

The Waldorf Weekly for December 14, 2011

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
OF THE WALDORF SCHOOL
OF PHILADELPHIA

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

- 15 Observation Morning, 8:30–10:00 a.m.
21-30 Winter Break, **NO SCHOOL**

January

- 2 Winter Break, **NO SCHOOL**
3 School re-opens
13 Eighth Grade Coffee House, TBA
16 MLK Day, **NO SCHOOL**, *Special Program*
18 “Bridge to First Grade”, TBA
19 Observation Morning, 8:30– 10:00 a.m.
21 Coffee & Conversation, 11 a.m.
28 Winter Open House, 2–4 p.m.

WINTER HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

The school’s administrative office will have the following schedule during the winter break:

- Wednesday, December 21, 8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Thursday, December 29, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Monday, January 2, 9 a.m. – noon

Winter Fundraising Challenge Kick Off!

I am excited to kick off the 2011 Winter Challenge and to announce that a very generous WSP family is matching every gift we receive by the end of the year, up to a total of \$10,000. This week you should have received a packet of information including our 2010/2011 Annual Report as well as information about our fundraising challenge. Please help us meet our goal of raising \$20,000 (\$10,000 from you + \$10,000 from our Challenge family) in the month of December. With only a little over two weeks left in the year, we’ve got no time to lose and so much to gain!

Also, don’t forget to ask your employer if they offer a matching gift program. With some employers offering a dollar-for-dollar match, it’s a great way to maximize your contribution. We are fully eligible to accept any corporate matching gift program.

You can donate anytime on our secure website at www.phillywaldorf.com/how-to-donate.

Thank you for supporting our 2011 Winter Challenge Fundraiser!



~ Alex Dilks Pandola
Director of Development

WINTER ORCHESTRA CONCERT

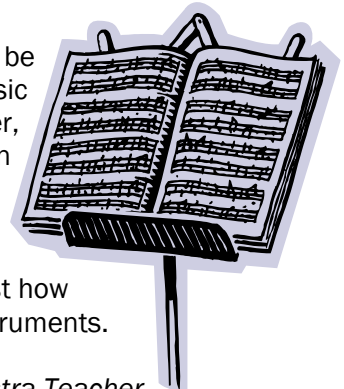
Monday, December 19th, 7 p.m.

Come support the orchestra program! We will be playing *Greensleeves*, holiday music, and music from *Harry Potter*, *Sound of Music*, Mozart, Weber, and Handel, with creative writing and narration featuring Rylee Gallagher, Martha Anne Smith, and Georgia O'Lynn.

Our fabulous 4th grade class will demonstrate just how serious and disciplined they can be with their instruments.

~ Eliza Cho, Orchestra Teacher

The concert will take place at the Unitarian Society of Germantown, 6511 Lincoln Drive.





So Noted...



The Whispering Wood

Newly-decorated and open just in time for those last minute holiday gifts! On sale Now in the old Fairy's Wing location —Kindergarten play stands, silks and play clips, swords, shields and other Good Sir Knightly attire; wooden play kitchens, plates, forks, and an abundance of play food for your little chef; Circus Arts gifts for your grade school child, including unicycles and Rola Bolas for the most daring and adventurous. And don't forget your beeswax!



Ice Skating for Grades Students Begins on Friday after Winter Break

Information about this winter's ice skating program was mailed to Grades parents last week. All registration forms are due at the school office by Monday, December 19th. If you have any questions, please contact Carrie Harris at the school office.

Thank you.

THE WALDORF WEEKLY Is published every Wednesday during the school year for the parents and friends of The Waldorf School of Philadelphia. The next newsletter will be published on **Wednesday, January 4, 2012.**

Submissions for the next week are due by **Friday, December 30, 2011.** Submissions after the deadline will be included at the discretion of the editor.

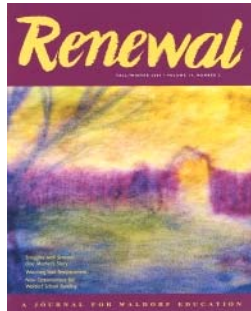
Classified ads are published bi-weekly as a free service to the community. Publication in the classified section is available as space allows. Please send all submissions to office@phillywaldorf.com.

Disclaimer:

Items and advertisements appearing in this newsletter may be the opinions or beliefs of their contributors, and may not necessarily reflect the policies or ideas of The Waldorf School of Philadelphia.

Time for Renewal!

Renewal Magazine is here! If you ordered this AWSNA publication through the Parents' Association, please note that your copy will be sent home with your eldest child on Friday, December 16th. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Carrie Harris in the school office at 215-248-1662, or send e-mail to office@phillywaldorf.com.



PIZZA FRIDAYS: IT'S RE-ORDER TIME

It's time to order or re-order pizza! Thanks to all families who have ordered this year. The first 12-week order period ends on Friday, December 16th. If you would like to order pizza for the next 12-week order period (January 6-March 30), please see the order form on the last page of this issue of *The Weekly* or find hard copies on the 8th grade bulletin board. (If you placed a full-year order in September, your child came home earlier this week with a thank you note on melon-colored paper from the 8th grade.)



Thanks from the Class of 2012!!!

PARENT STUDY MEETS TODAY

Parent Study meets every Wednesday from 3:30–5 p.m. in the Parents' Resource Room in Eagles I (near the Snowdrop Nursery). Come join us as we discuss Waldorf Education, parenting, and other topics of mutual interest. Complementary aftercare services are available for participating parents; however, please register with the school office. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 215-226-3688. See you after school!

~ Donna DiStefano

Recycle Your Old Bike and Help Support The Seventh Grade!

The Seventh Grade is collecting any used or outgrown bikes to raise money for their senior class trip. These bikes will be given to the Bicycle Coalition in exchange for funds. What a great way to also support the community! Drop off any bikes that you can spare on Wednesdays between 3:30–5 p.m. We'll even do pick-ups; just call Donna. Feel free to cut this notice out to give to a friend! Any questions, please call Donna DiStefano at 215-226-3688. Thanks for your help.

~ The Seventh Grade



Holiday Shop in Your Jammies and Support Our School!



Don't forget to use our online shopping links for popular merchants like Amazon.com this holiday season. Visit www.phillywaldorf.com/online-shopping. It could not be easier to contribute 4-6% of your total purchases to our school at no additional charge to you. Share our online shopping page with your friends and family to help maximize our holiday shopping contributions. Thank you and happy shopping!

~ Alex Dilks Pandola
Director of Development

TEN-SECOND ELEVATOR SPEECH

Looking for something to say when you talk to others about our school? Make it short and succinct with a ten-second elevator speech. This week's speech:

"Studies have shown that when used as a means of synergistic learning, art is an intensifier that makes academics more powerfully internalized. The approach to teaching at The Waldorf School of Philadelphia encourages curiosity, creativity and critical thinking skills."

Lost Something?

Please check the Lost and Found bin on the third floor for your missing items. All items left during the break will be donated to a local charity. Thank you.



MLK DAY

A day of service, reflection, and community.

Make it a day ON, not a day OFF.

Special program at WSP. Watch the Weekly for details.

January 16, 2012

Neighborhood News

HOLIDAY MARKETS AT THE ART GARAGE

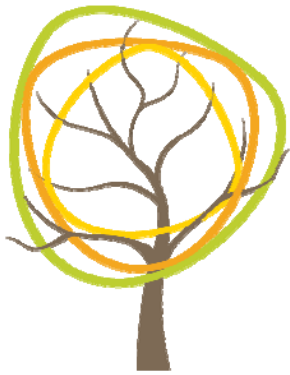
Mt. Airy's new community art center, the Mt. Airy Art Garage, is hosting its last holiday art market for the season this weekend.

The holiday market offers shoppers an opportunity to purchase unique art and handcrafts created by local artisans, many of whom are residents of northwest Philadelphia. Shoppers can find a diverse selection of art ranging from photographs and paintings to fiber works, clay and tileworks, wearable art and handcrafted toys and gifts. Artist participants vary from one weekend to the next, so there might be an entirely different group this weekend.

Market hours are 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, December 17th and 18th. In addition to shopping, refreshments, music and other merriment will be offered. The Art Garage is located at 11 West Mt. Airy Avenue, around the corner from McMenamin's. For information about the Art Garage, visit www.mtairyartgarage.org.

LOTTERY APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR CHILDREN'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND PHILADELPHIA

Applications are being accepted for one of the 2,000 new 4-year scholarships available through the Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia, a private scholarship source funded by area businesses. CSFP seeks to offer Philadelphia families more educational options by providing financial access to quality tuition-based schools for children in kindergarten through grade 8. For information about the fund and eligibility requirements, go to www.csphiladelphia.org.



**THE whispering
WOOD**

THE WHISPERING WOOD CREATES A BUZZ AT GREEN ON GREENE

Thank you to everyone who supported The Whispering Wood pop-up store this past weekend, in every which way the support came! Whether you contributed items for sale, created the window displays, unpacked and packed boxes, spent months ordering extra stock ("Buy Debra, buy!"); whether you visited the store, bought beautiful gifts for your loved ones, or whether you brought your kids out on a chilly Friday night so that they could sing in the school choir; however your support came, we were so very grateful.

The original idea for the store came during the hot summer months when the empty store front opposite the Co-op started looking very unloved and forlorn. After a few months, a couple of meetings, lots of great ideas, excitement, energy and hard work, the idea turned into a reality. The empty store front became alive and enlivened by our community of artists, artisans and creatives. As a marketing effort The Whispering Wood was a huge success, enabling conversations about Waldorf Education to extend far beyond our usual reach. However the project became so much more than it's *raison d'être*, a marketing project; real fun was had, creative energy abounded, friendships were sealed and the project showed us just how much is to be achieved when we all pull together.

The three-day event included way too many people to mention in this article but a mention to those involved in the project from the outset seems possible. Thanks to Mike Takats for the original idea of the pop-up store, even before all of the other pop-ups began popping up. To those who helped to shape and develop the creative vision for the store: Alex Kujawa, Daphne Fifield, Rob Linsalata, Debra Basso, Peter Price and Laura McCann, we say, "thank you" and "when can we do it again?". A special shout out to Jason Fifield, who saved the day with his iPad credit card gizmo. Who says Waldorf doesn't use technology? Cutting edge, baby! And to The Whispering Wood Creative Director and tour de force, Bettina deCaumette, "Thank you". Without you it would not have been possible, plain and simple.

Happy holidays, one and all!
~ Alexandra Borders, Director of Admissions



The Whispering Wood offered a variety of playthings for "kids" of every age.

SOCIAL INCLUSION CORNER

COURTESY OF THE MONTH

Choose positive words and thoughts and be guided by them.

What this world needs is a new kind of army—the army of the kind.
Cleveland Amory, American author and animal rights activist
(1917–1998)

The Social Inclusion is an on-going project designed to bring greater awareness to issues of social inclusion, courtesy and bullying in our school. Our school participates in, and supports, The Social Inclusion with the goal of creating a healthy social environment that nurtures children and adults, encourages open discussion, and provides ways of resolving disagreements and conflict that are beneficial to the school community.

The Why and How of Waldorf

Supporting Parents in Digestible Bites

THE HOLIDAY SEASON: PUTTING THE GENIE BACK IN THE BOTTLE

by Kim John Payne

Here comes the holiday season; something to look forward to and something that many parents also dread. "The whole thing is like being hit by a sensory tsunami," commented one mom who was wondering if there was another way to do it. While our kids are living life at such a fever pitch through the school year, is it possible to down shift the pace as we move into the holidays?

TOO MUCH, TOO FAST, TOO SOON

We are now living in a post excess era. We have seen what excess has done to our economy and to our environment. And hardly a day goes by when we don't see another high profile article about the excess of screen time and digital overload our children are experiencing, most recently, the NYT "Growing Up Digital, Wired For Distraction" [for example].

What about educational excess? With the national attention of the films *Waiting for Superman* and also *Race to Nowhere*, many are now questioning if education is also a part of the culture of excess.

It's around this time of the year

that we are given a chance to make some choices about the pace of life, and it's not easy. Somewhere inside us we know this is a time of "peace on earth", of family connection (maybe those two images don't exactly line up) and yet the pressure to speed up, do more and brave the "sensory tsunami" of holiday season shopping and celebration is acute.

THE SIMPLE HOLIDAY SEASON

What about a "Simple Holiday Season"? It could be easy on the wallet and easy on the nerves. It's possible, it really is. Let's establish some ground rules. Four of them to be accurate...

#1—Clutter

Do we really want more of it in our homes? With the financial pressures most people are under nowadays, the deluge of gifts has not lessened; just the amount they cost. "We are just buying more and more crap," says Heidi Stevens from the *Chicago Tribune*, who is writing a piece on this theme for their Sunday magazine. "It's stuff we don't want, will likely break, is annoying and just plain junky."

Speak to our major bearers of clutter (I mean gifts), extended family and, especially grandparents, about your wish for simplicity. Thank them for raising you in such a way that led you to make conscious parenting choices; that they gave you the strength to not be manipulated by marketers, and the morals to not confuse love and care with "stuff". Framing a conversation about your parenting values first takes the potential sting out of a request to keep the gifts simple.

#2—Rhythm and Predictability

The holidays shake the normal rhythms of family life. The normal pillars of our days such as waking up times, school or work, meal and bed times are the things that give our lives shape. This is especially true for children, as it provides a feeling of safety and security. The temptation during the holidays is to let all that go and to relax all those routines. However, there is a great big danger here to achieving some semblance of family sanity and it is this... if we take away our well-oiled rhythms, we take away the structure that makes navigating family life possible.

(Continued on page 6)



Coffee & Conversation

THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION presents an informal parent education opportunity

ART IN WALDORF EDUCATION

with Susan Braccia, M.Ed.

a founding parent of WSP, artist, and current faculty member at The Academy in Manayunk

Saturday, January 21, 2012, 11 a.m. ♦ Child care will be available

Save the date!

(Continued from page 5) SIMPLE HOLIDAYS

ble. And the double whammy here is that during the holidays we have *more* time together and our family interactions are at their *most* intense.

So here is the tip: maybe alter the times but not the rituals. The table still needs to be set, teeth brushed, room tidied and so on. If we hold onto these predictable moments in a child's life they will offer familiar points of decompression and provide safety release valves that are all the more important during the hubbub of holiday season. So, sit down each night, think about it and make some choices that are humble enough to be do-able about the structure of the following day and then, without becoming maniacal, stick to them.

#3—Scheduling

Rather than adding fuel to the *soul fever* that many of our kids experience during the school year, let's try and cool it down. Do less. Consider staying at home rather than facing the frenzied airports or frantic highway scenes. Rediscover "the gift of boredom". If your kids say to you, "Dad, there's nothing to do", your response can be "Mmm, that's a pity." If they return saying, "But there's really nothing to do." Your response [should be], "Oh, that's really a pity." LET THEM BE BORED. No TV, no unpaid parent event organizer. You must become more boring than the boredom. Boredom is simply the precursor to creativity. Soon projects, games, creative play breaks out. These activities can last for hours and the big pay off... you get to relax and read a magazine (or, might I add, *The Huffington Post*).

#4—Filter Out the Adult World

"Kids hear way too much adult conversation these days. It amazes me

what adults say in front of children," commented a grandmother at a recent workshop I was facilitating. This becomes even more intense over the holidays as we spend so much time together in mixed age groups. Three simple questions to ask before you say anything in front of your child: "Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?" If the answer is "yes" to all three, then you are on pretty good ground. If not, defer. Say it later when you can enjoy the conversation within adult company.

Excessive TV and computer time is a hot topic and certainly something to be conscious about especially in the holidays. Maybe I'll post some thought on this soon.

Lastly, we hear the word "authenticity" a lot these days, but it especially applies during the holiday season. If we are trying to give our kids a balanced life and we are trying to keep it simple, it does not look good to them when we cave in to holiday season pressure. Being true to yourself does not have a holiday season exclusion clause in the contract and we certainly don't want to model to our kids that values are optional. As touchy a subject as it is, our first loyalty as parents is to our kids, not to their uncles, aunts and grandparents, and certainly not to marketers.

In his renown enthusiasm, Henry David Thoreau once wrote to his teacher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Yes! We must simplify, simplify, simplify." Emerson wrote back, "Don't you think one 'simplify' is enough?"

Kim John Payne is the author of *Simplicity Parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier and More Secure Kids*. (Ballantine Books/Random House),

and has been a frequent guest at The Waldorf School of Philadelphia. You can see more at www.simplicityparenting.com, from which this article was reprinted.



Peace and joy this holiday season from the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff at The Waldorf School of Philadelphia.

We'll see you in 2012.

**Merry Christmas!
Happy Hanukkah!
Happy Kwanzaa!**

PIZZA FRIDAYS!

The Class of 2012 offers pizza for lunch with a side of organic, raw, baby-cut carrots to students in grades 2–8.

Place your orders using the information and order forms below.

12 weeks of Pizza Fridays (January 6–March 30)

One slice—\$35

Two slices—\$60

Three slices—\$80

The order deadline is Wednesday, January 4th, 2012. Place your order and payment in the collection envelope on the 8th grade bulletin board.

THANKS FROM THE 8TH GRADE!

Child's Name and Grade: _____

Please enclose your check made payable to WSP Class of 2012.

Child's Name and Grade: _____

Please enclose your check made payable to WSP Class of 2012.

Child's Name and Grade: _____

Please enclose your check made payable to WSP Class of 2012.



7500 Germantown Avenue
Eagles II Building
Philadelphia, PA 19119
phillywaldorf.com
T: 215-248-1662
F: 215-248-6167
E: info@phillywaldorf.com

Thank you for reading *The Waldorf Weekly*, the newsletter of *The Waldorf School of Philadelphia*. Follow daily life at our school on our blog at www.phillywaldorf.com