

October 2017 Awaken Wonder - Courage



The Anchorage
Waldorf School
Awakening Wonder

Martinmas

Waldorf schools celebrate a festival of light midway between autumnal equinox and winter solstice, or between Michaelmas and Christmas. Martinmas, the name given to this festival, commemorates Martin of Tours, a young soldier whose compassion exceeded his desire to fight battles. His feast day is commemorated with a lantern walk, symbolizing the spreading of light.

Martin was born around the year 315, in a Roman province that encompasses what is now Hungary. His father was a Roman officer and by Roman decree, his son was to join the army at 15 years of age. Martin's inscription into the army merely fulfilled an obligation, for he had already decided to serve, rather than to harm, his fellow people.

Martin's duty took him to Amiens, France. By the time he was 18, he too had become an officer. One bitterly cold winter day, as Martin rode his horse toward the city gates, he came upon a beggar. The beggar, barely covered in ragged clothing, sat shivering beside the city wall. Martin, likely donned in full regalia--armor, sword, and an exquisite woolen cloak--could not pass the beggar by, as had all others before him. Instead, he dismounted from his horse, and with one stroke of his gleaming sword, slit his cloak in two. He wrapped the beggar in this fine woolen garment, then continued through the gates of Amiens.

That night, Martin dreamed that Christ wore the half cloak he had given the beggar. Upon waking, he realized that his true calling was not one of military service, but one of service to all of humanity. He soon left the army. Martin's kindness was readily recognized and he became so well respected, that he was chosen to replace a deceased bishop. Ever humble, Martin wished to avoid this distinction and hid in a goose pen when emissaries were sent to deliver the calling. Honking geese announced his presence, however, making his bishopric an inevitability.

Martin's compassionate deeds are replicated in Waldorf communities in a few ways. The first is the lantern walk, which is traditionally held on Martin of Tours' day of passing, November 11th. Symbolically, light and warmth are spread through the dark and cold at this time of year. Another way to celebrate Martin's service to humanity is to offer a clothing drive, helping to warm those in need. In addition, Martinmas often spurs food drives, again providing for those who might otherwise do without.

The mood we aim to capture during the Lantern Walk is one of collective reverence. We ask that families enter classrooms with a whisper; join in harmonious song as we walk through the woods, and sing to our cars afterward for a quiet ride home: electronics and media-free. An ideal scenario would find a pot of warm soup awaiting each family's return, and a lantern-lit table set for a peaceful dinner. Many European families celebrate Martinmas with roasted goose, in memory of the geese who squawked on St. Martin. Whatever the meal, we eagerly anticipate your joining us for this festival, relishing a rare opportunity for you and your child to take in the quietude, and warming the night from the inside out.

~Donna Levesque
Pedagogical Director



Donna is on the AWS campus Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please say hello and feel free to ask her a question.

Fireweed Preschool

When I grew up in the pumpkin patch
I sat in the sun all day
I grew til I was golden round and I heard a little sunbeam say
Roll around little pumpkin in the pumpkin patch just tumble and twirl and sway
Roll around in the leaves and the grasses and thatch just turn and spin and play
But, when the sun is sinking low and shadows steal the night
Hurry back to your home in the garden row curl up in your vine so tight

We have been sneaky little hobgoblins with Halloween around the corner, and enjoying all that Jack frost has brought us! The children are looking forward to harvesting the seeds from our classroom pumpkin and making pumpkin bread!

Miss Michele



Sunflower Kindergarten

The sunlight fast is dwindling
My little lamp needs kindling
Its beam shines far through darkest night
Oh lantern, guard me with your light

During our annual Martinmas Lantern Walk, children and parents are invited to gather together as the sun sets, carrying handmade lanterns, symbolizing our own individual light.

This is a quiet, meditative celebration. After our story we will light our lanterns, the children will journey through our twinkling path together singing lantern songs. Parents are asked to walk with their children and to help preserve the mood of the evening by joining in the singing and encouraging the children in reverence and calm.

As you leave the Martinmas Lantern Walk, we encourage you to take the mood of the festival home with you. A quiet ride home, followed by supper and bedtime is ideal.

We are joyfully making a 'home for Father Sun's light' in our classroom! All is well in Sunflower Kindergarten!

Miss Susan

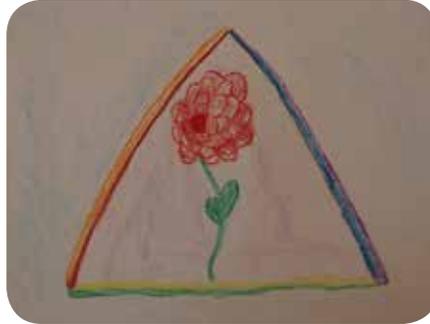
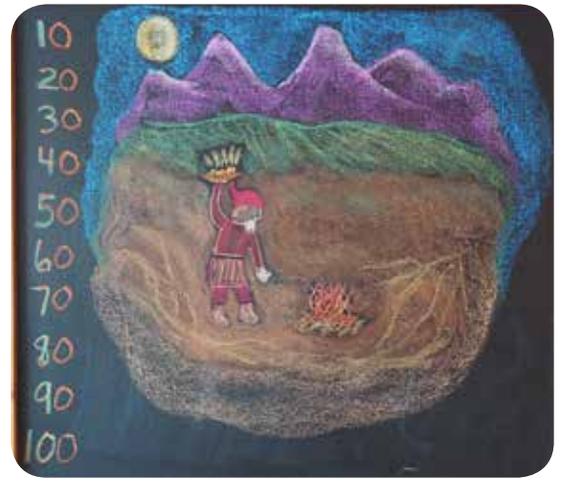


Grade 1

In First Grade, our work in mathematics begins with an exploration of the qualities of the numbers 1-12. We look at the unique aspect of each number and the way in which each number manifests in the natural world. For example, we look at the one-ness of the sun, the two-ness of day and night, and so forth.

When we learn about number 10, our children become little gnomes and work for the gnome king. They collect jewels and organize them into groups of 10 before they are given to the king. These little gnomes are short and strong, heavy footed as they march along. Every head is straight and proud and every step is firm and loud. Pick and hammer each must hold, deep in earth to mine the gold. Ready over each one's back, hangs a little empty sack. When their hard day work is done, home again they march as one. Full sacks make a heavy load, as they march along the road. Once their jewels are put into bags of 10, they learn how quickly they can count to 100 in 10's.

Ms. Smith



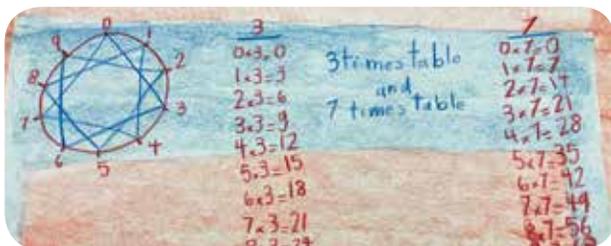
Grade 2/3

Arithmetic has been the focus of our Main Lesson work since Michaelmas. The children have created forms of many multiplication/division tables with yarn and counting sticks, in the form of 10-point circles and 12-point circles. Ten or twelve children sit in a circle, holding a counting stick upright in front of themselves. Another child is tasked with winding the yarn from 0 around, in a skip counting style, to discover what form will be created. This is a bit of 'living geometry'. The tables have been written and practiced, and each child has given their own artistic enhancement to their lovely forms. We have also explored the forms created for two tables by creating a fountain, using 10 points along a horizontal line. Routine math fact practice in addition, subtraction and multiplication has been introduced, and solving equations where the missing number is in a variety of positions has been a fun challenge for many. It creates flexible thinking in mental math.

Apple Harvest ~ Our class was gifted to enjoy a day in Peter and Rosey's orchard harvesting as many apples and could be carried! (And eating as many as possible while picking!). There were so many apples that children were able to deliver apples aplenty to their families. Our practice periods last week were filled with cutting, cooking and feasting on warm and cold applesauce. This gave us the opportunity to venture forth into some Grade 3 measurement and volume experiences. Huge thanks go out to Rosey, Peter and Oskar from all of Grade 2/3!

Grade 2/3 students converged from five different classes in their schooling last year. We seem to be at a turning point. The children are reaching out to each other in new ways. As they are building a history of shared experiences, they are beginning to guide each other in kind ways. It is a wonderful thing for me to observe and to help lead them in these huge social tasks. All is well on Grade 2/3!

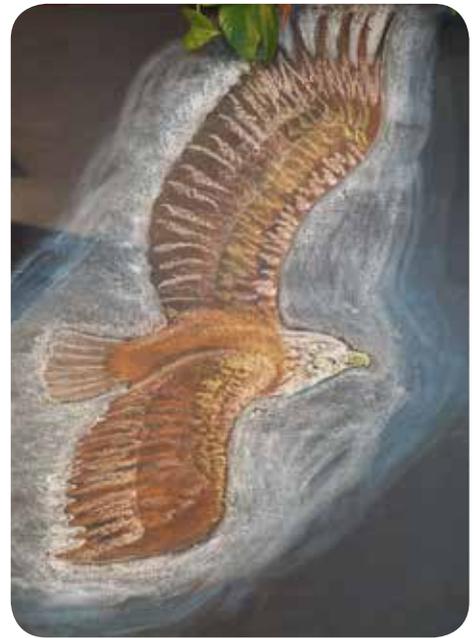
Meg Eggleston



Grade 4/5

We have just finished our first math block of the year: fractions. This is a difficult subject and we will spend much of the year mastering the idea of traveling towards zero, as opposed to away from it, which has been everything we've done up until now. The block was spent cutting, slicing, breaking and splitting all sorts of things. Fortunately, food is the perfect medium for this work and we enjoyed daily practice sessions with food. It was hard to say goodbye to such a fulfilling block. We have now begun a block on zoology, understanding some of the animals we see so often around us.

Mr. Jensen



Grade 6/7

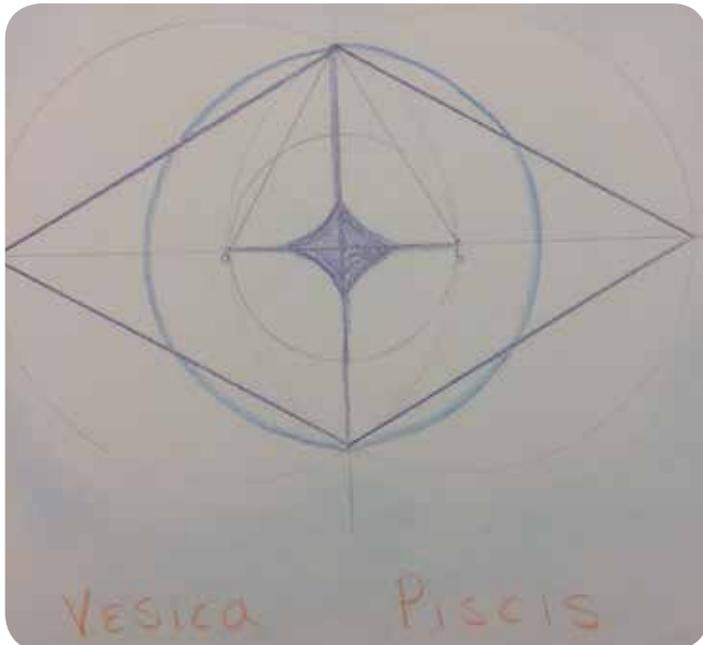
This past month, class 6/7 were given the same tools that ancient geometers used to construct and understand the secrets of the universe. Students have begun to understand the sacredness of the numbers 1 thru 5 and worked to construct the shapes that the natural world surrounds us with.

Imagine you had to find a path between two fearsome beasts - beasts that were tethered apart from each other along a straight pegged-out fence. Their chains allowed them to move in a perfect circle around their centers - overlapping in the middle. Where would you find your path? Where would the safest (albeit still dangerous) path be?

This path that you would delineate would allow you to form the perpendicular bisector of the line these beasts are tethered along! This shape that their paths would create is the vesica piscis - the shape that grows from the monad (1) to the dyad (2) and gives birth to all the shapes of the universe.

It is in this way that students were first enticed into the construction of one of the most important geometrical shapes of their universe. This beautiful practice coincided with the Medieval Games that we were invited to. These were held up in Palmer at Birchtree Charter School. A rainy, cold Friday turned into a celebration of their cooperation and teamwork together and with students from Winterberry and Birchtree Charter Schools. The children ran the gauntlet, carried each other through the spider's web, held court in front of the King and Queen and represented themselves with honor!

Ms. Herda

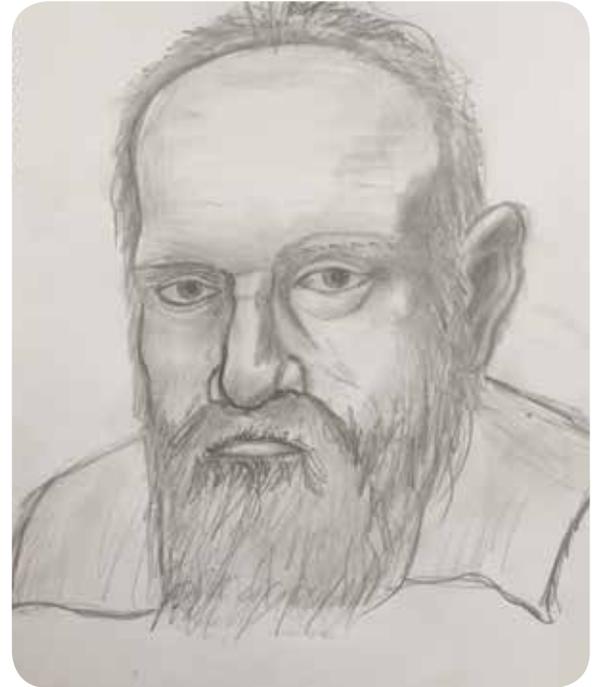


Grade 8

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way – in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only...”

Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

We have been studying revolts that occurred prior to the American Revolution and that paved the way for monarchies to become democracies and allowed for individuals to recognize their importance in the big picture. From the absolute monarchies of Europe, early America, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and modern-day revolutions in sports, technology, and culture; we have repeatedly seen, the human struggle to feel that a cause is right and will restore a sense of fairness when we stand up for what we believe. This block brought up varying perspectives and heated discussions. However, it balance out nicely with active movement in the morning, portrait drawing, painting, map work, composition writing, and timelines. We were blessed with the expertise of David Turner in the area of the Industrial Revolution and for an opportunity to work on Camp Birchwood’s Challenge Course to see where our own loyalties sit in moments of challenge. The beginning of the American Revolutionary War, known as “The Revolt of the Colonies”, is where this history block has ended and where we will resume in December.



Blessings,
Ms. Klein



Middle School Chorus - Ms. Starr

We have made great progress this month in both singing and recorder.

The students are starting their first piece in four-part vocal harmony: a beautiful setting of Jean Sibelius’s “Finlandia”. We are also making great progress on two classical pieces: an excerpt from Mozart’s “The Magic Flute”, as well as a setting of Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy.” Both pieces are translated into English, but still carry a great deal of the power and sentiments of the original work. The students are beginning to gain more confidence in their own voices, even as they are discovering the challenges and beauty of choral singing.

Russian - Ms. Burton

First graders are very excited to extend their counting in Russian to 20. They cannot wait to learn more and more with their friend, Cheburashka, who comes to every class. We made a small paper copy of the friend to go home with every student. Fall verses are coming along, verses about animals and toys. You can find beautiful drawings and new words about fruits in their Russian books. Grade 2/3 has been very busy with different projects. Children completed their alphabet books and made alphabet bingo cards. They learned new verses and songs about animals and fall that we have been practicing every class. Students also made season trees to learn seasons and months in Russian. All of us were very excited to complete our Matreshka puzzles. Grade 4/5 has been practicing word coding and decoding, and simple reading and writing all our learned poems in our Books of Poems. new song about days of the week was easy to memorize. We chose our play and assigned parts. Now we will be reading assigned words and practice the play. Grades 6/7 and 8 are conquering Russian grammar, pronouns, and verb conjugation. Geography became a part of our classes as we described different language skills. We went around the world using globes and maps, discovering what country speaks what language. It has been a fun learning experience for all these students.



Handwork - Ms. Margaret



Grade 1. Baby buntings are complete.



Grade 2/3. Our lion herd is growing slowly.



Grade 4/5. Wet felted Russian books are beginning to take shape.

Grade 6/7. What do you think these will become?



Grade 8 took a field trip to JoAnn fabrics to pick out their kuspuk fabric.

Woodworking - Mr. Wood



Grade 6/7 - wooden spoons



Movement - Mr. Unterberger



Cricket in Alaska. That's right, we're learning how to play Cricket in grade 4/5 for Movement. So much fun! Thank you, Joe Herda, for helping us out. Grade 6/7 recently took part in the Medieval Games out at Birchtree. A wonderful day, even in the rain. We are enjoying the crisp fall air as we move outside together. Cheney Lake is beginning to freeze and soon, after Thanksgiving, we will start a skating block. I'll keep you posted.

Thank you also Handy Helpers for helping me get basketball and teatherball set up again!

See you all outside!
Mr. Unterberger

October highlights



Sunrise on campus



Pumpkins found in the early childhood hall



Grade 6/7 during the monthly assembly



Dragons can do crosswalk duty



Fairy tale duck found a nice place to rest



Grade 8 helped carve pumpkins



The Anchorage
Waldorf
School

October 23, 2017

Awakening Wonder

Dear AWS Families, Alumni, and Community,

Fall has arrived, making the air cool and crisp. It's a time for reflection of how we have changed and grown over the past year. In our school garden, only the apples remain; waiting for the nip of Jack Frost to make them sweeter. Our thriving students, like our bountiful apple trees, are evidence of a wonderful school and supportive community, where their holistic educational needs are met and they are well taken care of everyday.

In this time of reflection and gratitude, I would like to share some of our own sweet accomplishments over the last year:

-We are maintaining our total enrollment count, despite Alaska's recession, and have many new students at the beginning of their journey enrolled in our two robust kindergartens.

-Our upper grades have been re-established through eighth grade, after more than four years of not having a middle school.

-We are accommodating working parents by having earned our Childcare License from the municipality of Anchorage, allowing younger children to stay at our school a longer time during the school day.

-We are furthering our social mission by putting a tailored tuition model in effect that determines tuition according to a family's ability to pay.

-Our pedagogical quality is deepening with our impressive faculty bringing a wealth of experience and Waldorf credentials, along with the involvement of a newly hired pedagogical director.

-The dignity of our campus is shining through improvements, like new flooring in the Great Hall and cottages, and re-lighting our school sign.

-We are collaborating with Winterberry School by absorbing their students into our aftercare program.

These changes have enabled our school's Waldorf community to develop beautifully, and we need your help to keep that momentum going! For the Anchorage Waldorf School to continue to thrive, we are asking families and friends to support our school's Annual Giving Fund by contributing a meaningful gift towards reaching our goal of \$60,000 by Christmas Day.

Your support will allow our school, much like the apple tree, to continue to be fruitful with each coming season.

In Gratitude,

Stacy L. Durych
Executive Director

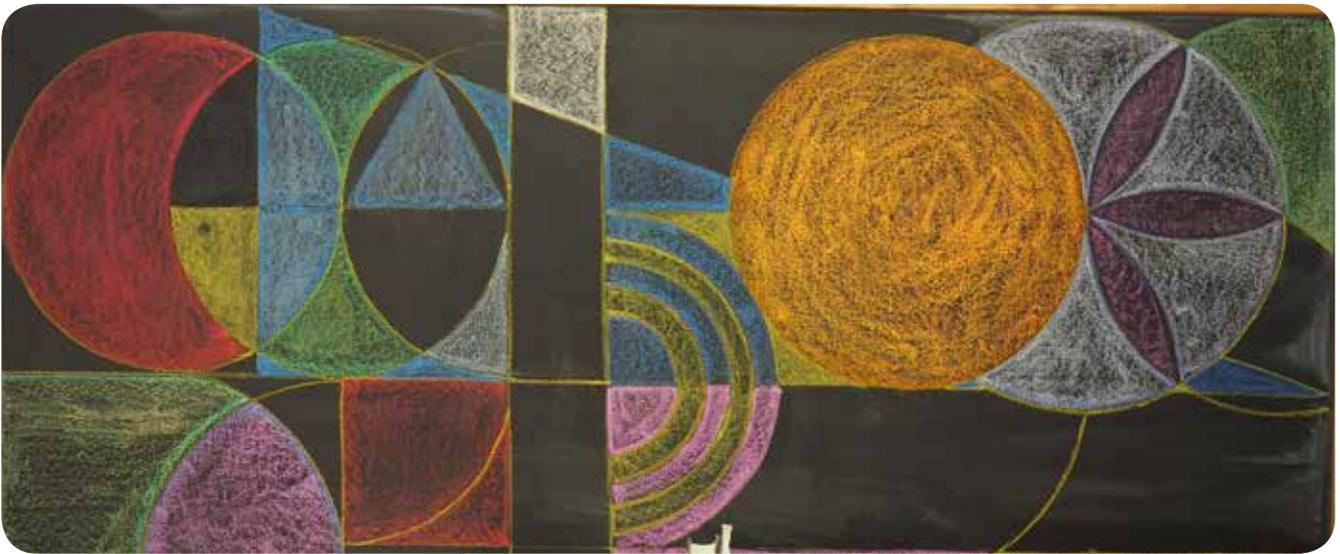
Community News

Mira Starr, our chorus teacher, is offering classes in harp, cello, piano and music literacy (literacy is required for piano students). She teaches students 1st grade and up, including adults. She teaches mostly at AWS, but homes are possible as well, although there might be an extra fee. If you are interested, please contact Mira at mira.starr@waldorfak.org.

Please sign up for **Amazon Smile and Fred Meyer's Rewards** for our schools. This is the easiest way to fundraise when you are buying groceries and shopping online! <https://www.fredmeyer.com/topic/community-rewards-4>. Type in Anchorage Waldorf School and it will pop up.

School Store is having a huge sale on books and other items. Please stop in the front lobby and take a peak at the 50% off items. We are also starting to get new items in for the upcoming holidays. Be on the lookout for wooden animals, local candles, baskets and special handmade treats from our own Craft Guild.

If you have some news that you want to share, please send it to Wendy at office@waldorfak.org with your information. We are compiling a community resource list.



Grade 6/7 chalkboard - inspired by Rick Tan



Waldorf Winter Craft Faire 2016

Looking for Volunteers!

Waldorf Winter Craft Faire, Saturday Dec 9, 2017

Parent Council is looking for volunteers to help with this festive event. There are still some tables available to sell your crafts. Please contact David Turner at davidturner@gci.net or call 713-725-8283 to learn more.

Gala Committee is also looking for you to join and help celebrate this early March 2018 auction. Please let Wendy know if you are interested at office@waldorfak.org.