep	
Haras Cullers, Grade Two Rep	
Tara Petter, Grade One Rep	
Leif Lidin-Lamon, Grade Kindergarten Rep	
Shanna Mall, Principal	mall_shanna@asdk12.org

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