

November 1, 2007

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ALLHALLOWS DAY

Yesterday was the *een* of Allhallows Day, also known as Allhallowtide, Allhallowmas or All Saints Day. In some parts of the world November 1 or 2 is the Day of the Dead when not just the lives of hallow people are remembered, but all those who have died are remembered, often with great feasts and celebrations. There is much to ponder about this autumn festival, both the eve and the day, with its ancient roots and more “modern” cultural adaptations, both religious and popular, from of a time when religious and popular were inseparable and indistinguishable, to our contemporary time when their paths seldom cross, especially when considering All Halloween today.

Nevertheless, from the ancient inspirations through the cultural adaptations, there are impulses behind these rituals, some for better, some for worse, but the better ones are calling for an inner preparation as we move past the time of harvest towards the time of darkness as winter and long nights begin to approach. What more natural time, some must have felt, to turn thoughts both to survival and to what may lie beyond death. Out of it come images of ghosts and goblins, and the impulse to drive away any evil spirits, but likewise come the images of saints and family passed, bringing reminders of hope and celebration as well.

For young children the images now are mostly playful. We have kept the Jack-O-Lanterns and our songs of witches and ghosts conjure up no very dark images. Nevertheless, the teachers take time to share activities and come together for stories to give the opportunity for the first stirrings of the end of autumn and the beginning of winter to come before they are covered in costumes and candy alone.

But these are just beginnings. Ahead lie the lantern walks that bring us deeply but safely into the time

*In the other gardens and all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires see the smoke trail!*

*Pleasant summer over, all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes, the gray smoke towers.*

*Sing a song of seasons! Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer, fires in the fall.*

Robert Louis Stevenson

Coming Up

Tonight, November 1, Early Childhood lecture “The Surprising Power of Family Meals” 7:00 p.m.

*A Midsummer Night’s Dream
Eighth Grade Production
Thursday, November 8
10:30 AM and 7:00 PM
at CAWS. All welcome.*

Lantern Walks

*First and Second Grades
Friday, November 2 6:00 p.m. at Green Meadow Farms*

*Kindergartens, Thursday, November 8
Red Rose at the Dawson’s at 5:30 p.m.
Yellow Rose at the Johnson’s 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.*

*Bluebell and Sunflower Nurseries
Friday, November 9 at the Cosco’s from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.*

of cold and darkness, and the festivals of light that will begin the journey out of darkness into light again. *Ed.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FA-LA-LA-LA-LA!!

This year, as always, the Holiday Fair Madrigal Singers will valiantly attempt to introduce some melody into the joyful madness of the fair. We'll be singing some of the old favorites, but also trying to mix it up a bit with some new things. To learn some of these new things, and also welcome new singers**, we'll hold two rehearsals the week of the fair: Tuesday, 11/13 at 7:00 p.m. and Friday, 11/16 during the pre-shopping gathering, also at 7:00 p.m. If you have never sung with us before, please try to come on Tuesday and Friday; if you're an old hand, come on Friday. (But please come, even if you can't make it to both rehearsals or to the preferred one!!) Questions, requests for obscure 17th-century motets, and miscellaneous commentary (as long as you're not telling me you hate what I made for dinner) can be directed to Kristine Haglund, 978-969-2931 or kristinehaglund@yahoo.com.

**** (yes, YOU, you who sing in the shower, hum along with the radio, are still nursing a grudge against the 7th-grade chorus teacher who asked you to mouth the words when your voice was changing--Uncle Sam wants YOU to join the madrigal singers!!)**

APOLOGIES FROM THE ANNUAL FUND

In the recent mailing you received about the annual fund, we neglected to include an envelope for you to use to make your donation. Our apologies! Don't let this stop you from giving to your school! For your convenience, we are attaching an envelope to the newsletter. Whether you use our envelope or yours, FedEx or Pony Express, we look forward to receiving your gift!

CROSS COUNTRY MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM

With over 900 runners, the Northeastern Middle School cross country meet in Gloucester's Stage Fort Park last Thursday was a genuine phenomenon. It was the largest event in the history of this area. Cape Ann Waldorf School's team was our first participation as we placed 7th in a field of 11

independent schools. We had a medal-winning student in 11th place, Theresa Orr from our 7th grade. The biggest news is that our 12-member 7th and 8th grade squad ran its best, despite some qualms and nervousness before the event. It was a glorious, sunny, fall day with parents and independent and public school students shouting their support of the runners who completed the 1.67 mile course. Many thanks to coach Shannon McHone for her spirited and joyous support of our runners. We look forward to next year's cross country second year. We hope to burn up the track, bettering each runner's record!

Tom Braden

COURTESY ANNOUNCEMENTS

GHOSTS OF THE PIONEERS

Twain Braden's latest book has just been published by Lyons Press. It is a "wonderful close-to-the-earth book about the West; that magical place where the best of us met the worst of us and nothing was ever the same" (Ken Burns).

Twain, his wife, four children and their dog followed the Oregon Trail during the summer of 2006. They discovered the stories, the ruts of the covered wagons and even the graves of the pioneer adventurers, some courageous beyond belief and others foolhardy or innocent.

"The western migration during the 1840s was a family migration, a unique time in American history and in the history of the West in particular, in which groups of families, not solitary adventurers, attempted to forge a new life together." Twain weaves that movement west with his own time of life.

"I was a 'dad,' the sexless, emasculated figure who, according to popular conception, for the next ten years had nothing to look forward to but a growing pastiness, perhaps baldness, and Saturday T-ball games. I would pull sweat socks up to the middle of my calves, push a lawnmower, pick up dried dog turds like Neil Young's Ordinary Average Guy....As a father, as a husband, and as an educated male seeking to make the most of my experiences to forge a meaningful life, I was drawn to these men of similar age who, in the 1840s, loaded their

belongings into a wagon, often over the protestations of their wives, or at least with their silent and grim resignation, and headed west.”

The (Boise) “Idaho Statesman” newspaper (Oct. 21, 2007) characterizes the pioneers in this way: “A colorful crew of 300 emigrants, the colony included strong leaders like William Shaw and Robert Morrison, who would become key figures in Oregon’s development, and Henry Sager, whose infamous recklessness led to his and his wife Naomi’s deaths, orphaning their seven children on the trail.”

The paper continues, “It’s a journey that continues today, of course, but imagine the family wagon is powered by horses instead of horsepower and the opportunity is not a promising job in a thriving city but an unsure future in undeveloped land you’ve never seen... Idaho proved to be the tipping point of people’s characters.”

The book, [Ghosts of the Pioneers: A Family Search for the Independent Oregon Colony of 1844](#), is available in The Enchanted Caravan and area bookstores.

GREEN MEADOWS FARM BOOK CLUB

Would you like to be a part of the Green Meadows Farm Book Club? Decisions as to which books will be read, how often to meet, what topics to read, etc. were covered at the first meeting. Please see Jen Benoit, Sunflower Nursery parent for details. The focus of this book club will be on progressive political, social and environmental topics. No sign-up required. For book ideas or suggestions, please contact Jen directly at jen.benoit@comcast.net

The focus of this newly formed book club will be on progressive political, social, and environmental topics. No sign-up required. Every third Thursday at the farmstand greenhouse.

Next meeting is Nov. 15th from 7pm-9pm

This month's book: "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle" by Barbara Kingsolver

For more info, please contact Waldorf parents Jen & Chris Benoit at 978-927-1177 or visit

www.jenbenoit.com/gmfbookclub.htm

Come and join us if you can!

Who’s Learning What?

Grade 1 – Numbers and Math

Grade 2 – Math

Grade 3 - Math

Grade 4 – Local Geography

Grade 5 – North American Geography

Grade 6 – Roman History

Grade 7 – Math

Grade 8 – Play Preparation

EYE ON THE SKY for the week of Oct. 29, 2007

Where do COMETS come from? Our solar system's orderly merry-go-round of planets is surrounded by a sphere of cold, dark comets that reaches halfway to the nearest stars. There are trillions of comets---snowballs of ice and dust, typically six miles in diameter left over from the formation of the solar system.

A sharp-eyed friend of mine recently said she saw a spectacular green explosion in the sky several nights ago. Well, last Wednesday a relatively small and dim comet underwent a violent change. Comet Holmes, discovered by the British amateur observer Edwin Holmes in November 1892, experienced an explosive outburst resulting in a million-fold increase in brightness. In a few hours, an object that previously could be discerned only with large telescopes was shining at magnitude +2.8, visible with naked eyes in a large city!

Why this comet has suddenly flared in brightness is a mystery, especially because it was far from the Sun when the outburst occurred. Some think the flare might have been caused by a rich vein of volatile ices on the comet's nucleus that was suddenly exposed to sunlight. Cosmic mysteries are joyous events, keeping us watchful and awed by worlds beyond our own.

(Adapted by Tom Braden from An Intimate Look at the Night Sky by Chet Raymo and The New York Times.)