



Newsletter

January 28, 2013

Newsletter not looking pretty? [View it in your browser](#)

Dear Robyn,

Please enjoy the current issue of our newsletter.

All-School News

Table of Contents

[All-School News](#)

[Grades News](#)

[Early Childhood News](#)

[Community Announcements](#)

Message from the Executive Director

Dear Parents,

What a whirlwind of a week! Since I last sent you the last update on our Community Meetings – which you can also see below - much continues to unfold in preparation for the program brainstorming session with the faculty this coming Thursday: a few parents have asked for clarifications while others have shared their perspective and made excellent suggestions. One very important element of our considerations at this time of transition is of course our tuition levels. I wanted to share with you at this time that I am making every effort to build our 2013-14 plan with a tuition level identical to this -2012-13 - school year, and thus to reconsider the tuition information included in the recommitment mailer you received last week. I will of course keep you well apprised of these modifications prior to the new recommitment deadline of February 26th.

I also would like to invite you to increase your participation in this process. To that end, I will host a meeting on Thursday January 31st, at 8:30 am, in the foyer. This time will be dedicated to hearing from you, parents, about your experience and perspective, and to capture ideas and suggestions that have come up in the past several weeks. Since this is a very short notice announcement, I am of course entirely available to you via email, written notes – anonymous as well! - or in person if you would like to visit me in my upstairs office.

And finally, several parents have let me know that they are unclear as to the school's organization structure and my role in the school, and my relation to the Board. Our school's structure is included on pages 3 and 4 of the [Community Handbook](#). A simpler version can also be seen [here](#). I sincerely hope that this will answer any remaining questions about 'how the school works'.

I look forward to unveiling our 2013-14 program in the very near future, and to engaging together

with you in taking the next steps in our school's growth!

Geraldine

Community Meeting Update

Thank you wholeheartedly for taking the time to attend our Community Meetings of January 17 and 22. Although not all parents were able to attend, many families are now well informed about the school's financial position and evolving plans for the coming years. You can view the slideshow we used in these presentations [here](#). This slideshow includes information about our financial position and what would likely result if we continued with the current – and unsustainable – situation, as well as two possible approaches:

- Slide 5 (Scenario A) presents the worst case scenario of a compression of personnel, substantial tuition increases over the next four years, with significant changes in programs and no improvements to our site.
- Slide 6 (Scenario B) presents the option we prefer, a middle-ground approach anchored in the children's best interest which includes a compression of personnel, enhancements to our programs, and a reasonable increase in tuition over the next four years, as well as an achievable enrollment increase of 6 additional students in grades 1 through 8 and a preschool for 8 young children.

In our conversations with the community, the Board and I articulated the need to envision the school's future with creativity and resourcefulness, in ways that will enhance the learning and social experience of our students. We choose to call this renewed approach **'Dedicated Main Lesson Blocks & Integrated Social Curriculum'**. This means that as a Waldorf School we are committed to honoring the development stage specific to each age by offering grade appropriate main lessons, and are also committed to enhancing our students' social well-being by grouping them for some subject lessons, either by grades or by levels. As we discussed during our Community Meetings, we truly see this sharing of subject lessons as a significant improvement in the area of our students' social well-being and learning, as they have the opportunity to learn from peers in the context of larger groups.

Next Steps - The coming two weeks will be very busy for our faculty and staff, as we engage in designing a program for 2013-14 that reflects these two commitments. Many faculty members have already stepped forth, of their own initiative, to offer to teach subjects they do not currently teach yet are passionate about. I am enthusiastically looking forward to the process of gathering these ideas in a **brainstorming session with the faculty**.

Following this brainstorming session, the PCG - Pedagogical Carrying Group, composed of faculty members in leadership roles, selected by their peers - will join me in firming up the program for each grade, which will then be sent back to the full faculty for final review.

We anticipate being in a position to **unveil this program to parents by Friday February 8th**.

This will be communicated by way of a class specific letter to each grade, publication of the whole program in the school's newsletter, and **two opportunities to meet with me in person, both on Monday February 11th: 8:30 am** in the Grade 7 classroom **and 6:30 pm** in Trillium Hall, during which I will be happy to answer any remaining questions.

Of course, you are welcome to ask for clarifications at any point, either via email or in person. You can make an appointment with me via email or simply visit my office. I will be available to meet with you unless I happen to be attending another meeting at that time.

Recommitment

These changes are taking place at the time we ask families to let us know of their intentions to return next year, and to express that commitment for 2013-14 through a tuition deposit. This information was included in the mailing that you received this past week. We are aware that making such a commitment in the absence of a clear picture is asking much from our families. For this reason, we are **extending our recommitment deadline to Tuesday February 26th**. (Please note that this extension does not apply to the deadline for Financial Aid applications of February 7th).

We are confident that, beyond this current short period of uncertainty, you will appreciate the program modifications we are now considering, and that these additional two weeks will be sufficient for you to make your final determination. You are of course welcome to let us know of your intentions for next year before this new deadline.

Since our Community Meetings, a few parents have shared with me their questions and concerns about this change in programming for the coming years. They expressed appreciation for the inclusion of the parent body in the early stages of that process – rather than simply being informed later. One family also shared their anxiety about what is to come, and how these changes will impact their child's and their own experience at the school. As a Waldorf parent myself since 1996, I know firsthand how easy it is to become anxious as we eagerly await specific news about our children's school. I chose this particular process – letting you know of upcoming changes early on in the process – because I believe that honesty and transparency are values that are best aligned with what we stand for as a school. I ask for your kind patience between now and early February as the faculty and I work on finalizing next year's program.

As always, I am available to respond to any further questions, or to hear your concerns and comments. Please do not hesitate to reach out!

Summary of Important Dates

- Financial Aid deadline (as per SSS) – **Thursday, February 7th**
- Publication of 2013-14 program – by **Friday, February 8th**
- Programs Q&A meetings – **Monday, February 11th, 8:30 am** in the Grade 7 classroom **and 6:30 pm** in Trillium Hall
- Extended Recommitment deadline – **Tuesday, February 26th**

Geraldine Kline, Executive Director

New Board Members Wanted

The TCWS Board of Trustees is actively looking for new volunteers interested in joining the board. This is an excellent opportunity to get involved with the school and help shape its policies and long-term strategic goals. The board is particularly interested in candidates with financial experience, candidates from outside the TCWS community and former Waldorf trained educators.

Registering your interest is easy! Simply send a message to the board at:

board@threecedarswaldorf.org

More information about the work of the board and Policy Governance can be found on the school website at:

<http://threecedarswaldorf.org/about-us/board-of-trustees>

Elementary Sharing Assembly - Friday, February 1

Our Elementary Sharing Assembly will take place on **Friday, February 1, 2013 at the Performing Arts Center of Sammamish High School**, 100 140th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA. The Bellevue School District has rented us the use of the theater at Sammamish High School, located in the Lake Hills neighborhood of Bellevue, two miles east of Three Cedars.

Three Cedars parents, friends, relatives, and kindergarten students (especially those who are nearing age of Grade 1 readiness) are warmly invited to see the demonstrations and performances by our elementary school students. Each assembly provides a variety of work from the students' studies and practice including recitation, foreign languages, eurythmy, recorder, song, strings, and ukulele.

- Please make sure that all elementary students are fed and at the Sammamish High School theater at 5:15 p.m. sharp
- Audience seating will begin at 5:30 p.m.

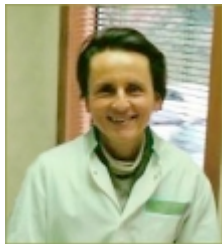
Click [here for directions](#) to Sammamish High School.

**Please note, all After Care programs will dismiss early at 4:00 pm.*

Dress Code for Assemblies, Concerts, Festivals

Several times each year, the school gathers for special events and assemblies for which participating students need to dress in "Concert Attire." We request that on such occasions the students dress in black pants and white shirts for boys, and black pants or skirts and white shirts for girls. All students are asked to wear flat, comfortable dress shoes unless otherwise indicated. Additionally, some school events invite a festive type of dress, such as the Rose Ceremony, graduation, or festivals. We will let you know well in advance when special occasion dress is invited or required.

Beyond the Myths of Healthy Food - Lecture by Dr. Witalis



Three Cedars is pleased to welcome Dr. Miroslava Witalis to our campus to present a series of two lectures, **Beyond the Myths of Healthy Food**.

The first lecture is on **Thursday, February 7 at 6:30 pm** in Trillium Hall.

Topics will include:

- Basic rules of eating
- How food supports the self-regulation of health and behavior in children

before, during and after puberty

A second lecture will be held on **Tuesday, March 26 at 6:30 pm** in Trillium Hall. This presentation's focus will include:

- How to help correct health and behavioral problems with appropriate nutrition
- When "healthy food" can do harm
- Food as the early introduction to self-awareness and social intelligence.

Lectures are open to the TCWS community, as well as the greater community. Please contact Three Cedars to reserve your space: 425.401.9874 or info@threecedarswaldorf.org. Please click [here](#) to view the flyer.

Dr. Miroslava Witalis is a board-certified Naturopath with a Masters degree in Medical Technology. She was an instructor in Pharmacology, Lab Chemistry and Homeopathy at the Medical College in Krakow, and taught Goetheanistic methodology in natural sciences and holistic medicine at the Goetheanum University in Switzerland. For nearly 15 years, she has served as a consultant on cognitive, sensory and motor rehabilitation of developmental impairments including autism, attention and learning disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, depression, mania, dyslexia, and Down syndrome.

To read more about Dr. Witalis, please click [here to view her website](#).

Brazilian Cheese Puffs



Three Cedars Kindergarten parents, Cris and Michael Wegmann, are offering their traditional and gluten-free Brazilian Cheese Puffs to the community. 100% of the proceeds will be donated to TCWS! They come in a bag, frozen, for you to bake and enjoy at your convenience. Orders will be accepted until Friday, February 15. Please contact Cris directly to place an order.

Please see the [flyer](#) for pricing, ingredient list, and contact information.

As Children's Freedom Has Declined, So Has Their Creativity



(By Dr. Peter Gray)

If anything makes Americans stand tall internationally it is creativity. “American ingenuity” is admired everywhere. We are not the richest country (at least not as measured by smallest percentage in poverty), nor the healthiest (far from it), nor the country whose kids score highest on standardized tests (despite our politicians’ misguided intentions to get us there), but we are the most inventive country. We are the great innovators, specialists in figuring out new ways of doing things and new things to do. Perhaps this derives from our frontier beginnings, or from our unique form of democracy with its emphasis on individual freedom and respect for nonconformity. In the business world as well as in academia and the arts and elsewhere, creativity is our number one asset. In a recent IBM poll, 1,500 CEOs acknowledged this when they identified creativity as the best predictor of future success.

Read full article on [The Creativity Post...](#)

Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood

The tragic shootings in Newtown have shined a spotlight on video game violence, but violent media is marketed to children long before they encounter Call of Duty. Since 2008, thousands of parents and the staff of the Federal Trade Commission have joined CCFC in calling for the Motion Picture Association of America to stop companies from marketing violent PG-13 movies to preschoolers. To date the MPAA has refused to act. We're pleased that MPAA chairman (and former senator) Chris Dodd is now saying Hollywood is ready to take part in the national dialogue about violence. But we need more than words. It is long past time for the movie industry

to stop marketing violence to young children.

To read more about this campaign, please click [here](#).

Grades News

Mochi Festival 2013



On Friday, January 18, Mr. Sugiyama brought his traditional mochi-making equipment to TCWS: a very heavy stone bowl, wooden mallets, and a hand built rice-steamer. All grades enjoyed his street-theater approach to mochi-making; he dared participants to hit his hand when he folded the dough while several hammers were rhythmically pounding it, and laughed infectiously. Wielding the wooden hammers was harder than it looked, and required more stamina than most of us have today. The warm mochi, folded around sweet bean paste and rolled in rice starch, was delicious!

We would like to thank Tokura and Lin Sensei as well as David Hasbrook, Sanae Stanley, Emiko Urata and the 8th grade helpers for again bringing this fun tradition to our community.

Early Childhood News

Puppetry in the Kindergarten



Often, after telling a story orally for a week, Waldorf kindergarten teachers will choose to bring the same story in the form of a simple puppet show. I have always appreciated the art of puppetry as a tool in my teaching. Over the years, using plant-dyed wool and silk, I have created a puppet family that joins our class for many stories each year. I truly believe puppetry has a special ability to meet each child in a gentle and heartfelt way.

Just after the Winter Break, the Morning Star children began hearing the story of "Sweet Porridge". It is a simple Grimm's fairy tale about a poor young girl who lives alone with her mother. When they have nothing left to eat, the girl goes into the forest and meets an old woman. The old woman gives her a magic pot and when you say "cook, little pot, cook" it cooks good, sweet porridge. When she says "stop, little pot, stop" it ceases cooking. With the help of their magic pot, the girl and her mother are freed of their hunger and poverty. One day, when the little girl is out, the mother uses the pot. But, she does not know the words to make the pot stop

cooking. The pot bubbles and boils and soon porridge fills up the house and runs down the street. There is great distress and the porridge covers almost every house in the village until the little girl comes home and simply says, "stop, little pot, stop". The closing lines of the story are, "and whosoever wished to return to that village has to eat his way back."

In the Morning Star kindergarten, during the week of a puppet show, our class nature table is transformed and features the puppets for the puppet show. For this puppet show, I used three very simple puppets to represent the little girl, mother, and grandmother. The children were thrilled to come to class and see the puppets joined by a real, tiny, cast-iron "magic pot". The house and village were represented by simple wooden logs. As the puppet show progresses, and the porridge covers the village, I gently and simply placed a white silk over the scene, taking great care that the mother escaped the porridge to wait for her daughter to come home. In the end, the little girl came out and stopped the porridge. Some children were so intent on watching the puppet show that they even breathed a sign of relief when she appeared! At the end of the puppet show, I chose two trustworthy 6-year-olds to be my helpers. My helpers gently and reverently placed the puppets and puppet show items back on the nature table.

I felt this simple story was just right for after the Winter Break. Many of the children experienced the abundance (and in many cases over-abundance) of material goods during the Christmas and winter holidays. The simple girl, with her wisdom and courage, came just in time to say "stop" and teach us all a lesson about having enough--but not too much.

Maggie Reilly, Morning Star Kindergarten Teacher

Community Announcements

Community Events

Ultimate Frisbee

Ultimate will take place Thursdays when school is in session at Wilburton Park from 2 to 3:30 pm (possibly to 4). New players and beginners from grades 3 and up welcome. Teams will be forming for spring league play from March to late May. Hosted by TCWS parents David Hasbrook and Jenny Doggett.

Local Events

Johanna Steegmans Lecture Series at Madrona School



If you missed Johanna's talks at Seattle Waldorf School last year and want to hear a re-run, here is an opportunity to hear her speak on Bainbridge Island. Just a 30 minute boat ride from Seattle! 60 minute drive from Port Townsend, 90 minutes from Tacoma, 2 hours from Olympia.

Tuesday, Jan 29 at 6:30 - Navigating the Middle School Years

For more information, please see the [flyer](#).

Spiritual Streams and Sun Initiates Workshop - February 2013

Workshop by Brian Gray

Friday, February 22 to Saturday, February 23

Held in Seattle Waldorf School's Huckleberry Hall
2728 NE 100 Seattle 98125

Brian Gray will share his significant research of the **Spiritual Streams and Sun Initiates** with the Seattle community by offering a Friday lecture plus two Saturday morning lectures and an afternoon workshop. On Saturday evening he will continue with a wonderful topic for this new year -- **The Healing Forces of Novalis: Spiritual Nourishment for 2013**. For the fullest benefit, please join us for the entire weekend offering and if not possible, you are welcome to attend any of the four lectures. Brian has not been to Seattle for over 10 years. This is a rare opportunity to experience his deep work and wisdom, his enthusiasm for humanity, and his loving warmth. Please see the [flyer](#) for more details and early registration info.

Brought to you by the Center for Anthroposophical Endeavors and the Seattle Branch of the Anthroposophical Society.

BELAX Girls Lacrosse

Girls of all ages can play lacrosse for Bellevue East, the top club for girls from all over Bellevue. BELAX has teams for girls from 2nd grade through high school. The season is March-May. Informational meeting January 15, 7pm, Lake Hills Library. Register now at www.belax.org

Classifieds

Looking for House to Rent

I am looking for a 4-5 bedroom house to rent, preferably in Bellevue, Kirkland or Redmond. I am early childhood educator and in the process of opening a childcare in my house.

Please reply if you have house for rent or if you know somebody who is interested. My contact is 206.661.1747 or email zebibanur@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Zebiba Nur, TCWS Kindergarten Parent

The newsletter is published every two weeks during the school year.
The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is Sunday, February 3.
Please email submissions to newsletter@threecedars.org.

We only intend to send you helpful information and respect your decision to modify your subscription.

Three Cedars Waldorf School
556 124th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98008
425-401-9874 ~ <http://threecedarswaldorf.org>