

December 14, 2015

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### A Message from Tracy Bennett

Dear TCWS Community,

Last Friday I had the opportunity to enjoy the Winter Bazaar—what a lovely celebration during this busy time of year! Singing around the fire, watching children happily play, observing parents laughing and sharing with one another, purchasing cookies and crafts to take home—it was wonderful to experience this community gathering. While



there are things about this celebration that differ from the Winter Faire I know at Seattle Waldorf, I could not help but be struck by the similarities. It is clear to me that our schools share an unwavering commitment to Waldorf education, a steadfast belief in the capacity for growth of all human beings, and a continued striving to bring goodness and joy into our world. Big stuff!

The joining of Three Cedars Waldorf School and Seattle Waldorf School offers exciting opportunities for both communities. It will also bring change, some of which we can anticipate, and some that will catch us by surprise. I will make every effort to answer questions and respond to concerns with clarity and transparency, and invite your feedback and ideas. Patience, thoughtfulness, and assuming good intentions will serve us well as we move forward; that we all care deeply for the children you have entrusted us to educate provides a strong foundation for strengthening our trust.

I would like to thank all of you for the very warm and gracious welcome you have extended to me. It is a privilege to join and serve in your community, and I look forward to getting to know you and your children!

With gratitude,

*Tracy Bennett, Head of School, Seattle Waldorf School*



## Holiday Message from the TCWS Board

Dear TCWS Community,  
The TCWS Board of Directors would like to extend to you all our best wishes for this holiday season.

In a year that presented both challenges and opportunities for our school, we are grateful for the strong support found in our community, for the inspiring work of our teachers and staff, and for the collaboration and friendship from our friends at Seattle Waldorf School.

An exciting period lies ahead with the approach of 2016 and we look forward to working together with you.

Happy Holidays!  
*TCWS Board of Directors*

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## On Sharing of Light

High on the wall in Trillium Hall, a chalk image of an Angel casts brilliant stars from her basket to a person who receives their light on earth. In our Winter Garden of Light, children and parents experienced a darkened hall growing lighter and brighter as glowing candles were placed one by one along the evergreen spiral. On emerging out into the night, a feeling of peace and a mood of inner reflection gave the sense of carrying the light along.

As many of us express festivals or traditions in celebration of shining light and miracles resounding at this wonderful time of the solstice, we can feel the presence of joy in our lives—like the Angel sending stars our way—for us to share with others.

—Geri Snyder (image by Kris Carlson, Artist)



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## Santa Lucia Procession

Our Lucia Day provided a stopping point during the busy season, a pause, a time to reflect; a time to be glad the dark of winter will soon be changing, and a time to remind ourselves that things should



be kept simple and of the spirit.  
*"Hope, like the gleaming taper's light,  
Adorns and cheers our way,  
And still, as darker grows the night  
Emits a brighter ray."*  
—Oliver Goldsmith



## Financial Aid Information Evening Tonight!

**Monday, December 14, 2015 • 7 pm**

Learn more about the financial aid application process for Three Cedars and Seattle Waldorf School.

[Read more](#)



## Open House: Spread the Word!

**Saturday, January 9, 2016 • 10 am**

Invite friends and family to come meet our faculty and learn how our rich Waldorf curriculum works with children's natural development. [Read more](#)

## Do Sweaters Have Legs?

Is your child missing a sweater, jacket, or hat? At Three Cedars Waldorf School, we collect missing items in our Lost and Found





bin. When the bin fills up and starts to overflow, we know it's time to tidy up!

Starting **Monday, December 14**, China will sort, organize, and display lost and found items on a table along the walkway near the school office. The table will remain until dismissal **Friday, December 18** (the last day of school before Winter Break), at which time all unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

## TCWS Alums Support Lantern Walk

A heartfelt thank you to the ten alums who braved the rainy weather in support our Early Childhood Lantern Walk. Their voices warmed the woods with familiar lantern songs as our kindergarteners wandered along the illumined trail.



We are grateful to you all and love when you visit your old stomping ground!

*Sophia Parker, Adam Jemal, Ellie Bennitt, Grace Haller, Sophia Hoag, Zoe Colwell-Lipson, Gwen Bennitt, Lucia Felix, Ananda Gordon-Peabody, and Hana Stanley*



## Winter Bazaar 2015

Winter Bazaar 2015 brought a festive mood to our campus on Friday, December 4. Even the rainy weather paused for the sun to shine its bright warmth on our community. With live music drifting tunefully across the plaza and the fragrance of cool air and a smoky bonfire, students and parents clustered around tables of colorful crafts and delicious treats to shop, taste, chat, and pass time while waiting for Winter Spiral walks.

Three Cedars Waldorf School faculty and staff extend heartfelt gratitude to *Karen Wegehenkel* for coordinating our Winter Bazaar 2015 fundraiser, which brought in more than \$3000 for our school! We also thank the many people who contributed their time and talent to provide handmade crafts

and baked goods, booth sales shifts, candle dipping, live music, supplies, and setup and cleanup: Cameron Altaras, Sue Ann Belmont, Carla Boon, Monique Bystedt, Trina Casey, Arabella Cody, Dana Bathiche, Liang Du, Thamis Esteves-Mendez, Martina Fischer-Klee, Nelya Galiakbarova, Barbara Geri, Tara Gowland, Grace Guan, Elizabeth Hartpence, Roslyn Herrera, Raynes Hutt, Rom Impas, Ashley Jensen, Luana Lewis, Molly Kirrene, Amy Masreliez, Kristina Paukova, Esther Ruurda-Drake, Tiffany Santerre, Andre Schoorl, Ria Simpson, Kris Solem, Stefanie Tholen, Christa Tinker, Monica Warkentin, and Traci Winters.

## GRADE SCHOOL NEWS

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### What's Happening in the Grades

#### Grade One | Arithmetic: The Four Processes

Students continue their lessons about story structure and story elements from fairy tales around the world. Ever true to our practice of whole-to-the-part lesson delivery, the holistic nature of the story ushers in a deep connection to the individual letter sounds. As this magical time of year draws near, the first grade students are exploring qualities of the vowels. Just as animals and people transform their physical forms in many of the stories that are told at this stage of development, so do the letters we call *vowels* shift in the sounds they make—depending upon the surrounding letters. With imagination and flexibility of thought, the students are able to relate to the great variety of sounds made by the English language vowels.



#### Grade Two | Form Drawings and Fables

In this block we share some the most remarkable facts and qualities about animals; we then listen to fables and finally turn all of the rich images into a form drawing which combines straight and curved lines. Form drawing supports the children's sense of spatial orientation, thus serving as a precursor to geometry. Form drawing also helps hand-eye coordination and beautifies handwriting, amongst other benefits. We continue drawing with running forms and reflections both on a vertical and horizontal axis.



#### Grade Three | Measurement

### **What Could You Measure?**

*You could measure the drink in your glass.*

*You could measure the time that has passed.*

*Whatever your pleasure, there's much you could measure.*

*"What more could you measure?" you ask?*

*You could measure the length of a mile.*

*You could measure a floor you might tile.*

*Why, quite at your leisure, take a ruler and measure the length of your toothiest smile.*

*There are measures of music, you can measure your weight.*

*The clock shows the time, a calendar the date.*

*You could measure the distance from where you stand up to the moon above.*

*But you could never ever, no matter how clever, quite measure the treasure of love.*

*—By Nina Personius with changes by Mrs. Spurgin*

In grade three we will be measuring all kinds of things. And while we certainly can't measure love, we will try to express it with a small handmade holiday gift for a classmate.



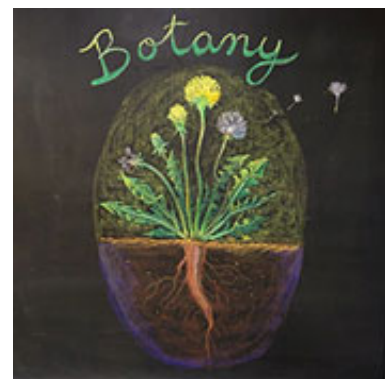
### **Grade Four | Fractions**

The second and third arithmetic blocks in the grade four curriculum focus on fractions, which represent the threshold that divides experiential “arithmetic” from conceptual “mathematics” (how can a larger number in the denominator mean a smaller fraction?!). In the Waldorf classroom, fractions can be fun—cutting and folding, measuring and baking, portioning and eating, and singing and playing recorder by written music for the first time. Fractions also can be challenging—numerators and denominators; common and uncommon fractions; mixed numbers; expanding and reducing fractions; adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing fractions; and applying these skills to word problems and real-life situations.



### **Grade Five | Introduction to Botany**

Grade five students study a range of plant forms that grow in the six climatic zones. We look at the gestures of typical plant species and their relationship to insects and soil. We explore the life cycle of plants and identify different parts of the plant. All of this information will be reviewed and expanded upon during our second botany block in late spring. Further, Andy Held will work with the class through the entire year every week for a double period to strengthen their wilderness and nature studies. To that end, trips will be taken to the Bellevue Botanical Garden and through the surrounding forest area of Wilburton Park.



### **Grade Six | Play Block**

Grade six has a special opportunity to perform (alongside some



faculty members!) one of the Oberufer Christmas plays as a gift to our school community. These plays are performed at hundreds of Waldorf Schools worldwide to uphold the tradition started by the first teachers in 1919 at the Waldorf School of Stuttgart. Yet, the tradition goes much further back than 1919. These plays have roots which are lost in medieval times, and have evolved to incorporate a unique mixture of peasant humor and deep reverence in their celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus. The play is historical and universal, linking in many ways to the grade six curriculum.



Play performances will be held **Thursday evening, December 17 at 6:30 PM** and **Friday morning, December 18 at 8:30 AM**.

### **Grade Seven | Creative Writing**

The inner world of a seventh grader is filled with new thoughts and emotions. This is a particularly ripe stage of development to strengthen, deepen, and expand the tools of self-expression. We describe the world around us as beautifully and descriptively as we are able. We share unique experiences that fill us with surprise or wonder, and we read the work of poets and writers to inspire our work. This time of year lends itself to inner reflection, and the work that we do draws on this reflection to help the students in turn reflect on their own wishes and hopes for themselves and for others.



### **Grade Eight | Short Story / Literary Arts**

Literature has long served as an artful means of revealing the human condition. The questions of identity and purpose that the eighth grader often asks are mirrored in diverse ways by diverse authors, each responding to the call of life in their own way. By reading and studying an array of short stories, we gain a sampling of some of the themes, moods, characters, and plots that have been explored. We enhance our appreciation by studying the author's craft, along with the elements of style and structure that are conducive to compelling work. Students also have an opportunity to try their own hand.





## —Oh My!

Three Cedars Waldorf School will offer two new after-school programs starting in January 2016. Both will be led by our Spanish and Gardening teacher, Luis Allende. Watch your inbox for details!

**Chess Club.** This program will be offered on Tuesdays to students in grades three through eight. The many benefits of playing chess from a

young age include:

- Development of analytic, synthetic, and decision-making skills which can transfer to real life.
- Cultivation of higher-order thinking skills, analysis of actions and consequences, and visualization of future possibilities.
- In countries where chess is offered widely in schools, students exhibit excellence in the ability to recognize complex patterns and consequently excel in math and science.
- Increased planning skills, confidence, patience, and discipline.

“Chess is in many ways like life itself. It is all condensed in a playful manner in a game format and it is extremely fascinating because first of all I am in control of my own destiny, I am in charge. You have to be responsible for your actions, you make a move, you have to think ahead about what is going to happen, not after it happens, because it is too late. Chess teaches discipline from a very early age. It teaches you to have a plan and to plan ahead. If you do that you will be rewarded, if you break the rules, you will get punished in life and in chess.”

—Susan Polgar, *Four-time World Champion and founder of the Susan Polgar Foundation*

**Spanish for Native Speakers.** This program will be offered on Mondays to students in all grades.

### Garden Report

- With grade four we planted kale—and students have been challenged by slugs and snails. Grades two and three have been a great help in hunting these unwanted diners.
- With help from grades seven and eight, we prepared two beds to plant garlic. We also cleaned the beds and applied lime to improve the soil's pH value. The plants are sprouting and it is rewarding to see them emerge!
- Thanks again to grades seven and eight for helping to remove the compost pile from a parking space and for helping to eradicate invasive ivy from our woods.
- Grade three planted Austrian peas, and grade two planted clover.

Many thanks to the Three Cedars Waldorf School community for your support of our Spanish and gardening projects.

—Luis Allende, *Spanish and Gardening Teacher*





different cultures and languages at his home, in part through a climbing club created by his father to attract international climbers searching for new adventures in the magnificent Andes. Touched deeply by these experiences, Luis developed a real interest in studying languages. He studied Basque languages at Euzko Etxea in Santiago, Chile; Greek at University of Chile in Santiago; and later on, Classical Greek and Latin while studying Philosophy at Catholic University of Valparaiso. Because of the common roots of

Romance Languages, he also learned Portuguese. Wanting to make a difference in the lives of other human beings, Luis earned a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at Metropolitan University of Education in Santiago de Chile. Luis has more than 18 years of experience teaching Spanish as a first language to native speakers and significant experience tutoring students with learning disabilities. Luis came to the USA in 2000. At that time he began teaching different levels of Spanish at a variety of schools in the Olympia area. Luis encountered Waldorf education at The Olympia Waldorf School, where he taught for seven years before joining the faculty at Three Cedars Waldorf School.



## Grade Eight Prose-Poetry

Metallic trees ring an oval, their leafless branches glowing softly silver against the midnight firmament, no light shines down from there. Piles of snow rest below the trees yet no flake lies on the branches as if it had simply appeared there, not fallen. The frozen circle of water shines the blue of a noon sky, its light blending with that of the trees creating a mist shroud over the space even as the clearing remains dry. White writing is inscribed upon the ice, the words from the language of a dancer, each character flows from one to another as silver blades carve them out. The

figure is as dark as shadow her black silhouette stark against the blue. A skirt and a scarf trail behind her flitting over her letters in contrast. Her hands conduct an unheard music as her eyeless face watches flakes of light fall from nothing. She is emotionless as she studies the tiny mirrors reflecting flashes of reds and golds that aren't there. Each shard chimes once as it hits the ice before vanishing. The darkness stretches infinitely in every direction hiding nothing, as there is nothing to hide. The scene is melancholic, a forgotten memory, seen only in dream.

—Rachel David, Student, Grade Eight

## Grade Six Geometry

As Plato so aptly stated, “*Geometry is knowledge of the eternally existent.*” As such, it is a powerful subject that touches the students at their core, and inspires awe and reverence for the inherent lawfulness of that which surrounds them. Truth, lawfulness, and beauty are all revealed in the form itself, and it is thereby a subject that transcends verbal explanation.

The images below offer a literal glimpse into the forms that grade six students created during their Geometry block. The fruits of their labor in the precision, variety, and beauty lend credence to the thought that the forms never lie.

—Stephanie Packer, Grade School Faculty Chair and Teacher, Class of 2018



Stephanie Packer grew up in New Jersey, and graduated with a BA in Organizational Studies from the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor. During college, she spent a semester living and studying in Seville, Spain, where she formed a strong connection to the Spanish language and culture. This connection brought her back to Seville after graduation, where she taught English and American culture to both children and adults in various settings for several years. She also taught elementary school classes in a bilingual, public school setting. Simultaneously, she spent a few summers volunteering on a Biodynamic farm in Princeton, NJ, which sparked her interest in Waldorf Education. Stephanie went on to pursue this path by working in various roles at the Waldorf School of Princeton, and she completed her Waldorf Teacher Training at the Centro de Formación de Pedagogía Waldorf in Madrid, Spain.

## Handwork and Craft Ideas for Young Children

Every day we use our hands for a variety of tasks, and yet take this for granted. We open or close objects, lift or push, twist or turn caps; we pull, twiddle or tie, unwrap, peel, lift, wash, and feel with our hands. Think of what these daily tasks teach us. Think of what a handshake tells you about another person. Where would we be without our hands?



As teachers, we must help the children become aware of their hands and of the great gifts they bestow on themselves and on others. Their hands need to become skillful, sensitive, and strong, so that they can accomplish all the mentioned wonderful deeds. Moreover, through the activity of the fingers the child connects to the world through a sensory experience.

So much of handwork has to do with waking up, seeing things, and noticing details. Current brain research reveals that using the hand opens up neurological pathways that otherwise would atrophy. So one could say that handwork with young children is a training ground for thinking. The more one includes the cultivation of beauty and feeling into such handwork projects, the more creative will the intellectual thinking become.

Yet it is important that in kindergarten and preschool many projects are done primarily to enliven the senses and secondarily with the idea to achieve an actual result. When we play and model with sheep wool, the children do it to have a sensory experience which is completely different from that of modeling with sand or earth.

From a wide range of handwork and crafts, a few ideas are listed in the [linked article](#) for you and your child to try at home. These diverse occupations carry exceptional sensory richness when you use beautiful, pure objects from nature. Activities such as picking, searching, wrapping, tying, knotting, sewing, dying—and also sowing, harvesting, grinding, and baking—stimulate the child's imagination and delight in creating, and thus nourish the child in many ways.

[Read the full article here.](#)

—Jeannette Nagel, Teacher, Sweet Pea Preschool



Jeannette was born in Eastern Germany and attended a Waldorf-inspired school from first through tenth grade. She attended Universities in Germany, Ireland, and Canada and received Masters Degrees in Geography and Environmental Education. She worked for five years in the Publications department of the Federal Statistical Office of Germany and traveled frequently to Eastern European and Central Asian countries. Her family joined Three Cedars in 2010 and she regularly volunteered in the early childhood classrooms and during



school festivals. In 2014 Jeannette started her Foundation Studies in Anthroposophy and the Arts at Sound Circle Center Seattle and is currently enrolled in the Handwork Teacher Training program at Rudolf Steiner College, Sacramento. Besides teaching in the Sweet Pea classroom at Three Cedars, Jeannette enjoys gardening and tending animals at her Snoqualmie home, and using her hands for all kinds of crafts and woodworking. She loves to hike, swim, and scuba-dive, and usually spends her holidays at the ocean.

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## Teaching the Whole Child

*Carol J. Carter, Huffington Post Education, posted 12.2.15*

*(Excerpted)* A growing number recognize that the Waldorf model supports educational and personal habits which often go overlooked and under-appreciated in traditional schooling.

Teachers are the main source of strength in Waldorf schools. With a heavy focus on the importance of hands-on experience for their students, rather than standardized testing, Waldorf teachers help their students to explore curricula through diverse activities, with plenty of room to customize lesson plans. The fluidity of this approach provides extensive engagement that leads to lifelong connections with the material taught, the teachers involved and the bigger questions at the heart of each subject.

With bright, capable students and teachers wholly committed to both what occurs in the classroom and after, the Waldorf model flourishes. The immense quality of thinking and roundedness that comes from a Waldorf education is vital to today's society.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### Feldenkrais Method Workshop: Brain Food for Adults

***A special workshop to benefit Three Cedars Waldorf School. 100 percent of net proceeds will be donated to the school.***

**When:** February 5–7, 2015

Free Lecture/Demo: Friday, 7–9 PM

Workshop: Saturday, 9 AM – 4 PM and Sunday, 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM

**Location:** Three Cedars Waldorf School, 556 124th Ave NE, Bellevue

Can you recall the joy of learning? Do you want to recover your capacity for learning that has become restricted over the course of your life? In this Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement® workshop, you will remember the pleasure of learning. Experience carefully constructed movement experiences to help you function in your body in a more simple and pleasurable way.

Over the weekend, you will:

- Learn to breathe more easily
- Learn what is good posture and self-organization from a biological perspective (not what your mother told you)
- Discover how to reduce stress and tension
- Discover a new-found potential for freedom of movement
- Recover abilities lost due to past injuries
- Learn how your brain is effected by intentional movement

**Cost:** Public: \$200; \$350/with a friend

Three Cedars parents: \$150; \$250/2

Three Cedars teachers: \$75

*No one is turned away for lack of funds*

**Registration:** [www.insidemoves.org](http://www.insidemoves.org) or mail check to:

Inside Moves, 15081 SE 54<sup>th</sup> PI, Bellevue, WA 98006

**Wear:** Warm, comfortable clothes



### **About Jeff Haller / Inside Moves & the Feldenkrais Method®**

Pioneered by Israeli scientist Moshe Feldenkrais, the Feldenkrais Method® offers a novel, unique and profound way to examine your habitual and often limiting ways of thinking and acting. Through attending to yourself in movement, you'll discover how to improve the quality of your actions in life.

Dr. Jeff Haller studied directly with Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais. After graduation from his Feldenkrais training in 1983, Jeff created Inside Moves, operating a movement arts center in Seattle, WA from 1984–1991 where classes in Feldenkrais, Aikido, Yoga, Tai Chi, and meditation were offered. Since 1993, Jeff's primary focus has been to train Feldenkrais Method teachers. He has developed and refined his skills, conducting Feldenkrais trainings and mentoring programs worldwide, while building an extensive private practice in his hometown of Bellevue, WA.

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## **Sound Circle News**

Sound Circle Center offers a variety of programs in arts, anthroposophy and education. For more information, visit [soundcircle.org/offered-programs](http://soundcircle.org/offered-programs)



## Information About Waldorf Education



**Inform Newsletter:** The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) is a nonprofit membership organization of independent Waldorf Schools and Institutes in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. To read their December 2015 newsletter, please visit [AWSNA Community Newsletter, December 2015](#).

**AWSNA Northwest Regional Conference:** Save the date for *Scythe and Compass: Traveling the Path of Moral Development*. February 14–16, 2016, Seattle Waldorf School High School Campus. Keynote speaker: Douglas Gerwin. For more information, contact [northwest@awsna.org](mailto:northwest@awsna.org).

## CLASSIFIEDS

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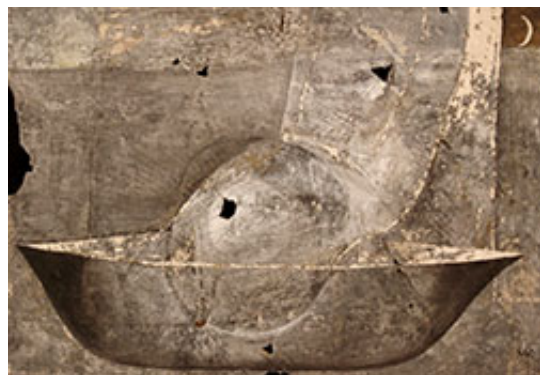
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### Art Exhibit by Mike Kline

Mike Kline, former TCWS woodworking teacher, is showing a selection of more than 60 works spanning 25 years during the month of December at Praxis Arts in Georgetown. Please come and see the development of his work over a quarter century! Find the details of Praxis Arts' location and opening hours at

[facebook.com/events/918304381558506/](https://facebook.com/events/918304381558506/)



### Missing a Small Item?



Many small items have landed on the bulletin board in the school office—we have quite the eclectic collection of miscellany!

Please drop by if you recognize one of the pictured items and reclaim your lost treasure.



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Our newsletter is published once per month when school is in session.  
Content for the next issue is due **Monday, January 11.**

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