



Four Tellings

*A weekly bulletin for family
and friends of Four Winds
Waldorf School*



November 9, 2011

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Lantern Walk

*The sunlight fast is dwindling, my little lamp needs kindling.
Its beam shine bright in darkest night
Dear Lantern guard me with your light.
—Traditional Martinmas Song*

Lantern Walk is a wonderful fall festival celebrating the legend of St. Martin, (or Martinmas, November 11th) who was known for his ability to bring warmth and light to those previously in darkness. He is remembered in many cultures with a festival of lanterns, carrying light into the coming winter, storytelling and singing songs. Our school celebrates Lantern Walk in Early Childhood classes through Grade 3.

This year, our school will have two Lantern Walk celebrations. On Friday, November 11th at 5PM, grades 1 through 3 will meet in their classrooms and then take their walk. On Saturday, November 12th at 4:15PM Early Childhood will meet in their classrooms and then take their walk. Parents, please be sure your child eats something substantial before coming to this event.

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Oh the places we will go...

Last week the Faculty, Board, and Parent Council took the first step in our quest to revitalize our school and rediscover the life-affirming benefits of a Waldorf education for our children and our community. Ralph Weickel, with the Corporation for Positive Change (www.positivechange.org) provided his insight and guidance in directing us how to use the process of Appreciative Inquiry to help us grow. Just as plants grow toward their energy source, so do communities move toward what gives them life and energy.

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From the Desk of Marianne Fieber

At nearly every Executive Steering Committee we speak our school mission as an opening verse. I hope by now everyone is aware we have a mission statement and that we are working on it as part of the strategic planning for our next phase of development. As a reminder it is:

Four Winds Waldorf School is committed to awakening the intellect, imagination and determination of every child, leading to a life-long love of learning. Within a protective and nurturing environment, teachers and parents work together to build a community where each student's confidence, sense of responsibility and self-reliance unfolds.

I was reflecting on one topic of discussion in our ESC meeting this week and made a connection between our mission and the "It Takes A Village" impulse. It is so important that every adult in our community; teachers, parents, staff or other caregivers, find the right relationship to every student and support the development of respect for one another, other students' work or effort and the "elders" of our community. It can take a great deal of courage to draw attention to the careless word or deed that we overhear or see as we move about our day and yet that is what we are called to do. Not to be what could be deemed the moral police but more to serve as guides in an effort to shape behaviors that uphold the quality of the culture we are striving to co-create. One of the messages we heard over and over through our work with Kim John-Payne and social inclusion was "whatever we ignore, we condone". We participate in the creation of our school culture through our own thoughts, words and deeds and consequently strengthen it for our children in how we model and guide them in the moment.

Just a reminder... Don't miss our 7th/8th Grade Orchestra performance at Art Works 2011 presented by the Warrenville Arts Council!

Oh the places we will go...

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A basic tenet of Appreciative Inquiry is an organization grows in the direction it asks questions about. This is where we need your input. What does Four Winds look like to you in 5 years. Do we own the property next door? Do we have science labs? A large garden? Chickens? What have been some of the highlights of being a part of our Four Winds community? What's on your wish-list? Over the next couple of months, a parent from within our community will be calling to set up an interview to get your input.

Let the following be our guide in pursuing our destiny:

"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius and magic in it." —Goethe

—Jocelyne Roy

Parent Council Update

As part of the *Appreciative Inquiry initiative* process at our school, we replaced our meeting this last Thursday by an opportunity to sit down and participate in Ralph Weickel's workshop. It was the right decision! We were able to learn about this powerful process which can be used to transform and strengthen an organization,



This Week's Calendar

November 9, 2011 (Wednesday)

8:45^{AM} School Tour
1:30–3^{PM} Leadership Council
3–4^{PM} Executive Steering Committee

November 10, 2011 (Thursday)

SCRIP Orders Due / Pick-up
8:00^{AM} Groman Cafe
8:15^{AM} Parent Handwork Group—*all are welcome*
10:30–11:30^{AM} Social Inclusion Coordinating Group (SICG)
3:15–5:30^{PM} Faculty Meeting

November 11, 2011 (Friday)

Newsletter Submission Deadline
3–4^{PM} Student Service Committee Meeting
5^{PM} Lantern Walk Grades 1–3

November 12, 2011 (Saturday)

10^{AM}–12^{PM} All School Clean-Up
4:15^{PM} Lantern Walk Early Childhood

November 13, 2011 (Sunday)

ARTWORKS Student Performances

November 16, 2011 (Wednesday)

1:30–3^{PM} Leadership Council
3–4^{PM} Executive Steering Committee



We are Thankful

It takes so many people to give our school the warm and inviting feeling that makes it a special place for our children. It is easy to get caught up in our busy lives though, and many in our school go on unthanked for their hard work and thoughtfulness.

Next week will be the last *Four Tellings* issue before Thanksgiving break. I'd like to dedicate some space in the newsletter to a *Community Thanks* page.

Do you have someone you'd like to thank for their unnoticed hard work? Are you thankful in general for an amazing aspect of our school?

Please send your words of Thanksgiving to Kassia Shaw (kassia.shaw@me.com) no later than this Friday, November 11th. All thanks will be printed anonymously in the spirit of community.

Here are some things I'm thankful for:

The team of dads at Harvest Fest who took time away from the festival to work on needed school repairs.

Being greeted at the door each day by smiling faces.

namely our Four Winds Waldorf School. It was very interesting and exciting.

Parent Council has begun to engage in preparation for the *Elves' Market*, through our 5th grade representative, Angela Murray. It will be a great and fun event that will require the participation of many volunteers. As we learn more about the resources needed to make it happen, other Parent Council members will add to the team and start reaching out to our community. So, stay tuned. After all, it will be nice to do some holiday shopping while hanging out with one another and avoiding the shopping malls altogether!

—Eduardo Nigro

Social Explorations Update

"The healing social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community the virtue of each one is living." —Rudolf Steiner

"We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." —Franklin Delano Roosevelt

The quotes above epitomize my passion for social health and healing. I strive to support the faculty and Waldorf curriculum by providing ways for students to practice compassion and tolerance. My hope is that with time, our alumni may become adults capable of celebrating another's gifts while tolerating quirks as simply being part of the human package.

As you may not know who I am, I will give a brief introduction. My name is Parvaneh Shidnia-Smith, and six years ago, I enrolled and completed a teasing and bullying program developed by the award-winning author, Waldorf educator and counselor, Kim John Payne. As a result of Mr. Payne's faculty in-service, and due to my persistence in keeping social issues front and center, bullying and teasing decreased substantially. This continues to be the case at Four Winds, and for that I am very proud. However, it is my opinion that Mr. Payne's work could be supported and strengthened by ongoing practice of social skills so that our classrooms are kinder, more respectful, and more thoughtful.

Over the summer, I researched a number of social-emotional learning programs which employ hands-on, experiential activities to help students practice vital skills. I knew that I wanted to find a curriculum, which had at its foundation, thinking, feeling and willing. By chance, I came across a plan complimentary to our pedagogy. It is called *Tribes Learning Communities* or TLC, and it is used by at least one other Waldorf school.

TLC operates from a late elementary/middle school developmental perspective. The model stresses that there are a number of tasks young people need to learn which are independence and autonomy, social competency, a sense of purpose, and problem-solving.

This year, I am continuing to teach a class I call Social Explorations and will use TLC activities to deepen my lessons. Each class begins with a reminder of the four agreements:

- Attentive listening
- Appreciation/no put-downs

- Mutual respect
- Right to participate or pass

We then move into experiential activities. Last month, the 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th grade students chose a behavior that they would practice throughout the year so that their regular and combined class might be strengthened. I gave them each a piece of paper, had them write their goal, and illustrate it. I asked each pair of students to help their partner by reminding them of their goal when they fall short throughout the school year.

I then made a “dream quilt.” At our January assembly, the quilts will be unveiled and each student will read out their New Year’s resolution to the entire school. We will then hang the quilts above the stairs. If you are in the school, I hope that you will have a chance to view their artwork and goals.

I am a big fan of experiential activities because they help students identify why we need social skills, give them opportunities to practice the skill, and provide time for reflecting upon their use.

If you wish to learn more about TLC, you can visit www.Tribes.com. Otherwise, if you would like to talk with me about my class, or if you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am at school on Thursdays, or you can call me on my cell phone at 708-557-5279.

—Parvaneh Shidnia-Smith
Originally the School Counselor

The First Light of Advent in Parent-Child Classes

Advent is a time of awaiting and preparing for what is to come. In our materialistic culture where advertisements are constantly alerting us to the many things we don’t need, but “need to need”!, it is a time so filled with family and social demands, that we truly have to “work at” creating the gesture and mood that we want around our young children. In this light, the calm, solitary light of a single candle, we can contemplate what it is that our inner selves deeply desire at this darkest time of our outer year. It is a time we can build feelings of gratitude and acknowledgement for the kingdoms of nature that support our lives all year long. Advent is a time for more silence, more moments of calm in the midst of chaotic outer demands and the rising excitement in the children. If you have not yet done so, it is a great time to create a very deep and calm bedtime routine and mood that, with the single candle, can light your way through the coming whole year.

This year Advent starts on the Sunday following Thanksgiving, November 27th, and because Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, we have the longest possible Advent period of preparation—the full 4 weeks—28 days!—which makes the traditional “average” Advent Calendar 4 windows short!

The Four Winds Parent Child classes offered this year will be the first three weeks of Advent, beginning on Tuesday, November 29th and Wednesday, November 30th. Both classes will include a Advent Circle time, a simple snack eaten by candle light, and a closing story.

The Tuesday morning class will focus on adult education and will explore the



November Parent Handwork Group

Beginning November 3rd parents are invited to a weekly *Elves’ Market Workshop* on Thursday mornings after Groman Café in Sunrise Garden. We will work from 8:00–9:00AM and clean-up in time for the Parent-Child class to begin at 9:30AM. Kassia Shaw will help coordinate our crafting work to create some wonderful treasures our young people may purchase as gifts for their siblings or relatives. Feel free to drop in and work with the group, or on your own project for the Market. Younger siblings are welcome.

Can’t make it, but still want to help? See the attached *Ideas List* for things you can make or purchase.

Special Project: Handmade Straw Stars

On Monday, November 14th, beginning at 2:00PM, we will hold a special afternoon handwork session. Parents are invited to join in creating beautiful straw star ornaments. We have the straws, the thread and even some exacto-knives. Come and we’ll learn a new skill together.

—Marianne Fieber



Mysterious Suitcase

Since last year, a dark-green hard-sided suitcase has been camped in the upstairs costume closet. It has a combination lock so the contents cannot be discerned. If not claimed, it will move on to its new home at the dump.

Classified & Newsletter Submissions

Please submit classifieds and newsletter content by Friday afternoon before school ends to be published the following Wednesday.

Classifieds should to be submitted to the front office. Ads cost \$5 for a 50 word ad that will run for two weeks. All classifieds are subject to editing.

Newsletter content can be emailed to Kassia Shaw at kassia.shaw@me.com.

many possible family/life habits that one might want to establish during the Advent season.

The Wednesday morning class will offer a simple watercolor painting experience for the parents and children. After the children have gone off to play, I will guide the parents, who are interested in doing so, in bringing more form into their Advent paintings. On the third class meeting, we will help the children turn their paintings into card/gifts by decorating them with golden stars.

—Naomi Studebaker

Elves' Market Update—New Details!

We will be printing new details about the *Elves' Market* in each week's *Four Tellings*. The purpose of the *Elves' Market* is threefold. First and foremost, it is an important community building event, where families can come together over the holiday season, and enjoy the warmth of each other's friendship. Secondly, it is an outreach event. We will be promoting the Market to the outside public and prospective families, who are still learning about our school and the rich childhood experiences we have to offer. And thirdly, it is an important fundraiser. As such, we hope that you come prepared to give and consider bringing friends and family to share in the merriment.

This week, we are excited to announce the addition of a talent show during the last hour of the *Elves' Market* in the Sweet Shoppe. All members of our community are invited to participate. We will be hosting sign-ups for five minute time slots starting November 14th through December 5th.

The fairs and festivals take a tremendous amount of work on the behalf of our *entire community* to organize and make memorable. The more help we have, the more we can do! Be on the lookout this week for volunteer sign-up sheets in the hallway. If any events don't fill up, we will consider dropping them in the coming weeks.

Here are some additional ways you can help support our *Elves' Market*:

- Consider contributing handmade items to the children's "Sparkle Star Market," where they can purchase inexpensive gifts for family and friends. Not sure what to make? Come to one of our November Handwork Meetings, or use the attached ideas list.
- We will be hosting an Ornament Fundraiser during the Market. Please think about donating a handmade ornament for the bookstore to sell at the event. Ornaments will sell for \$15 each.
- Bring a bake sale item the day of the fair.
- Volunteer to help clean the school and prepare our classrooms for the event. This can be done in several ways, we have an *All School Clean-Up* scheduled for November 12th (details below), contact Robyn Abend to help with a more general and weekly clean-up schedule, contact your teachers to see if they need any room-specific help, or contact Marianne Fieber to see if you can help with the event decorations.
- Do you have a service or something of value to add to our silent auction?

From the *Elves' Market* Team: Marianne Fieber, Angela Murray, Melissa Rutkowski and Kassia Shaw.

Save the Date

Lantern Walk

Grades 1-3

Friday, November 11th, from 5–7PM

Early Childhood

Saturday, November 12th, from 4:15–6:15PM

Lantern Walk is a wonderful fall festival celebrating the legend of St. Martin, (or Martinmas, November 11th) who was known for his ability to bring warmth and light to those previously in darkness. He is remembered in many cultures with a festival of lanterns, carrying light into the coming winter, storytelling and singing songs.

Ted-X Lecture by *Four Winds* Parent and Board of Trustees President, Rich Hill

Friday, November 11th

Grounds for Hope Cafe in Lisle

Come and learn from over 10 speakers who will share with us on how “Good is Happening” in our community and surrounding Chicagoland. Speakers include a leading Argonne National Laboratory Director for Computing, the founder and leader of the amazing Red Bull Air Force, a previous TEDxNaperville attendee now sharing with us why the current US space program is anything BUT dead following the space shuttles final voyage, and best of all...our very own Rich Hill will also be a featured speaker! Tickets sell out fast. Visit www.tedxnaperville.com for more information.

All School Clean-Up

Saturday, November 12th, 10AM–12PM

Please help us make the school shine for the benefit of our community and visitors attending the *Waldorf Journey* November 19th and the *Elves' Market* December 10th. We'd like to give the school a thorough cleaning inside and out leading into the holiday season.

ARTWORKS 2011

Sunday, November 13th

Hubble Middle School, 3S600 Herrick Rd, Warrenville

The Four Winds Waldorf School 7th/8th grade Orchestra will be participating in Warrenville Arts Council's annual Art Works Festival celebrating both performing and visual arts in and around Warrenville.

In addition to our orchestra, we will have a display of visual art throughout the grades. This is a fabulous event and we hope all our families will carve out some time to attend. Our Orchestra, directed by Honna Austin, will be performing between 1:00-1:30PM. Our 8th grades students, under the direction of Altin Naska, will share their Waltz, Tango and Salsa to start us off—come see what our students can do!

Free Balance Board Workshop

Sunday, November 13th, Noon–4PM

Peaceful Parlour, 212 South Third Street, Geneva



Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee fully engaged in their effort to deliver a Strategic Plan for Four Winds Waldorf School. We will be actively engaging every parent within our community through interviews and conversations toward identifying goals, developing steps toward their fulfillment and impassioned partners. Please see the attached communication form outlining the topics from our recent conference call meeting.

Pictures This Week

The *Four Tellings* needs pictures!!! I'd like to publish photos of all the field trips and any other special event or project. Please send your pictures to Kassia Shaw (kassia.shaw@me.com) by Friday, for a Wednesday publication date. Thank you to Anna Morris who sent in pictures of Rainbow Garden.

Sparkle Star Market Crafts

The *Elves' Market* on December 10th will feature a children's *Sparkle Star Market* where gifts can be purchased for friends and family. Please consider donating handmade items valued between \$0.50 and \$5.00.

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Elves' Market Donations Needed

We are in need of the following items for *Jack Frost's Children's Craft Workshop* at the upcoming *Elves' Market*. If you are able to donate, please bring these items to the front office for Kassia Shaw as soon as possible. Thank you!!

- Ribbon (3/4" to 1" wide)
- Colorful wool yarn
- Copper picture hanging-gauge wire
- Glue sticks, mini hot glue sticks, Tacky Glue
- Small natural items that can be glued on wood (berries, seed pods, fuzzy grass tips, acorn caps, tiny pinecones, small shells, etc.)
- Pinecones of all sizes
- Cracker and cereal boxes (leave in the front office for Angela Murray)

We are also looking for the following food items for the *Cookie Cottage*:

- Dried fruit
- Shaved coconut
- Other allergy-free cookie and candy toppings

Contact Marianne Fieber or Angela Murray if you are able to help donate natural seasonal items for decoration.

Local artist, Liz Kantorski of Balance Boards & Beams, joins Peaceful Parlour once again for a special session with some pre-cut wood pieces so kids & adults alike can design & create their own balance board. Attendees will be sanding, applying oil, assembling the pieces & upholstering the top. The instruction is free and the cost of the boards range from \$25 to \$70 depending on the size of the board. This is also a great opportunity place special orders for the upcoming holidays.

RSVP to Peaceful Parlour at (630) 232-6300 as space is limited. We will leave some space for drop ins too.

Peaceful Parlour is a general store that offers cool, stylish and future friendly gifts for children and adults. Our products are made of renewable resources, recycled materials and created by people earning a living wage. We are the go to place for plastic free alternatives.

Hearts, Hands and Voices

Friday, November 18, 7:00PM

Immanuel Presbyterian Church

29W260 Batavia Road, Warrenville

All Four Winds School families are encouraged to attend.

This is a wonderful chance to see some of the beautiful work and activities that the grade school children are doing at school for their morning lesson as well as special subject classes. It is a celebration of the curriculum and a demonstration of the unique way it is experienced in a Waldorf School. Join us for this unforgettable community event.

Continuing Education: New Waldorf Coursework

Great Lakes Waldorf Institute in Milwaukee, WI, is offering a new course— "Contemplative Practice: Beginning a Path of Transformation" that will start with a weekend retreat January 6-7, 2012, and continue online after that. If you are interested in developing your own meditative practice or in exploring the Anthroposophical approach to mindfulness, this course may be for you. For more information, please contact Lori Barian, Director of Administration, lori.barian@greatlakeswaldorf.org, or 414-616-1832.

Scrip Stock Up Time! Last Chance to Order Before Holiday Shopping Kicks Off!

Thank you again to those families who have made the decision to use Scrip for their buying needs this year. This week will mark 25% of the way through the school year, will we reach our benchmark goal of \$1250 raised to keep us on track to earn the budgeted \$5000 through Scrip purchases this year? Look for the answer in next week's Four Tellings. Better yet, help the answer be a resounding, "YES!" by making your purchases through Scrip this week. This order will be the last one received before the Thanksgiving Break, so please consider your holiday purchasing in addition to your regular shopping when placing your order this week. Scrip is making holiday shopping even sweeter by offering increased percentages back for a limited time from vendors such as Bath & Body Works

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(18%), LL Bean (17%), Shutterfly (14%), Overstock.com (10%), Home Depot (5%) and more. Go to shopwithscrip.com and click on "Specials" for the complete list of promotional offers. Please remember that your order must be *placed and paid for by cash or check by 8:30AM on Thursday* to be included in the school order (orders paid with PrestoPay can be received as late as 10AM).

As always, to register to order through Scrip, go to shopwithscrip.com and enter enrollment code *L99B27DD227L2* to place your order from over 600 vendors. If you've already registered, just go to shopwithscrip.com and place your order online. Please remember to turn in payment for your order by 8:30AM on Thursday (10AM for PrestoPay payments). Unpaid orders remaining in the system will be cancelled after 2 weeks of nonpayment. If you forget to place or pay for your order on time or an unforeseen need arises, a limited selection of cards is also available for purchase from the office at any time. If you have any questions about the Scrip program, please contact Corrie Goldberg at corrie23@sbcglobal.net.

Scrip Tip of the Week: Have you enrolled in PrestoPay yet? PrestoPay makes it so easy to place and pay for your Scrip orders online all at once by debiting directly from your checking account. PrestoPay payment allows you to buy ScripNow! e-cards and reload your Scrip cards in as little as an hour for last-minute purchases or e-gifting needs. *Scrip has just lowered the PrestoPay convenience fee to only 15 cents per use, regardless of the number of cards purchased.* Once enrolled, you are not required to use PrestoPay to pay for your orders, but the option will be available to you whenever you need it for that last-minute gift, holiday shopping trip, or just to make life a little easier during the busy holiday season.

Focus on a Grade: Fifth Grade

"Focus on a Grade" is a year-long series. Each grade represented at Four Winds Waldorf School will be featured in the Four Tellings for an entire month. We will be looking at different aspects of that grade from what's going on in the classroom, to student work and activities.

Last week, Mari Cooper discussed the overarching theme and block study of fifth grade. She used flower drawings the children had just completed as an example of the emerging viewpoints of this age. This week, we are happy to share pictures of many of these drawings with the community.

