The Golden Quill

News from the School Coordinator

It is often said that parents and teachers are a team when it comes to educating our children and I believe this is very true, at least in Steiner schools. Because of this close working relationship, it is important that teachers build a strong picture of how the different families work as units and the parents have a very strong picture of why teachers are covering particular topics and also how they are doing it. This is in no way to make judgements about whether one side or the other is “doing it wrong”, rather it is to build up a picture of what the children themselves are seeking to incorporate into their life experiences. Steiner teachers work on the basis that, before birth, all children actively choose the parents they want so that they develop the physical body and habits in particular that suit their inner strivings. This is a comfort for me at least when I look back on all the mistakes I made with my own two children and see them struggle with some of the same issues my wife and I have.

Steiner talked about a fundamental law that comes into play with every adult/child interaction. He said that, if we watch over time, we can see that the significant adults for a particular child are actively affecting his or her development in a very specific way. Up until the change of teeth, it is our habits that directly affect the child’s physical body. You may have wondered why Steiner kindergartens around the world look almost identical and that is the reason behind it. This particular layout and the repetition of the routines are seen as the
best way to leave the children free to develop exactly the physical organs they need for the rest of their lives. The emphasis on developing fantasy-filled free play will also have a direct effect on that person’s ability to find creative solutions to difficult problems when s/he becomes an adult. When dealing with children this age, we must show discipline with our habits: bedtimes, exercise levels, indulgences – all our mannerisms affect the proper growth of children this age.

Between the change of teeth and puberty, it is the significant adults’ emotional reactions that directly shape the child’s habitual ways of doing things when s/he becomes an adult. One of the worst things we can do when living with children this age is be apathetic. When reading biographies of strong leaders, there is often a mention of lively debates had around the dinner table. Children this age are desperate to hear us laugh and cry, to rage against injustice and find the ability to forgive. All these experiences directly affect the idiosyncrasies they will take with them into their adult life.

Then, as teenagers, our children are developing their levels of emotional intelligence. They are finally able to directly experience their own emotions rather than simply display what they want the others to see. As the adults dealing most directly with these young adults, they are demanding to see our inner strength (called the Ego – with a capital E – in Anthroposophy). Out of witnessing our inner struggles with too much or too little money, relationships, death of our own parents they are enabled to find appropriate emotional responses to the circumstances in their own lives.

We human beings continue to go through stages of development throughout our adult lives and this means that our children are able to continue observing us and we continue thereby to influence the development of their higher bodies all through our lives. We never stop being the role model, on one level or another, for our children.

This topic finally leads to the speculation about what might have happened to Mozart if he had had a Steiner education. I guess that he would have still insisted on playing the musical instruments he found in the house from a very early age and, because this was a deep inner need, he would hopefully have been allowed to focus on this without receiving formal lessons. His parents would often let him experience the instruments, but they would have insisted that he spent more time playing with blocks of wood and building sand castles. You can be sure that he would be imitating his parents’ devotion to playing music and practising hard without having to take on the need for technical accuracy. Then, hopefully when he turned nine or perhaps a little earlier, he would begin to receive formal lessons and show his innate brilliance. His musical training would not be at the expense of gaining an all-round education, of course. Then finally, as a teenager, he could push himself to achieve whatever he set himself to do. This is roughly what happened to the Evers-Swindell twins. They became a highly successful double scull rowing team with multiple Olympic medals and world championships to their name and are now settling into the rest of their lives as normal, well-adjusted adults. This was even though one of the twins hadn’t even sat in a rowing skiff before she turned sixteen.

The big question we all have to ask when pushing children to achieve is – at what cost?

Robert Gillman
Calendar of the Soul—Week 28

Newly revived within myself, I can now experience the vastness of my own being.

Newly filled with forces From the sun’s power in my soul, I can now release rays of thinking Solving riddles of existence.

I can now fulfil many a wish whose wings before had been crippled by hope.

Violin News

For all violinists performing in the Albany Eisteddfod: You will be playing on Thursday 22nd of May at the Albany Entertainment Centre (Jude will let you know what time). We are having a pre-Eisteddfod concert on Sunday 11th of May at the Uniting Church in Denmark, starting at 2.30pm. Please, arrive by 2.15pm unless Jude asks you to come earlier for rehearsals.

Everyone is welcome to come and listen.

News from Silver Birch Kindergarten

“A little brown possum knocked on our door
I gave him an apple, he wanted some more
With eyes so big and brown and bright, he peeped around into the night”

Well, welcome to our term of Autumn changes. It is that time in the year where we watch out to keep the children warm and cosy as King Winter slowly creeps our way.

Thank you Scott (Finn from Class 1) for welding our swing set together. Anyone able to come and sand off the old paint is most welcome. We are looking for a simple swing to attach for the children’s pleasure. Perhaps if you have one that is no longer of use...

Our term calendar is out. Our next parent meeting is in week five. You will have noticed that our fence is under construction. It is hoped to be all finished by then and this will give Sophia a boundary for the children to play within.

I am looking to answer your questions at the meeting, so do let them come to me early. I would like to prepare some of my responses. I will be talking a little about Our Senses—those which effect your child at this time in their development.

See you all soon.
Christine and Sophia
Wanted

All empty Milo tins or similar, please. We are making lanterns for the Early Childhood Winter Festival. You can drop them off to Sophia at Silver Birch Kindergarten or leave at the office.

Many thanks, Sophia

Perth Waldorf

You are warmly invited to the Perth Waldorf School High School Journey and Beyond.

6.30 pm- 8.30 pm
Thursday 22 May 2014
Williams Hall
Perth Waldorf School
14 Gwilliam Drive, Bibra Lake

An evening of information and inspiration about the PWS High School curriculum, tertiary entrance details and reflections, presented by our High School Coordinator Mark Philips, High School teaching staff and past students.

Tea, coffee and refreshments will be served after the presentation.

Enquiries: 9417 3638

Parent Involvement

I have started to enter the time contribution for parents who have used the following:

Sign in / sign out form in the office;
Sign in / sign out form at the busy bee;
Parents who have had their name on the volunteer list in the office for the Autumn Festival;
Or I have received a form via email or in my tray.

If you have any time sheets at home, please bring them in or send them to me. They will be stored in the office which means a new form can be used for each term.

Thanks so much and warm regards,

Annett Forman (Ethan’s and Teo’s Mum) - atomnett@westnet.com.au—0458 069 049

Parent Involvement Coordinator

News from Karri Kindergarten

One of the gifts we offer the young children in our care is the opportunity to be completely present, so that time is forgotten and they can be at one with their surroundings and experience a sense of timelessness. This is where true creativity begins.

Adults can create this space for children by providing a place where they can play freely, with unstructured materials, in an unhurried manner, free from the constraints of time and goals. By getting on with their own work, and allowing the child to play freely, without adult interference, direction or questioning, the parent/teacher/carer offers this opportunity. Children will come to the adult if they need help, but it is important to give them time to try to solve challenges alone or with their peers first. This kind of play often happens in the natural environment, and children really love to be immersed in nature.

We now have a beautiful fairy garden just inside the gate, with thanks to Rosie and Emma, which invites the children into a magical world.

We also begin our Tuesday walks this week. After morning circle, we will pack up our morning tea and head off to the nearby forest alongside the brook for games, adventure and a picnic morning tea. I’m sure we will make many discoveries and look forward to this weekly outing.

Warm wishes to all for a great term,

Denise
News from Class 1

Our new room is very warm and calming and the children have settled in well. Thank you to everyone who was involved in the project. I feel the love that went into it every time I walk through the door. It is a credit to the whole community and I have been truly inspired by the generosity of people. It is wonderful what can be achieved when we have a vision and a desire to work together for the benefit of the children.

Our next big project is the lyre workshop which starts this Friday and goes for three weeks. The children are very keen to have their own lyres and have already started learning some songs with Bruce. Just a reminder that the remainder of the money is due before the workshops commence.

We are going to Albany on Thursday to visit Finn’s and Maya’s homes. Everyday these two children make the trip back and forth to Albany to be a part of our class. Because of the distance it is more difficult for them to have play dates and sleep overs with the other children. This excursion will help us get to know them better and let them know how important they are to our class.

We are doing the second of our Form Drawing main lessons. Form drawing is one element that is unique to Steiner education. It develops the fine motor skills as a preparation, and later a support, for writing. It strengthens eye-hand coordination and trains the intelligence to be flexible. As the children visualize, move and draw the forms they create an inner balance and harmony. And most of all they love doing form drawing so much that when I give them free time they will frequently get out their paper and crayons to practise.

Nuts are on again. It is $2 per week or $20 per term. I haven’t had one complaint from the children about being hungry since we have started having daily nut snacks.

Cheers, Karen

From the P&F to the Golden Hill families

The P&F thanks those who volunteered for the Soup Day but in the name of an equitable distribution of volunteering efforts, it has been decided that the Soup Day cannot proceed with so few volunteers.

Could all families please start to collect branches for the tepee bonfire at the winter festival. As the weather turns wet, potential kindling and long branches will only get wetter. If you are able to bring in any offering of wood now and store it under Cl.3 that would be great.

The next P&F meeting is on Monday, 19th May at 1pm in Peppermint Cottage. We
News from Class 2

At the end of Term 1, Cl.2 went to Parry’s Beach and Waterfall Beach to explore the local coastal geography. Cl.2 parents Karl and Simone taught us how to catch lots of delicious fish. We enjoyed eating the fish for lunch, grilled over a fire thanks to Kristi. We also enjoyed a refreshing swim, thanks to Brad, our surf life saver. When we collected rubbish off the beach, the children found a bottle with a message inside! It was a treasure map! Cl.2 put in a successful group effort digging for the treasure at Waterfall Beach! After some dune track climbing and a few brave cold waterfall showers we ended our day out.

Term 2 now begins with stories of the Saints, which present to the children another picture of how one can be in the world and qualities they may wish to aspire to/express. After engaging with the story of Saint Francis of Assisi this week, I have already overheard expressions like “I want to be a Saint!”.

Also, we have a helpful new assistant, Anne, in our class on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Gardening helpers are still welcome on Tuesday 1.30-2.30pm and Wednesday 11.15am-12pm. Afternoon craft helpers are also sought, please contact me if you may be free to help regularly on any day except Tuesday. We’d also love some new bean bags if anyone is able to make some.

We are encouraging water resistant shoes, running shoes and indoor slippers at school, as well as warm and waterproof coats, sun hats and beanies. Additionally, it would be great if all the children had one recorder they keep at school so we may all practice our recorder regularly together. Thank you also for continuing to pack extra snacks into lunch boxes. To satisfy hunger at fruit time, it may be helpful to pack some nuts too!

The Cl.2 and Cl.3 “PJ or onesie sleepover” is happening on the 16th May, 2014.

Home visits: I am available Monday and Wednesday afternoons 3.30-4pm (+/-) this term, though I can be flexible with other day/times. Please contact Silvia to arrange a time and I will get back to confirm. I look forward to the visit!

Warm regards,

Sonja
News from Class 3

Kia ora ki te katoa (hello to all),

I hope everyone had a great first week back at school.

Class Three is enjoying a Grammar Main Lesson. This week we focused on nouns (naming words). We heard how it was Adam’s job to name all the animals, and then we named all the animals we could think of.

The first verse of our grammar poem:

Adam named the animals
Pig and rat and mouse
NOUNS we use to name all things
Like roof and room and house

The children are coming to the end of their first crochet project, a pencil case for their Lyra pencils. They have all had moments of frustration that they have worked through, and are now getting excited for their next project. The next project will be a winter beanie. It will be a few weeks before we start, but a heads up to those who can crochet a beanie, we will need your help over the first few Thursdays.

Warm wishes, Chrystal

News from Class 4/5

Term 2 has started with a lot of momentum in Cl.4/5. We are well into our Main Lesson on Aboriginal culture, learning about the Dreamtime, the Rainbow Serpent and the rites of passage for young Aboriginal boys. Soon we will be learning about the colony established at King George Sound in 1826 and the European interactions with the local Minang Tribe.

Inspired by the incredible work of Karen and all of the Cl.1 parents, we scheduled a busy bee for Saturday May 3rd to clear out our own classroom and begin to work on the aesthetics. We got so much done in just a few hours and we have many ideas for the improvement we could make in the future. Special thanks to those parents and children who donated their time to help us out. Your dedication is very appreciated.

Of course our big news is our upcoming camps. Both the Cl.4’s and the Cl.5’s will be doing an overnight on the Bibbulmun track. Excitement is high and we look forward to sharing our experiences when we come back! News flash: Due to severe wind warnings, Cl.5 camp has been rescheduled for Mon/Tue of week 5 (26 and 27 May, 2014).

As the class 4 and 5 students are going on separate camps we hope that students can swap with each other. If your child does not have the proper gear and no suitable arrangement can be made within the class, we can then ask the greater school community.

Also, if any parents are available to volunteer some time to help in woodwork on Friday afternoons, could you please let Alex know.

Alex
**News from Class 6/7**

Class 6/7 left on Monday for the Bibbulmun track walking camp. They will walk for 5 days between Peaceful Bay and Walpole. Have a great time!

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**Kwoorabup Community Market**

The markets are a brilliant way for us to connect with the wider Denmark community. The market is an excellent way to bring people to our school, and experience the Steiner community, its facilities, grounds and flourishing children and they appear to becoming more and more popular.

We do need to take a moment to think about the impact of the fortnightly community markets on the viability of our children’s education.

It seems there are still many myths surrounding our school ... ‘hippies’ without goals or cares around education, behaviour or respect. With the Markets’ very presence at our school, mingling with the wider community is dispelling these myths.

I have a high profile friend in town, who had ‘preconceived’ ideas of ‘Steiner children’. This has been well and truly dispelled by her attendance at the markets. She has gained much more respect for us all and, in her role in Denmark, is able to ‘ripple out’ her newly formed respect for Steiner families. She is even starting to recommend our school to other families. This is just a small example of the importance of this community event at our school.

I wish to highlight to our families that the markets are an important, and perfect in many respects, way of inviting potential families to our school. This bears a direct impact on the school’s viability, in that we are welcoming new people, thus inviting new enrolments, thus keeping us financially viable and emotionally nourished, with more like-minded people joining our “village”.

So, when we bake those cakes for our class’ market stall, it is not just a chore, it is a direct investment in keeping our school community healthy and viable. It has the potential to ensure our children can attend a single-stream Steiner school through all their primary years ... and who knows? if we have a growing attendance perhaps also into the high school years...

Julie Marsh
Dear fellow families of GHSS,

It is with pleasure that I introduce myself to those of you whom I do not know. I have taken on the auspicious role of school council chairperson, and would like to share my thoughts with the whole school community.

I am Julie Marsh, Mother of Ben (big Ben in class 6)! I also have a son Sam at the High School and my very busy and supportive husband and best friend Nigel.

We had our first meeting with the newly elected councillors after school on the first day back! I was inspired to meet the new people on council bringing new ideas, a multitude of strengths and robust discussion to the challenges at hand. Thanks to all new and existing councillors for supporting the school community.

I would also like to heartily thank the retiring councillors Chris Robbins, Katie Bewley, Genevieve Yap, Ilan Trom and Bruce Anthony who have shown amazing commitment and have made significant contributions to the school over the past years, thank you so much!

I have been thinking of what our role is as a council. It is to govern the school. To be trustworthy, reliable and responsible custodians of the environment in which our beautiful children are developing. It is to manage ‘the big picture’, to protect the interests and assets of the school, and ensure the future longevity and viability of our school.

It goes without saying that a chunk of our role is to steer the boring practical stuff such as finances, polices, contracts, buildings, employees, safety, compliances, education dept ... the list goes on.

However, more importantly, I see the heart of our role is to extend well beyond these physical needs. I hope my contribution as chairperson will extend this to nurture and nourish the virtues, culture and overall wellbeing of our whole school community, which I see as a ‘village’ in which we will all contribute and thrive. I guess this concept of a ‘village’ for me means that we are all equal, and will play our role in that village and contribute to its growth and wellbeing, This can only happen when we all feel valued, energetic and are working toward the common goal of keeping our school viable and vibrant.

My personal most important philosophy is OPEN and HONEST communication at all times above all else! Please let us be open and honest with each other, with respect and integrity. If anyone has issues, grievances, concerns, ideas, or joys they wish to discuss there are many avenues in which to do this. Silvia, in the office, is a good person to ask to point you to the right person.

The Council is also here in a listening capacity for big picture issues. The school has numerous policies and procedures if anyone wishes to understand things in this way.

I look forward to getting to know our “village” members and working alongside each other this year. Our “village” is only viable when supported by its whole community.

Below I have outlined a few of the things I would like to focus on this year as council. Please feel free to contact me for a chat if you wish.

With warmth and respect, Julie—0412 813 779

**SOME THINGS FOR COUNCIL FOCUS**

| School culture and sense of belonging—Parent involvement and teacher involvement (ensuring our Parent hours are used for core school needs, with the teachers and children’s needs being met), addressing the issue that parents are feeling ‘over stretched’ (re assessing the tasks for parent involvement to ensure the hours ‘add up’), closer ties and communication with other committees especially P&F, ensuring families are happy and have a positive sense of belonging at school. |
| Kwoorabup Community Markets—Building on the strength of the markets in 2014. |
| Finances—Taking our fiscal responsibilities seriously when decision making; a long term financial plan |
| Strategic plan—Ensure this plan moves forward appropriately with ongoing school community involvement |
| Year 7—Working with the school community on the desire for class 7; Term 2 priority -Working directly with the class 6 parents to determine class 7 options for 2015 |
| Staff and employee needs—Working closely with teachers and staff on their needs and development |
Worth reading…

A Second Classroom: Parent-Teacher Relationships in a Waldorf School

By Torin Finser

Reviewed by David Kennedy, Waldorf Today

Parent-teacher relationships can be one of the most fulfilling and satisfying aspects of life in a Waldorf School. Or, sometimes, it can be less than that.

What is it that sometimes works and sometimes doesn't?

In the preface, Torin Finser begins by describing the inspiration for this book. He was talking with a former student, who was describing her impressions of parent-teacher work in Waldorf schools. She said, "It is almost as if the teacher today needs a second classroom, given the importance of working with parents." In the course of writing the book, Finser sent out surveys to Waldorf parents and teachers around the country. What could have been a qualitative analysis of the results is instead an honest and warmth-filled 'picture' of what's happening in the parent-teacher dynamic.

It's this 'picture-building' which sets the tone for the book. There is an over-arching goal to find the archetypes at work in schools. Everyone will recognize some of them: The Veteran Teacher, Conflict, Parent Evenings, Shards of Glass: When Ideals Are Shattered, The Uber-volunteer, Barriers, Self-less-ness, The Life Cycle of Parent Involvement in a School, and many more.

Finser's style is warm, knowledgeable and sometimes provocative. He freely weaves his personal experiences with those of others. It's a disarming style that invites you in, and like a true friend, asks you to think about what you're doing. Into this mix, he also weaves aspects of Anthroposophy that will appeal to teacher and parent. Whether it's about Family Constellations, Spiritual Streams or the Problem of Evil, Finser presents it in a down-to-earth and, at the same time, inspiring way.

Who would like this book or find it useful and inspiring? Highly recommended for any parent or teacher in a Waldorf school, as well as anyone interested in Waldorf education. It's a wonderful guide to accompany you and your friends on the road ahead.

"The world of parent-teacher relations has grown more complex over the years and at its worst can feel like a minefield. Torin demines and demystifies the experience with information, insights, stories, and warmth, creating a safe passage for teachers and parents."—Joan Almon, Waldorf educator and cofounder of Alliance for Childhood. Torin M. Finser, Ph.D., is Chair of the Education Department of Antioch University New England and founding member of the Center for Anthroposophy in Wilton, NH. He has been an educator for three decades and has also served as an organizational consultant for a variety of schools. Leadership development and support is a theme that runs through many of his books. Dr. Finser serves as General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in America.
Advertisements

Disclaimer: the articles, advertisements and community notices in this newsletter are provided as a service to the school community. The carrying of an article, advertisement or community notice does not imply endorsement by Golden Hill Steiner School.

Relationships Australia (WA) Albany will be running three seminars in Denmark this Term:

**Mums Raising Teenage Girls @ Denmark Youth Centre**
Wednesday 7 May, 2014
9:30 am to 12:00 pm Fee: $20 p/p (Concessions Avail.)
The passage from girl to young woman is often challenging, not only for the girls but also for their mums. If we can better understand the developmental stages of teens we can achieve a level of harmony with our precious daughters.

**Mums Raising Teen Boys @ Denmark Youth Centre**
Wednesday 28 May, 2014
9:30 am to 12:00 pm Fee: $20 p/p (Concessions Avail.)
As Mothers we need to have some knowledge of our son’s world, appropriate knowledge of modern technology, allow decision making, risk taking and the steps to independence.

**Mums Raising Boys (0-12yo) @ Denmark Public Library**
Wednesday 11 June, 2014
9:30 am to 12:00 pm Fee: $20 p/p (Concessions Avail.)
However well-prepared mothers are logically, the emotional response to having a boy is often still, ‘Wow! This is unknown territory.’ It is true that for many mothers, the idea of raising a son carries its own set of worries.

Ph: (08) 9845 7700 Fax: (08) 9845 7799
Email: Leanne.Marsden@wa.relationships.com.au

**ALBANY MUSIC EISTEDDFOD**

Tue 20 May - Sat 24 May
Albany Eisteddfod Inc.

The Albany Music Eisteddfod will showcase the incredible talent of performers and teachers in the Great Southern. Sessions for Piano, Strings, Brass, Woodwind, Classical Guitar, Instrumental Ensembles, Bands and Orchestras, Vocals, Piano Accordion, Choirs and Folk will be held from Tuesday 20 May until Friday 23 May, with the Winners Concert to be held on Saturday 24 May. Tickets on sale soon.

**“Looking for Home... Have you seen it?”**

Hmm... do excuse the silliness, but trying to find a place to call home when travelling about the Far North with three little ones breeds a fair dose of silliness I can tell you.

Come mid July, this family of roaming Lambs will be moving to Denmark where Papa Lamb is starting work. My Mama job will be to settle our three into your beautiful schooling space before baby four arrives at the start of September (I mentioned silliness right?). We hope to find a home closish to town, 3 plus bedrooms (anything bigger than our camper trailer will be bliss) with some warming certainty (breast feeding and nappy changes at midnight ... brrrrr!). Our silliness relates only to travelling ambition, and not house care; we’ll take fine care of wherever we land.

Hoping this hope finds a home... You can catch us (when the stars are aligned and the Telstra tower is in sight) at brett.lamb@bigpond.com or 0488 003 176. It would be so nice to meet any kidlet play friends in the last week of the July holidays ... my class 4, 2 and K6 kidlets would be so happy to say hello ... the Mama would be quite pleased too.

So, so looking forward to saying hello. Cheerio till then. Katja

**DENMARK DORF**

**FREE EVENT!**

**ALL AGES WELCOME...**

**Starts Saturday 3rd of May @ Denmark Rec Centre**

(8 week program)

4pm - 8pm

Get there anytime!

**ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:**

Rippaball, Indoor bowls, Music, Pizza making, Board games (bring your favourite!)

**Movies for kids!**

For more info contact:

Matt Winter (0429556948)
Clare Harrison (The House 3848 2377)
Denmark Rec Centre (3848 2044)

Department of Sport and Recreation

**slow flow Yoga**

Now at the Steiner School Hall

Thursday mornings

9:15 -10:45

Contact Carol on 98483741 or 0487239768 or capestyle3@gmail.com
Holistic Birth offers a 12 hr comprehensive childbirth education program led by a Registered Midwife, designed to embrace the power of positive birth.

Create a calm gentle environment for your baby’s arrival regardless of your birth method. Whether your baby’s birth is vaginal or caesarean, Hypnobirth can be applied.

Hypnobirth releases the fear associated with childbirth and previous traumatic births. Maximise your body’s natural ability to prevent and block the release of pain causing stress hormones but encourage the release of good hormones called endorphins; which are proven to be 20-30 times more effective than morphine.

Elisha Spalding  
Registered Nurse/Midwife, Certified Hypnobirth Practitioner, Childbirth Educator

040 228 0306  
holisticbirth@hotmail.com

The natural approach to a calm and positive birth.