



# Waldorf Academy Voice

Celebrating 23 years  
of education at Waldorf  
Academy



250 Madison Avenue, Toronto, ON Canada M4V 2W6 | www.waldorfacademy.org | info@waldorfacademy.org | p. 416.962.6447 | f. 416.975.5513

## June 16, 2011

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we emerge from what can only be seen as a fantastic “play season” and are now just finished “trip week” it is hard to believe the school year is closing. During the last Thursday Faculty Circle we reviewed the plays of grade three, six and seven. Words such as transformation and elevated to new heights were attributed to many individuals, all the classes and the volunteers and teachers. These comments didn’t even include the wondrous production of Macbeth put on by the grade eight class. Waldorf education and Waldorf Academy in particular, can be very proud of the work we do in education through these plays. The literacy skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and memory combined with social skills of collaboration and teamwork as well as the incredible examples of volunteerism shown by parents and community supporters has a lasting effect on our children. Learning to take on a role and project the whole nature of their character is enriching. This is an example of what we mean by wholistic education, this is where we educate physically, emotionally, intellectually and even spiritually.

We began this school year working within a two year plan in which staffing and salaries, enrollment and fundraising targets were set. We have been successful in meeting these targets with just a small bit of fundraising to go. We all owe a great deal to all those who rose to this challenge. Faculty, Administration, Board of Trustees and parents all contributed to this community effort. Now we will make adjustments and enter the second year of this plan in September. [Con't page 15](#)



## ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS! Thank you!

### 2011/12 IMPORTANT DATES:

September 6<sup>th</sup> School Starts

December 22- January 6 School Closed for Winter Holidays

March 12-23 March Break

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Reading and Literacy at Waldorf Academy

Grade 8 Graduation

Waldorf in Huffington Post

Summer Reading List

Gr.4/5 Olympiad and Class Trip

Gr.2 Puppet Show and Book Binding

Hatching Chicks in Kindergarten and more...



**Left Back Row:**  
**Andrew Walker,**  
**Gideon Ruttiman-**  
**Hoskins,**  
**Julia Van Kralingen,**

**Left:** Isaac Roberts,  
 Maximilian Kahn,  
 Nathan Chazan,  
 Emmett Talbot  
 McEwan, Lee Silden,  
 Chloe Matamoros,  
 Noah Stamp

**Center:** Laura  
 Millard-Zieglar

A Nigerian proverb says it takes a village to raise a child. Children are considered a blessing from God for the whole community. We have been very blessed! For the class sitting before us the village has been The Alan Howard Waldorf School (now known as Waldorf Academy). Together the parents, teachers, staff and students have cared for them, some guiding them along their path of growth while others have accompanied them on their journey. Each student in this class is a **Nwa ora**, child of our community.

This class is an enigma in many ways – one moment you think you know who or what they are and then like the Greek God Proteus they change their shape, transforming into yet something new. It is for this reason that I have likened them to an amoeba – a single celled organism that is the ultimate shape shifter. As you observe them you discover, however, that they are not as straightforward as they seem. Instead they are quite sophisticated – their simplicity and easy-going nature belie all that lies beneath the surface.

The 7 boys and 4 girls that make up this class have bonded together into a very tight unit that moves quite fluidly as one with no individual driving the whole. At any given moment one of the eleven will surge forward to take the lead and then slip back into the whole again and then the shape will shift with a different student protruding to taking the lead. Just as there are many quite distinct species of Amoebas there are 11 students each quite distinct from the others. However, as a whole they work together in harmony as if one.

They can be described as:

- gentle, , kind, thoughtful, caring, helpful, accepting, empathetic, principled
- soulful, encouraging, fair, grounded, contemplative
- passionate, intense, forthright, genuine
- creative, talented, curious, engaging, thespians
- chatty, silly, active, cheerful, spontaneous, enjoyable
- highly regarded, role models

When I first began to teach this class when they were 8 years old I instantly noted their incredible heart forces. Their capacity for caring for others in a sincere and genuine way was remarkable. In particular, they put the needs of an extraordinary young boy named Kai above their own so that he could fully participate in a lesson that he loved very much but was truly challenging for him. As a teacher this is one of the experiences I will always remember. This is when I first fell in love with this class.

Dear students, three years later I had the privilege of becoming your class teacher. It was with a gentle nudging (or not so gentle) from students in my last class that I agreed to forgo my sabbatical to teach you, a very wise and rewarding decision. There were a few bumps in the beginning – that is me forgetting you were only sixth graders and engaging with you as if you were eighth graders. Well, you quickly put me in my place and helped me find my way.

Over the past three years there are many things we have done together – academically, socially and physically – as we meandered from Ancient Rome, through the dark Ages to the Renaissance, then onward through big revolutions and finally into present day. You have lived into these periods very deeply, sometimes too deeply – you could say we had our own Dark Ages only to be reborn through our personal Renaissance. Together, through the bad and the bliss, we have grown and matured as individuals and as a class. You are a remarkable group of young people who I am very honoured to know and to have worked with. Thank you for all you have taught me along the way. You will always have a place in my heart.

I am not the only one you have left a mark on. Every time I stepped out into the hall I found one or more of you interacting with a younger student. Often times these younger people were being carried around on your backs, holding your hands or even being comforted by you. One of my favourite moments of this year was seeing the looks on your grade one buddies faces when you gave them the Christmas present that you had needle felted for them. In turn, they gave you each a card that you carefully tucked into your bags to take home. You have provided gracious, mature, responsible, caring leadership. Thank you for helping to make this a wonderful, harmonious middleschool year. You are a well-loved and respected class.

With regards to your classmates it is abundantly clear that you are a very close knit group, bound together by a flexible cell wall somewhat like that rather rare organism called an amoeba. The appreciations and wishes you offered every member of your class in our closing circle demonstrated how much you care for each other and how well you really know one another. Last week on our trip I had the pleasure of watching a few of you revel in the joy of a magical toy store in Creemore as if you were 6 year olds. After your initial delightful exploration you came up with a wonderful gift that was perfect for Laura who was celebrating her birthday on the trip– a colourful sock monkey for a girl known for her very colourful socks! She loved it! Furthermore, there was absolutely no envy or upset about her receiving something that no one else had received, just pleasure in the giving. You are truly generous and caring souls and we have been blessed to have you as a NWA ORA, child of our community!

**Paula Rosa, Grade 8 Teacher**



Chloe and Griffin (Alumna)



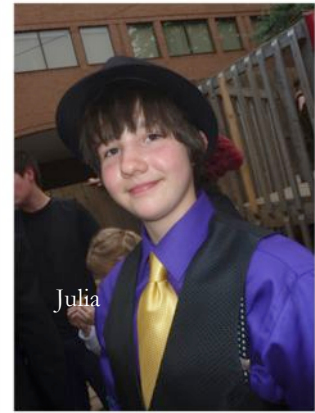
A wave of balloons, bubbles and gold fish!



Nathan



Isaac and Noah



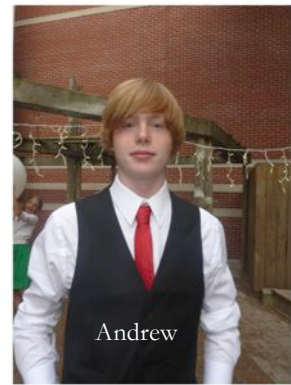
Julia



Laura



Krinda Valenciuik and Emmett



Andrew



Gr.8 Teacher, Paula Rose with Founding parents, Rita and Reiner Martin-McHold



Lee, Emmett, Max and Gideon

## Grade 2 Puppet Show and Book Binding



What to do with those Tupperware containers of main lesson books? Create a book that can sit on your coffee table. Thanks to Katharine Gordon who introduced the concept of book binding the Main Lesson to Grade 2 parents on Monday. We unraveled the spirals, removed the covers, used matte paper to create a book cover and sewed the pages together. Then we selected 2 watercolour paintings by the children and used wallpaper glue to attach it to the matte board and create a beautiful front and back cover. If you would like to try this please contact Katharine Gordon or any of the Grade 2 parents.



Grade 2 students presented to parents and friends last Friday a puppet show complete with songs, rhymes and riddles featuring the puppets they had created. Thanks to Grade 2 teacher, Ena Bruce, for a magical family evening.



### Grade 8 Penny Drive: Reflections

\$326.69. That is a sum we were not counting on reaching. But lo and behold, here it is. The Canadian Red Cross now has three hundred twenty six dollars and sixty nine cents more for their efforts in Japan, all thanks to this great school. We have gone above and beyond our original goal of \$200, I would like to thank every teacher, student, and parent who donated any amount of money (even a penny!) to our cause. It warmed my heart to see grown-ups in their forties and kids in first grade alike bring donations every day for love of the school and respect for the cause. However, do not think this is the end! The wreckage left by the earthquake in Japan will take billions of dollars and thousands of volunteers to truly repair. I plan to make another contribution some day in the near future, and want you to do the same. Arigato! Thank you! -Nathan D. Chazan, Grade 8 student on behalf of Grade 8

The festivities began with an orientation and Greek wrestling. The day ended with the solemn and reverent opening ceremonies, complete with Olympic flame, drum circle, and the Olympic Oath, spoken in unison by all athletes. Minweiwei performed a segment of their play with great eloquence and maturity. Students from five Waldorf schools were in attendance, and each was welcomed into one of the city-states of Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Thebes or Mycena.

Competition morning dawned cold and grey as the city-states processed into an open field framed by gigantic white pines. It was beautiful to see these children, who have been working towards this event all year, take up their places with joy and equipoise as they endeavored to “win with grace and lose with dignity.”

All too soon, the closing ceremonies marked the conclusion of the two days. Every athlete received a medal, and two Waldorf Academy students were especially honored for their grace and beauty.

A very special thanks to our sister school north of us, The Toronto Waldorf School, for hosting the 2011 Pentathlon.



The students sewed the border on their tunics. Each student had to write an ode to the Gods and say it before throwing the discus.



Learn more about **Spatial Dynamics** and the 5 selected events; discus, javelin, sprint, running long jump and Greek wrestling—watch a video about Jaimen Mcmillan, founder of Spatial Dynamics on our school blog [www.waldorfacademy.org/voice](http://www.waldorfacademy.org/voice)



**Kindergarten (read aloud)**

Flower Fairy books by Cicely Mary Barker  
 Nature Stories by Thornton Burgess  
 Catwings series by Ursula LeGuin  
 Anything by Elsa Belskow  
 The Snail House by Allan Ahlberg  
 Night in the Country by Cynthia Rylant  
 Owl Moon by Jane Yolen  
 The Big Big Sea by Martin Waddell  
 Owl Babies by Martin Waddell  
 The Toot and Puddle series by Holly Hobbie  
 Happy Birth Day! by Robie Harris  
 You Be Good and I'll Be Night (poetry) by Eve Merriam

**First and Second Grade (read aloud)**

My Father's Dragon by Ruth Stiles Gannett (3 Books)  
 The Book of Fairy Princes, The Seven-Year-Old  
 Wonder Book by Isabel Wyatt  
 The Light Princess, The Princess and the Goblin, The  
 Princess and Curdie by George MacDonald  
 Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney  
 The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf  
 The Quiltmaker's Gift by Jeff Brumbeau  
 Thunder Cake by Patricia Polacco  
 The Salamander Room by Anne Mazer  
 All the Places to Love by Patricia McLachlan  
 Mole Music by David McPhail  
 The Mousehole Cat by Antonia Barber  
 Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch by Eileen Spinelli  
 This Land is Your Land by Woody Guthrie  
 Whoever You Are by Mem Fox  
 The Mare on the Hill by Thomas Locker  
 Sunflower House by Eve Bunting  
 The Butterfly House by Eve Bunting  
 Roxaboxen by Alice McLerran  
 Weslandia by Paul Fleischman  
 The Blue Hill Meadows by Cynthia Rylant  
 The Raft by Jim LaMarche  
 The Lighthouse Family series by Cynthia Rylant  
 Spring Story, Summer Story, Autumn Story, Winter  
 Story, The World of Brambleby Hedge by Jill Barklem

**Third & Fourth Grade (read alone or read aloud)**

Celtic Wonder Tales, The Tangle-Coated Horse by Ella Young  
 Pippi Longstocking series by Astrid Lindgren  
 The Little House series by Laura Ingalls Wilder  
 As My Heart Awakes · Arthur M. Pittis, A third grade reader  
 Sun So Hot I Froze to Death · Arthur M. Pittis A Fourth  
 grade reader from AWSNA bookstore  
 Half Magic and others by Edward Eager  
 The Wizard of Oz by Frank Baum  
 Tales of a Korean Grandmother by Frances Carpenter  
 Down the Mountain by Ellis Credle Matilda,  
 The BFG, The Witches, James and the Giant Peach by Roald  
 Dahl  
 The Frances series by Russell Hoban  
 The Jungle Book, Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling  
 Eli, Big, Bad Bruce by Bill Peet  
 Red Indian Folk and Fairy Tales by Sanders Doctor DeSoto,  
 Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig  
 Stuart Little, The Trumpet of the Swan, Charlotte's Web by  
 E.B. White  
 Miss Hickory by Carolyn S. Bailey  
 The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh  
 The Wheel on the School by Meindert DeJong  
 Thimble Summer and Gone-Away Lake by Elizabeth Enright  
 The Moffats and others by Eleanor Estes  
 Animal Family by Randall Jarrel  
 The Railway Children by E. Nesbit  
 The Borrowers by Mary Norton  
 All of a Kind Family by Sydney Taylor  
 Boxcar Children by Gertrude Warner

## Great Summer Reads for Parents:

**Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature: For Kids of all Ages and their Mentors**

by Jon Young, Ellen Haas and Evan McGown

"Coyote's Guide by is nature education as it should be — mysterious, timeless, hopeful, evocative and playful."-**David**

**Sobel**, author of **Beyond Ecophobia: Reclaiming the Heart in Nature Education**

**At the School Store:** Check out our selection of great books on parenting, Waldorf education, crafts, nature and cooking. **Kitgut CD's for sale- Alumni Jesse Corrigan and Frank Evans performed at Stone Soup- Support**

**My Kids Don't Watch TV (But I'm Not Judging You!)**

Waldorf parent, Abi Cotler O'Roarty writes in the **Huffington Post** May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011

"I hesitate to write about this because when I even tell just one other parent that we don't do media, I see the walls that can instantly go up. Am I judging them? Am I trying to convert? I truly am not. Sometimes I think I am just one stomach virus away from Nickelodeon myself. "They just don't watch *yet*," I always tell them, and it's true. Some day we'll journey into things like "The Sound of Music" and the Discovery Channel. But even if we waited until Ginger was 7, or 9, she'd still have a long life of keyboards and DVDs ahead of her, no doubt."

"Here are some of the things we love about our no-media policy, with a huge disclaimer that you can never be sure what's nature over nurture:

- Our elder daughter's unbelievable imagination
- What she does make and do while I'm busy (sometimes that means helping me with chores -- it's amazing what little hands can do)
- The innocence of her brain and her total lack of sophistication -- she has no idea about things like war, sarcasm or commercials
- The malleability of her brain -- a rock can still be so many things for her
- Her attention span for stories, books, even car rides
- Her initiative about playing on her own, and her lack of need to be entertained"

Excerpt from article in the Huffington Post by Abi Cotler O'Roarty. Read full article on [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/abi-cotler-oroarty/kids-tv\\_b\\_848864.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/abi-cotler-oroarty/kids-tv_b_848864.html)

**Waldorf 101 Lectures for 2011/12:**

Next year we will have four Waldorf 101 Lectures and one guest speaker for our Parent Enrichment Series. The very first Waldorf 101 Lecture will be an introduction to Waldorf Philosophy at our New Parent Evening September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Lecture #2: Reading and Literacy; how we teach children to read- a gentle introduction with a strong finish.

Lecture #3: Media: Our ongoing relationship with media in the classroom and at home.

Lecture #4: Learning Challenges; a look at the Extra Lesson, Remedial and Curative Therapy.

In addition we will be offering for the first time in partnership with the Rudolf Steiner Centre of Toronto, a Foundations Study that parents will be able to participate in.

## Fifth &amp; Sixth Grade

The Dragon Boy by Donald Samson. A coming of age story.  
 Owl In The Family, by Farley Mowat  
 Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech Catherine,  
 Called Birdy by Karen Cushman  
 Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving Heidi by Johanna Spyri  
 Kidnapped,  
 Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson  
 Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit, The Two  
 Towers, Return of the King by J.R.R. Tolkien  
 Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain Spirits, Heroes,  
 and Hunters from North  
 American and Indian Mythology  
 by Marion Wood The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson  
 Burnett The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis The Saturdays,  
 The Four-Story Mistake,  
 Spiderweb for Two, And Then There Were  
 Five by Elizabeth Enright  
 The Long Secret by Eleanor Estes  
 Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh  
 The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame  
 Paddle to the Sea by Holling D. Holling  
 Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell  
 Around the World in 80 Days, Journey to the Center of the  
 Earth, Twenty Thousand Leagues, Under the Sea by Jules  
 Verne  
 Chronicles of Prydain by Alexander  
 Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll  
 The Little Prince by Antoine de St. Exupery  
 The Boys' Sherlock Holmes  
 by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
 Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving  
 Number the Stars by Lois Lowry  
 Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery  
 Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls  
 The Yearling by Marjorie Rawlings  
 Rootabaga Stories by Carl Sandburg  
 The Witch of Blackbird Pond and The Sign of the Beaver by  
 Elizabeth Speare

## Seventh &amp; Eighth Grade

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel DeFoe  
 The Three Musketeers by Alexander Dumas  
 Anything by Lloyd Alexander  
 Little Women and Little Men by Louisa May Alcott  
 Sounder by William Armstrong  
 Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank  
 Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt  
 The Keeping Days by Norman Johnston Bright and  
 Morning Star by Rosemary Harris  
 Tales of King Arthur by Roger Greene  
 Wizard of Earthsea, The Farthest Shore, The Tombs of  
 Atuan by Ursula LeGuin  
 Call of the Wild by Jack London  
 Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton  
 The Prince and the Pauper by Mark Twain  
 Watership Down by Richard Adams  
 Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt Caddie  
 Woodlawn by Carol Ryrie Brink  
 Silent Spring by Rachel Carson  
 My Antonia and O Pioneers by Willa Cather  
 Last of the Mohicans by James Fennimore Cooper  
 Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane  
 David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, Tale of Two Cities, and  
 others by Charles Dickens  
 The Outsiders and That Was Then, This is Now  
 by S.E. Hinton  
 Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes  
 To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee  
 Animal Farm and 1984 by George Orwell  
 Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger  
 Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift



### HATCHING CHICKS IN THE CRYSTAL GARDEN

For the fourth year my class has hatched chicks through the Green Achers Nature Program.

On the first day we receive the fertilized eggs each child carefully places the eggs into the "sun box" to be warm and cozy. And we wait....

The children ask which is theirs or for their name to go on the egg, but we try not to promote materialism. The chick belongs to Mother Nature and are here for us all to care for.

Daily we check for warmth by touching the outside of the sun box, we visually see if there is enough water. And we wait...

We borrow a wheat grinder from another class and we began to daily grind grains of sunflower, flax, alfa and wheat and little by little we build a store house of food. And we wait....



In the new era of virtual farming and Kinder Eggs I hear the children on the first day asking me every ten minutes, "did the eggs hatch?"

I provided the family with a calendar to color in to see when the eggs hatch. In days of old I would of use the phases of the moon.

As the weeks pass the questions hush and quiet. We are slowly lulled into a daily rhythm of feeling for warmth, visually checking the water and grinding grains. And we wait....

No child has ever asked for the scientific details of what an embryo is or how the chick gets out?

Children fortunate enough to be left to their natural ways are living in the moment.

The one question I always get is, "where is Mother and Father." This is the important question and I mean really, really important.

A child has an archetypal need to feel safe. Knowing this, I had prepared a story before the chick arrived about a Mother Hen and Father Rooster who one Spring laid too many eggs and needed help. In our story the children help and Mother Hen comes to get her chicks after hatching and they all return to the farm. For the young child their emotional journey must be as the Earth travels around the sun. It must have a beginning, a journey and a concluding ending that is happy.

It is essential when building language skills the teachers works with the visual. A puppet show is told for two weeks, first by the teacher then by the children. The story is then moved into the circle time and a four week cycle is completed (about the same time it takes to hatch the chicks and move them to the brooder box). Humans are rhythmic beings and we are naturally in tune daily with the Natural Laws of nature. In Waldorf Education teachers know this and we organically design programs that deepen the child's learning potential.

I was amazed to see elements of the story coming out in different ways. One little boy held the Mother Hen and Father Rooster in such reverence that one day I saw him place them on our 'Seasonal shelf' reserved for only the very special items. Another little girl collected sticks and held them over her body and said she was a porcupine (from our story) she was a very physical sensitive girl and somehow this image spoke to her as a way of building self regulation when he felt overwhelmed. As an educator I could see the elements of the story coming alive within the children's learning. I saw the children using language and social skills pretending to be a family of chickens, arguments over who would be who and compromises were learned. Or building a farm in small groups of co operative planning, organizing and team work. One child was using the chart to count the days to hatching, one child measured the grains as they increased daily. Of course we all counted how many chicks hatched and we were sad at the one chick that did hatch but died. Sometimes children loose family members and we talked about that as well. A Waldorf Kindergarten is more than a school of learning, we are like a family and become a community of learning.

Then on the twenty first day after placing them into the "sun box" we returned to our class from a ravine walk. With great enthusiasm as if a Shofar blowing from the highest mountain, a little boy said, "Hey, I can see one hatching." We all huddled around that little sun box as a chick pushed off the shell, released his head from under his wing and uncurled like a micro cosmic spiral, unfolding as if the beginning of time.

I could feel in that short span the children had united and when that little chick uncurled there was a united out breath followed by the universal "Ahhh." It was a calm expression of wonder that welcomed this little chick into our world

The children went back to the lunch table and quietly ate their lunch. After rest time one child asked to draw a picture. Within minutes several children gathered around the table each drawing a picture of the chick they had just seen hatch. Some pictures were to be taken home immediately, others were hung with tape for the chicks as a little gift. Here we see the children's temperament unfold and their relationship to their world. Some chicks were flying in the air, others surrounded by flowers, grass and firmly on the earth. You could see the big eyes of the chicks and as many as twenty toes. These simple drawings reveal to the teacher the inner reflection of the child's nerve sense taking hold of their physical surroundings.

In Steiner's Lecture (Dornach, 1st November 1919) he writes, "wisdom gave him (man) the feeling of being membered into the whole cosmos. A man moving about the earth not only felt himself composed of the substances of the forces present around him in earthly life, in the mineral, plants and animal kingdom, but he felt the forces operating, for example in the movement of the stars, the sun were playing into him. This feeling of being a member of the whole cosmos was not a mere abstraction."

In looking at the hatching of the eggs from a Waldorf Pedagogical perspective we provide for the children an oasis, a place for children to be in their natural state, feel the rhythm of the chicks hatching, to know that there is a Natural Law, a morality if you will or an unshakable Trust in Nature and in their little world, the World of Childhood.

For example, the chick hatching on the 21st day, is a trust in the world, a world that is safe for them to grow up in. The little child knows deeply and truly that Mother and Father do indeed belong on a high shelf of reverence and that in spite of the fact there is a short separation they will be together again.

When the children experienced the chick birthing in the form of the cosmos, this is indeed an event that takes one's breath away and deeply lives in the child's daily rhythms of the of sleeping and waking as they themselves curl up cozy for a good nights sleep only to uncurl and stretch to greet the morning sun.

Upon moving the chicks to the brooder box, the children helped with the physical care. The food they painstakingly prepared bit by bit over 21 days has now filled a large container and is enough to feed the chicks as they hatch, one by one. Once the chicks were placed in the brooder box the children held the chicks, kissed them, followed them on all fours as the chicks ran about the class. The joy and fun of this experience was truly a delight for every child in the class and those who came to visit. The children prepared for the day to say good bye. No child was upset; they were happy as they know the Natural Law is to return to the parent and the farm.

Through a simple act of hatching chicks these little children have been invited towards and indeed to the natural world of childhood through body, soul and spirit that we offer in the Waldorf Kindergarten.

Our Early Childhood programs are carefully designed and staffed to provide a learning environment for children to grow, to become intelligent, caring, nature conscious, socially healthy adults. Just as the Law of Nature is a chick shall hatch in 21 days, so it is true of a human being in 21 years. Our Early Childhood Programs are part of the child's first seven years.

Written by; Maureen-Rose Everatt  
Kindergarten Teacher Spring 2011



**Maypole Photos**



**Summer Festivals and Celebrations at our Childcare Centre**

People around the world celebrate festivals. These festivals bring people together in moments of joy or sadness.

Waldorf education is well known for its many ways of celebrating and enjoying all elements of life and rhythms of nature in the form of acknowledging the seasons.

We believe that festivals are ways of bringing an uplifting meaning to being human.

Our young children, experiencing being away from home for the first time, are guided through our daily and weekly activities, incorporating nature and festivals from each season. Our activities are the piece of art that grows and changes constantly through the observation of the children, their needs, behaviors and feelings.

The diverse stimulation offered by nature nurtures the children’s foundational senses of touch, movement, balance and general health.

Summer time is a time for renewing life forces and building up new energy for our bodies. We are now preparing fun activities for the children in order to serve them well in building their bodily strength and positive feelings.

Celebrating the four elements of nature such as air, warmth, earth and water with age appropriate activities gives our summer curriculum an in depth venue. Children need air and light, moving and running around outside exercises to promote their breathing and circulation. Having pathways to run, to bike and to gallop like little horses, having the opportunity to splash in wading pools or sprinklers, or enjoy picnic lunches outdoors , all these are ways of nurturing the body, soul and spirit of the young child. Let us all enjoy the benefits of the warmth this summer!

Best wishes to you all!! With Gratitude,

Florentina Cotop, ECE Teacher



Our Childcare Centre is working on re-designing and renovating the childcare playground.

Any used equipment that you no longer need and wish to donate will be greatly appreciated.

Some ideas for things we could use:

- Playground equipment that is made of mostly natural material (not the plastic type);
- Wind-chimes and other durable musical instruments;
- Construction material (Please call and ask if it is useful);
- Tools to be used and returned to you (such as shovels, wheel-barrels, electric-saw, and the like);
- And working hands to be helping us if and when we post a date for community help at the playground.

Please contact miss Ora Waldman (Toddler assistant) with any donations or questions, at [owaldman@waldorfacademy.org](mailto:owaldman@waldorfacademy.org)

**Photo: Children playing peek-a-boo**



Several Waldorf moms spent Monday mornings this spring taking a course in attachment parenting, facilitated by April Quan. The course, called "The Vital Connection," is Part I of the three-part course *The Power to Parent*. It's based on video presentations by Gordon Neufeld (author of *Hold On To Your Kids* and recent guest lecturer at Waldorf Academy.) This particular group included lively discussion, excellent pastries, and comfortable mornings at the Chernoff-Luke home. The participants look forward to taking Part II in the fall.

Gordon Neufeld and me: two years at the Waldorf Academy

Three years ago, I serendipitously attended a full-day presentation by Gordon Neufeld, *Bullies: their making and unmaking*, at the Peel Region School Psychology Conference. I haven't looked back, and since then have become authorized to offer four of his courses, with more pending. I did my first formal practicum in the fall of 2009 at the school, offering *The Vital Connection*, the first part of Dr. Neufeld's three-part course, *Power to Parent*. After being authorized, I ran the same course during the winter term.

This year in the fall and spring terms, a group of dedicated Kindergarten parents worked their way through Parts II and III, *Helping Children Grow Up* and *Common Challenges*, both practicums, and over the winter another group braved the cold and snow to watch and discuss *Making Sense of Adolescence*. Three separate groups have taken *The Vital Connection* this year as well. Leading these groups has been a rewarding experience for me, and I believe the participants found them enjoyable and worthwhile. I appreciated the thoughtfulness and perspective that each person brought to the discussions, and the questions kept me continually thinking and on my toes. I thank all of you for your enthusiasm and commitment.

I'd also like to thank everyone who attended the talk on March 30, for giving Dr. Neufeld such a warm reception. I know he will be happy to return next year.

Starting in the fall, I hope to offer the above courses, as well as a new one, *Making Sense of Attention Problems*. Dr. Neufeld's attachment-based developmental paradigm may be a bit of a mouthful, but it's also an ideal complement to the principles and practices of Waldorf education. See you next year!

From top: Carola Speiss, Leigh Lamacraft  
April Quan, Marion Chow, Kari Kozso  
Nada Alaica, Sarah Luke, Alexandra Tsamis

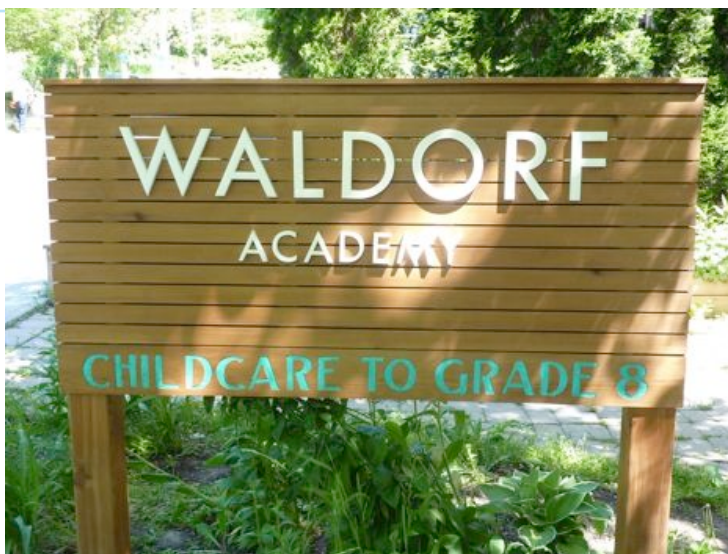


**On Saturday the 25th of June** we are having a two hour volunteering Spadina garden party from 10 am to 12 pm. We are looking for helping hands and donations of specific plants and shrubs.

The plants we need are **Hostas, Ashley Hydrangea, Dogwood,** and **low lying evergreens.** Thanks, Margo Lee(CCC Teacher) **Please respond to whether you have time or plant donations by Thursday June 23rd.** [mlee@waldorfacademy.org](mailto:mlee@waldorfacademy.org)

Our New Sign! 20,000 cars drive by the Spadina buildings everyday and as well, numerous tourists enroute to Casa Loma.

Special thanks to Margo Lee, parents and the GV's that took on the garden last Saturday. Looking Great!



## Class trip to Luna Projects- Grade 5 Botany

All activities were crafted to enhance each child's awareness of their individual relationship to nature, their impact on the environment and to foster an awareness and respect for others in their class. Each meal required a team of students to assist in preparation and another team for cleanup. David's staff worked to make these chores a fun social time. Our students participated without complaint – some even volunteered for extra duty. The children participated in working cooperatively to set tents up and take them down. They began each day with breakfast, story, exercise/stretching followed by Main Lesson. The days included activities such as shelter building, nature walks, scavenger hunts and sit place -they would sit by themselves in the forest with a task or question to ponder and then record their observations in their journal. They also did a night sit which involved a short time in the forest by themselves quietly, listening to and observing the forest going to sleep. There was of course a swim each day in the pond. The students truly enjoyed each other frolicking in the water – they actually resembled otters. Many hunted frogs and turtles on their bellies. All were enchanted by the fireflies dancing through the forest at night. The final night included student performances of legends they had made up. This exercise caused some difficulty since all of our children are very creative and absolutely convinced that their ideas are the best. Cooperation, compromise and respect were required to accomplish the task. Some groups found their way with a little guidance – others found it hard going. In the end, the skits were performed at the campfire – all were entertaining. We finished the evening with a singsong and marshmallow roast. On the final day, the children were praised for accomplishing camp takedown quickly and

efficiently. We participated in a white-water raft adventure down the Grand River from St. George to Paris. This was good practice for portages next year. We stopped on an island where the children learned to identify poison ivy and stinging nettle as well as jewel weed – which counteracts the effects of the first 2 plants. The children had an opportunity to learn how to ride/swim rapids safely should their boat capsize. It was wonderful to watch them ride the current and pull themselves into shore. Our guides, of course, were in the water with ropes ready to catch runaways, but each child managed themselves very well. As we arrived back at camp, we were surprised to find a young fawn nestled in the trees just outside the tree lounge. David told the children that no animal meets us with this gift without a reason. Each child has been asked to consider what they think the reason is for them and we will discuss it on Monday. The final minutes of our trip were in the tree lounge doing closing circle with David Masters. Each child was asked to think about everything they had encountered on the trip – both outside themselves (environment & activities) and inside themselves (feelings & reactions). They were then asked to express a 'rose' and a 'thorn' from their experience. These were shared and received with respect. I truly enjoyed watching the children meet themselves and one another in this setting. It shed light on their individual strengths and challenges as well as their interdependence as a group. I look forward to future trips with this group of young people.

Leslie Moffitt, Minweimei Teacher

**Cont'd from page 1**

During this past year we began the implementation of our “new brand” becoming Waldorf Academy. Our web site, the new look of The Voice, blogs and much more let the world know that we are moving forward.

Waldorf 101 lectures were established to educate ourselves, our parents and those outside our community about what we are all about. They will continue next year.

A new revitalized Board of Trustees with many new members has helped us stabilize our course and is helping us develop professional practices to ensure our stability.

A revised management organization of administration managers and faculty managers has improved our organizational effectiveness. The arrival of Angelo Zaccheo has brought experience and a steady hand to our business operations and site management. Next September we will begin with the same management team as we are ending this year- it has been awhile since we have had no turnover.

We had a very successful Winter Fair with the Community Council initiating a new organizational structure. The Community Council itself was revitalized and sponsored the most unbelievable series of Faculty Dinners that left the staff well fed and with a boosted morale. So many earnest heartfelt thank you messages are due to everyone who served the school throughout the year.

The Waldorf Academy Child Care Centre emerged from it's beginnings into a vibrant centre with full enrollment and a waiting list. We will now focus on providing our caring environment while encouraging families to move on to take advantage of the unique opportunities of a Waldorf Education from Nursery to Grade Eight.

After many years we finally put out a parent survey this spring. The response was excellent and an initial look ensures that we are headed in the right direction in our efforts to meet the needs expressed by our parents. The Enrollment Committee, who sponsored the survey, will issue a more comprehensive report and analysis of the survey results in the fall.

The Faculty conducted reviews of our foreign language program, our remedial program and our music program. These curriculum reviews, initiated by our curriculum manager Dean Husseini will result in some changes and a desire to make these reviews a regular feature of the school.

The Administration members have all been involved in performance reviews and these reviews are now also being established as a regular feature of the school.

We are growing up, becoming more professional and all within the context of a compassionate wholistic Waldorf Education. We are not complacent and we know that we have many challenges ahead. Next year we will be engaged in a comprehensive process of accreditation as part of our membership in the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, (AWSNA). I believe we are in excellent shape to meet this challenge and to continue our mission to...

“Ignite the passion for the art of learning “

We Are One  
Peter

## Reading at Waldorf Academy

### Listening, Speaking, Writing, and the mechanics of Reading

The Reading Curriculum at Waldorf Academy is a continuum which begins as the child enters the school and concludes when the student graduates. Reading formally begins in Grade one with the introduction of capital letters through stories, movement and drawings. It is an engaging approach which leads from imagination to inspiration to the concrete expression of each letter printed on the child's paper to lead to the creation of a Main Lesson Letter Book. The forms and sounds of the letters ideally live with and within the children.

In Kindergarten, such activities as listening to stories, speaking in Circle, sorting, sequencing of materials, rhythmic movement including moving to verses and poetry all contribute to preparing the child to learn - including learning to read.

In Grade Two a weekly skills lesson begins with writing which encourages phonetic development. These lessons then lead into reading weekly from books according to the child's level of reading which has been determined from the reading benchmark. The books are also selected to complement the subject matter determined by the Curriculum. For example, early readers often have a theme with an animal in relation to a child or a member of a family. The table below delineates how we track the progress of the students. A reading benchmark is administered to Grade Two and Grade Three students to confirm the level of reading of each student and to confirm that improvements in reading are occurring. It is administered to Grade Four students as requested by the teacher or as indicated by earlier benchmark reports. A reading benchmark is an assessment tool that helps determine a child's reading grade level.

Throughout the years that a student is with Waldorf Academy, reading is brought to the student throughout the day during Main Lesson, Subject Lessons and Skills Lessons. Reading is interwoven throughout the day. Books are prepared as part of the Main Lesson which integrate reading, writing and composing with less teacher instruction and increased compositional demands and spelling as the student progresses through the grades. Teachers from Grades Four and above often also rely on the letter grouping found in spellers in addition to spelling lists from the Main Lesson material.

Below is a list delineating some of the activities which support reading. The list begins with Kindergarten and concludes with Grade Eight.

### Reading Approaches and Development within the Waldorf Curriculum

#### Kindergarten

- Rhythmic movement and clapping
- Listening to stories
- Conversing, playing with friends (informal)
- Speaking in Circle
- Sorting, sequencing of materials
- Conversing, following instructions while preparing food, etc .
- Verses and/or poetry with rhyming words

#### Grade One

- All of the above
- Introduction of upper case letter including recognition and recall by sight and sound
- Story telling
- Retelling stories
- Acting out stories
- Printing in Main Lesson Book
- Teacher reads sentences, students print sentences
- Printing: From Letters to Sentences
- Teacher reading to class

**Grade Two**

All of the above  
Introduction of lower case letters (if not completed in Grade One)  
Printing missing letters in words  
Syllabic clapping  
Stress on phonemic ability (hear sounds of letters – initial and final)  
Story writing of one and then two sentences (requires taking word apart by sounds in order to write)  
Introduction to books including how to approach a book, use of illustrations  
Introduction to strategies to read such as skip a word, read on, etc.  
Drawings are labeled  
Word walls begin  
Group reading including:  
    Choral reading  
    Individual reading aloud  
    Partner reading  
    Reading modeled by teacher  
Children reversing letters and/or numbers usually begin remedial movement (may be a  
    Fee for this service)  
Some students may begin a letter printing book for support  
Benchmark each student in Term II and/or Term III (using TDSB material for  
    Grade One to end of Grade Three)

**Grade Three**

All of the above as required by class  
Reading Benchmark is again completed at beginning of school year to compare to the  
    Grade Two Level  
Group reading continues  
Reading throughout each day as part of lessons  
Reading Benchmark is repeated at the end of Grade Three

**Grades Four through Eight**

Reading continues as a subject. Parts of speech are reinforced, punctuation is stressed, dictionaries are used, verb tense are part of the Grade Four Curriculum. Level books continue to be used. One or more books are selected for the class to read together.

In Grade Four a few students often form a group to work in a more concentrated manner. These classes are offered once a week by a reading specialist and the teacher can then build on the lesson during an additional weekly skills class.

In Grade Five the books being read can be sent home as homework. If there are questions regarding the reading level of Grade Five students, they are asked to read benchmark material. The benchmark material can also be compared to the student's success from earlier years to confirm progress continues to be made.

Students in Grade Six through Eight continue reading books as part of the Main Lesson and as part of the Language (English) Programme as well as reading during most other lessons. Reading is included in French, German and Math. There are also additional Language (English) classes in all grades. Please refer to the article on Middle School by Sheila Anderson for more detailed information.

The table below delineates benchmark timing.

	G	r	a	d	e	s		
Service to students and teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Reading Benchmark Assessment	•	•	•	•*				
Reading Academic Remediation			•	•	•*	•*	•*	•*

All Benchmark information is reported to the Main Lesson teacher.

\*Reading Benchmarks in Grade Four are completed on request.

\*Academic remediation is considered after a request from a teacher or parent. Additionally, teachers gather information about the progress of each student. This begins as anecdotal recording in Kindergarten with marks given as early as Grade Five. There is continual information gathered by teachers which is shared at Parent-Teacher Interviews, meetings, letters and through report cards.

Additional assessments and evaluations other than reading benchmark are conducted by the Therapeutic/Remedial Teacher and this information gives support to teachers and for the students.

At Waldorf Academy, the wholesome and balanced development and encouragement of the full potential of each student is of great importance. Within this context teachers work together and discuss students individually to assure that the student is developing in all areas including the important area of reading.

Janet Hendershot, O.C.T.  
 Therapeutic/Remedial Teacher  
 Specialist in Reading  
 and Special Education  
 (Through Ontario College of Teachers)

Written in consultation with  
 Ena Bruce  
 Grade Two Teacher

### Reading in the Middle School, by Sheila Anderson

A strong culture of literacy depends on a strong oral culture. Through language, two poles of experience are integrated: imaginative, holistic thinking, required when the child is challenged to engage in complex situations, and analytical thinking which requires the child to stand back.

Language enables children to express themselves and relate to the world, but at the same time the language itself works through grammar and syntax to order and structure thinking. Language is the main medium through which we construct our picture of the world and the relationships within it. Through language we find and express meaning.

In the early grades the attention is on *what* children are describing, while in the middle grades (6,7,8) the *how* becomes important. Growing confidence in writing techniques will give rise to sentences and thoughts of growing complexity.

Spelling and grammar conventions in writing are presented as important in the same way that it is important to follow society's conventions for greeting people or for dressing appropriately. Language is continually evolving, but those who do not respect current usage will be seen at best as difficult to understand, and at worst as less capable, regardless of their other skills. We create a reference book based on Spalding's *The Writing Road to Reading*. Seventy phonograms and 29 spelling rules are at the heart of this process.

Objectives in middle school include having students reading a variety of texts, discussing language, meanings and ideas and relating their understanding to personal experiences and other texts. Students write on a variety of topics in a variety of genres, learning to shape, revise and proofread. By the end of Grade 8, students are developing an awareness of the effect of sentence length and word order. Student work is often used to point out grammatical or stylistic choices.

Creative work is often tied to a novel studied in class. Students rewrite a chapter from the perspective of a particular character, or they add a chapter, or write dialogues, monologues, poetry, short stories and personal reflections. In Grade 6 or 7, depending on the class, we begin work on essays, presenting a particular topic with a series of points that are each supported with examples.

From age 7-14 children live in the emotional content of words, in the moods and feelings they evoke. After puberty, however, they must find their own voice – literally and metaphorically. It is an exciting process to watch students as they learn to appreciate the power of language, both as readers and writers. Through language they will find access to universal concepts and ideals.

### Major tasks and objectives

(Each grade includes most of the tasks and objectives of the previous grades. Students will be at different levels of competency on the reading and writing continuum, but the list below includes what is generally presented and practiced in the middle school grades).

#### Grade 5

- review of main parts of speech (noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, prepositional phrases)
- active and passive verbs
- direct and indirect speech (writing dialogue)
- paragraphing
- developing editing skills
- punctuation (-, ; :)
- read independently and fluently
- use a dictionary

#### Grade 6

- composition with 5 paragraphs
- accurate descriptions (i.e. in science blocks)
- imaginatively and dramatically retelling scenes from history
- public speaking – short talks
- main and subordinate clauses/ conjunctions
- sentence parsing

#### Grade 7

- writing within specific parameters (i.e. sonnet format, newspaper editorial, news report): using an objective structure to express inner life, soul moods
- playing with sentence structure: modifying structure to imply subtly different meanings; finding own voice, and also hiding behind language so as not to reveal inner feelings
- exploring poetry: metaphor, imagery, sounds of words and picture making words
  - finding the right word, the strongest word
- adapting techniques for different purposes
- writing a position essay (with thesis statement)
  - short book summaries
  - journal writing
- subjunctive mood (if sentences)
- study of adjectives; comparative, superlative

#### Grade 8

- continuing work with metaphor, analogy, simile, proverb – figures of speech
  - examining abuse of words ( clichés, jargon, slang...)
- studying meter and rhythm, rhyme
- learning to discuss and debate, arguing a case they do not necessarily support
- studying common grammatical errors and sentence structure errors
- continuing to play with sentence structure – creating moods (studying *Lije of Pi* is excellent for this work)

## Community News

Classifieds have moved to our School Blog [www.waldorfacademy.org/voice](http://www.waldorfacademy.org/voice)



**WEEK 1 Theme: 6 – 8 YEARS OLD - WYANDOT TRIBE**

Come join our tribe! Animals, birds and water! Create pinch pots, medicine shields, animal masks, and rock art and weave stories and songs reminiscent of Native Canadian Traditions.

**9 plus – KEEPERS OF THE EARTH**

Through story, games and food, experience the Native Canadian approach to life. Eat popcorn, adopt a tree, explore and play tracking and skill games.

Learn more about our summer camp for 4-6 yr olds and all weekly themes [www.northerndawnedu.com](http://www.northerndawnedu.com)

**The Moon is Red:** A Positive Approach to Menstruation

A Workshop Designed by **Kate Laidlaw** MA

Therapist, Program Developer, Educator, Reiki Mast  
The purpose of this program is to address and reframe the negative cultural beliefs towards our menstrual cycles into positive and healthy attitude while recognizing the value and wisdom of women's bodies.

It is very suitable for mothers and young daughters (ages 9-13) who have not started their period yet.

In 2010, Kate presented **The Moon is Red** for mothers and their daughters at the Waldorf Academy in downtown Toronto on two occasions.

If you are interested in attending a workshop with your daughter or just for yourself please call Kate at 647-967-3912 to learn about dates and times.

### Summer Packages:

Over the summer you will be receiving by mail your child's yearly report and your summer package. Enclosed will be a Family Handbook, Emergency and Health Forms, Volunteer Form and a School Calendar.

Please drop the forms off to the school or mail them before school starts.

We will be open during the summer except for two weeks-July 24<sup>th</sup> to August 6<sup>th</sup>.

The childcare centre is open all summer except for the week of July 24<sup>th</sup>.

During the summer there will be a summer camp at our school hosted by Northern Dawn until Aug.

Spread the good word about our wonderful school and enjoy your summer.

Jen D

### Voice Update:

For 2011/12

We will be moving to a weekly e-newsletter and will print a Voice Newsletter each term.

Classifieds can be accessed on our blog year round with your school password.

Jennifer Deathe

Marketing Manager

416-962-6447 ext 233

[jdeathe@waldorfacademy.org](mailto:jdeathe@waldorfacademy.org)



# inform

June 2011 – page 1

A Newsletter for Waldorf School Communities  
from the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America

We are delighted to announce that Joanne Andruscavage is **the new AWSNA Accreditation Chair**. Joanne has been the administrator at both the Emerson Waldorf School and the Austin Waldorf School, and brings more than 30 years of teaching and administrative experience in private schools to her new role. She received her BS in Education from Florida International University and her M. Ed. from Loyola College in Maryland. She is an avid reader, loves the outdoors and enjoys sports of all kinds. She also volunteers her time in the areas of animal rescue and service dog training.

**SAVE THE DATE: WaldorfFest** – our second annual alumni gathering in the Hudson Valley is on Saturday evening, July 30 at the Club Helsinki Hudson, in Hudson, NY. Come and greet old friends and make new ones. Parents, trustees, faculty, and staff of Waldorf schools are all welcome!

**Congratulations to Waldorf Alum and RSF Trustee Scott Williams** who received the David Award. David Award winners are considered business and academic leaders who accomplish outstanding heroic humanitarian acts. “The David Awards are named for David, the giant slayer who represents the Ideal Renaissance Man, as memorialized by Michelangelo’s noted 16th century statue,” according to Networking Magazine founder and publisher Christine Conniff Sheahan. In addition to his work with Changing our World and RSF, Scott Williams dedicates tremendous time to his community, serving on various boards for organizations such as RSF Social Finance, ERASE Racism, and AWSNA.

**If you are a Waldorf community member** who has always yearned to network with other parents in this global school movement, and if you have always wanted to go to (or return to) Iceland, here is a golden opportunity for you: The two presidents of the parents’ association of the two Waldorf schools in Iceland have extended an invitation to join the International Steiner Waldorf Parents’ Network conference October 21-23, 2011, in Iceland. The theme of the conference is called “Waldorf, the School of the Future.” The group was formed several years ago, the inspiration being to bring into focus results from studies and research that have been conducted that confirm Waldorf pedagogy and educational methods. This year’s meeting will take place in a 100-year-old ‘Waldorf Village’ in southern Iceland.

**Winning with Waldorf VI:** In celebration of the Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School’s 40th anniversary, PGA Touring Golf Professional, Duffy Waldorf, will be at the Copake Country Club in Copake, New York. This year’s 6th annual golf event is June 13, 2011 and sponsored by the Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School, Highland Hall Waldorf School, and AWSNA. Join us!

**AWSNA Summer Conference** is around the corner! From June 24-27 you can join Dr. Peter Selg, MD, and learn more about Rudolf Steiner’s unique understanding of adolescence, child development, and the spiritual intentions of Waldorf Education. Hosted by the Waldorf School of Garden City, NY.

*Here are some ways you can further Waldorf Education in North America: Sign up to receive the e-news and on the Alumni Corner on [www.WhyWaldorfWorks.org](http://www.WhyWaldorfWorks.org) to stay informed about Waldorf news; find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/waldorfeducation](http://www.facebook.com/waldorfeducation); support your local Waldorf school every way you can; and use GoodSearch (instead of Google) when surfing the web. You can also support AWSNA o line on [www.WhyWaldorfWorks.org](http://www.WhyWaldorfWorks.org). Thank you for your commitment to Waldorf Education!*

