

February 2016

Anchorage Waldorf School

“Empowering Parents, Strengthening Community, Supporting Families”

Share the love!

As parents, relatives, and friends of students at AWS, we experience moments of joy every day and occasional "aha!" moments when we recognize and appreciate the value that the school brings to each child. In February we are providing you with a way to easily share these moments with our community and beyond. In addition to expressing our own gratitude for the gift of our school, this "word of mouth" is the very best form of outreach to attract new families.

- 1) If you are active on Facebook, take a photo or write a short story of anything that makes you smile about our school and make sure to include our school's name in it. Post it on your Facebook page and send it to Amy Meissner at amy@amymeissner.com to post on our school's Facebook page. If this is the first time you're hearing about the AWS Facebook page, check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/Anchorage-Waldorf-School-118586968174014/>.
- 2) If you consider yourself low-tech, please feel free to write whatever moment or story you'd like to share and put it in the Share the Love Story Box at the Front Desk.

We will select a few stories and share them with the world! Thank you!



Grade 2/3 at Cheney Lake for Movement class with our wonderful Movement Teacher, Mr. Unterberger and our amazing Parent volunteers. Thank you so much for being there week after week. We couldn't do it without you!

News from the Classroom

Pussywillow Kindergarten

Brave and cheery was little brown duck, Shingebis. Big Chief North Wind couldn't freeze him, starve him or make him afraid! No matter how fierce and angry North Wind became, Shingebis's tidy little life was unaffected. Little brown duck, Shingebis, was sturdy, patient and resourceful! And in the Pussywillow kingdom, every child wants to be him!

Isn't this what we all want for our children? That they are able to weather life's storms, look after their own needs with good cheer and faith, that they can persevere and do what's needed in life? Aside from introducing inspiring avian examples, Waldorf kindergartens are replete with opportunities for children to develop just these skills. Letting the children take the time they need to get their snowsuits on just so develops independence, and the understanding of what we must do to stay warm in the world. Grinding the grain for the bread, molding rolls and then enjoying them, freshly baked and buttered for snack, provides lip-smacking satisfaction in the whole process of feeding oneself. Learning to stand up for oneself appropriately during an altercation over the possession of a toy teaches confidence and composure. And, oh, I haven't even mentioned the joy of singing and moving together – because doesn't a person have to learn to rejoice, as well as work hard? And being able to look in your own heart and join with your friends in the resounding "yes" when your teacher asks, "Is our kingdom neat and bright? Did everybody do what's right?" brings such a wonderful feeling of order and well-being that every teenager will remember that moment (Okay, maybe I'm going too far!) But I needn't give more examples. Every child in the Pussywillow kindergarten is well on their way to being Shingebis, if not in our little play, certainly in their hearts!

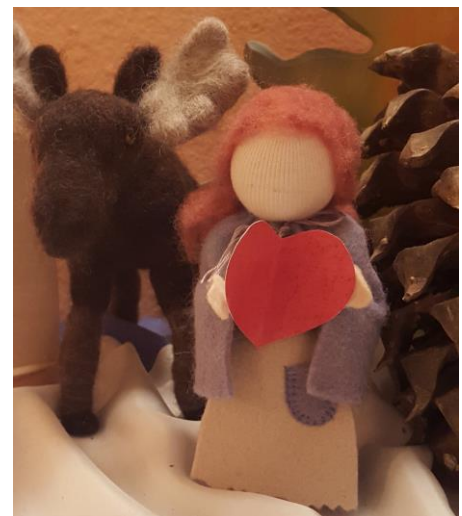
Love from the Warm West Wind, Miss Diane

Sunflower Kindergarten

*My love is wide as the wide, wide world
And nothing remains apart
As the Sun to all beings gives warmth, gives light
So the world receives joy from my heart*

We are enjoying our new story about Missy Mouse and Bitty Bunny, good friends who search for the perfect gift for each other on Valentine's Day. We will be working on a special Valentine gift for parents and we are so excited to share our classroom on Feb 10th with visiting Grandparents for our annual Valentine's Tea. It has been so nice to have the snow back in our play yard, no more slipping and sliding. Every week my wish, on our wishing stone, is for more snow!

Love & Joy in Sunflower Kindergarten!
Miss Susan & Miss Michelle



First Grade

We're working away in First Grade to learn to get our fingers to cooperate. It can be frustrating, confounding, and fun. These flutes are helping the children learn to read, as the same development that's needed to master flute playing (integrating mid-lines and working both sides of the brain together) is necessary for reading. With daily practice and encouragement from friends, the children are steadily improving and building strong foundations for reading. Who says we don't teach reading in Waldorf schools?

--Ms. Steinhilber



Grade 2/3

We are in our last Language Arts block for the year. This means our list of things to do is long! Fortunately, we're a capable group. We're refining our cursive writing, reviewing and practicing basic parts of grammar and writing some interesting, as we call them, sentences.

--Mr. Jensen

Grade 4/5

Class 4/5 has been transitioning into Grade 5 work in earnest this month with the topics of botany and geometry. We have spent some glorious moments outside in the snow looking for moss, lichen, fungi and of course, examining conifers. Exploring their natural world, even in the heart of winter is what the children love to do!

We ended our work with the following quote from Rudolf Steiner.

--Mrs. Herda



*"Behold the plant!
It is the butterfly fast
to the Earth.
Behold the butterfly!
It is the plant set free
by the universe."*

Grade 6

Ask and it shall be given unto you...

We spent the last month living the power and majesty of Imperial Rome, the civilization that conquered most of the known world and shaped it in ways that are still felt today. We then watched its slow decay into disorder, as the men who ruled it could not live up to the legacy of their fore-bearers. In the midst of all this chaos, we paused for a moment on one bright light shining out across the years: Jesus of Nazareth. After all of the blood and greed and materialism of Rome, we are reminded to think of our humanity and the humanity of those around us. We are reminded that we are all living on the same Earth, gazing up at the same stars.

We also had another reminder to gaze up to the stars and the secrets hidden from us in the night sky as we had the opportunity to visit Stargate Observatory in Wasilla and view the heavens through one of the largest Newtonian telescopes in Alaska. How much beauty there is in the world, in the sky, in the heart of your neighbor, if we only take the breath to look for it.

...Seek and you shall find.

--Ms. Starr

Russian



Students have been very busy since they came back from the winter break.

After celebrating Russian Christmas on the 7th of January we started to think about our spring assembly. We read and reviewed some verses, poems, plays, and decided which one we would like to share.

While learning new plays and making masks and costumes to go with them, we also study different topics. First Grade has started to learn the Russian Alphabet. 2nd-3rd Graders have been working on Russian cursive writing. And our 4-5th Graders are learning some Botany in Russian. After finishing the Astronomy block and learning about first dogs (Laika, Belka, Strelka), first man (Yuri Gagarin) and first woman (Valentina Tereshkova) in space, 6th Graders have been working on Russian Grammar. They can describe their language skills and pretty soon they will be able to write their autobiography in Russian, that's going to be our next project. They also get very creative when it comes to practice counting in Russian as you can see in this photo.

--Ms. Burton

Handwork

In the handwork classroom we have had a productive beginning to our year.

Grade 1 are excitedly working to complete their special, slightly mysterious knitting project in pastel colors. There is some special magic coming to be!

Grade 2/3 are developing their crochet skills (with some knitting for our new classmates). We are working from our climbing rows to working in circles and spirals and adding colors. Beautiful work is emerging!

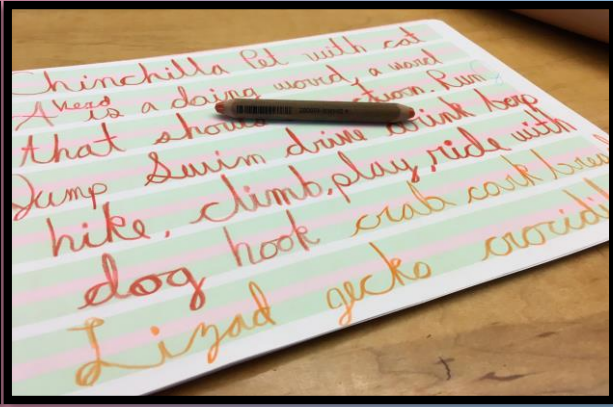
Grades 4 and 5 have mostly completed their beautiful, hand embroidered needle cases. They have selected their special sets of needles and pins to prepare their cases for future work. It is time to move on to fine embroidery detail in thimbles.

Grade 6 are beginning the creation of their human figures! This is a major project that will continue for most of the rest of our year. We are in the design and pattern making stages and everyone is looking forward in creativity!

In enthusiasm!

--Ms. Caitlin





Calendar

February 3: Inspiring Love of Math, 7:00-9:00pm

February 5: Barn Dance, 6:00-8:00pm. Yahoo!

February 10: Grandparents Valentine's Tea (Kindergarten), 9:30-11:15am

February 11-12: Parent Teacher Conferences, NO SCHOOL *Childcare available,
please talk with Maggie*****

February 15: President's Day, NO SCHOOL

February 20: Doll Making Class, 1st Session, 9:00am-12:00pm

February 26: Assembly at 11:30am followed by Early Dismissal at 12:30pm

February 27: Doll Making Class, 2nd Session, 9:00am-12:00pm

March 2: All School Meeting 7:00-8:30pm

March 5: Cupcake Concert with Amy Hettinger and Dan Pascucci and cupcakes by Middle Way Cafe