

November 26, 2007

Cape Ann Waldorf School, 668 Hale Street, Beverly Farms, MA 01915 978-927-8811 www.capeannwaldorf.org

ENTERING THE ADVENT SEASON

In the Roman Catholic and many Protestant Church calendars the fourth Sunday before December 25 is the beginning of the season of Advent. Advent – to approach or to arrive – in the Christian tradition is a reference to the coming of Christ and was historically a period of fasting and penitence before the celebration of the Christ Mass which was held on December 25, a day thought to have been chosen because of its close proximity to the Winter Solstice, the turning point when the shrinking of the daylight ends. It is understandable why this day was chosen, probably somewhere in the fourth century, by many –though not all – of the Christian faiths, to be the celebration day for the birth of Jesus who is referred to in the Gospel as the “Light of the World.”

Even the known celebrations of the winter solstice, however, go back many hundred of years before the birth of Jesus. There are some who interpret the juxtaposition of this day on the winter solstice as an attempt to preempt an already popular celebration day. Rudolf Steiner, however, as in all his reflections of traditional festivals, would have us look for and recognize “a more ancient wisdom.” Their purpose is not

Spiral of Light
For the children and families of the Nurseries, Kindergartens and Grades 1-3
This Saturday, December 1, 2007 at CAWS
Nurseries: 11:00 AM
Kindergartens: 12:30 PM
Grades 1-3: 2:00 and 3:30 PM
Families with children in more than one class may attend one event together. It is recommended that you attend the time set for the younger child.

Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us to kindle the Hanukkah light.

Part of the blessing before the Hanukkah lights are kindled.

*Deep Mid-winter drawing near,
Darkness in our Garden here –
One small flame yet bravely burns
To show a path which ever turns.*

One of the verses sometimes said for the lighting of the first candle of an advent wreath.

a propagation of a belief system, but an opportunity to reflect on or perhaps connect to both natural and historical realities. The winter solstice is the turning point in the relationship of light and darkness in a day. Events in history, behind which are so many influences, consistently bring about turning points in the way we think and live. Our growth and maturation are filled with natural or inspired turning points throughout the course of our entire lives. The Spiral of Light is just one of many little rituals of the season drawn from traditions to reflect what was once consciously being experienced around them, and that now only draws on that memory. By walking to the center of a spiral we reach a turning point where we light a candle so that each returning brings a greater and greater light to the room. It isn't magic, but it may seem so. Certainly it is awesome.

And so we enter the season of approaching and arrival to a turning point in time out of which we will carry more and more light. Next week, as well, begins the first day of Hanukkah, which, too, holds at its center, the miracle of

light; one night's holy oil that burned for eight days. Although it is a festival to celebrate the bravery of the Maccabees, it is its ritual of lighting the menorah that rose out of the miracle of light that catches all of our attention, so great and universal is the symbol of light for hope and new beginnings.

Ed.

A WARM AND FOND THANK YOU TO MARY ELLEN

For many years Mary Ellen Donohue steadfastly arrived at school each week to photo-copy, label and mail out our school newsletter. Her eagle-eye and sharp memory saved us from many a faux pas just before going to press, and her remarkable ability to hold names of people, places, events, birthdays and other significant dates filled the office with friendly inquiries and best wishes from her to others each time she came. As we forge ahead to reorganize our newsletter to put the full issue online, we wish to send our heartfelt and warm thank yous to Mary Ellen for all that she has done, both in copying the newsletter and other tasks she has done for us over the years. And as she would have wished each of us, all of us here at the school would like to wish her a beautiful and joyful Advent season.

From all the Office Staff, the CAWS Community, and *Ed.*

ARE YOU ARTISTIC?

The Development Committee is looking for someone to design the chart for this year's Annual Fund. We have the concept, but we need someone with artistic ability to render our ideas into something beautiful or inspiring or funny or, well, something! We need you! This would be a great way for some talented person to help out the school this year. Just call or email Pam Fantini (781 639-2359 or pcfantini@hotmail.com). Thanks!

8TH GRADE FOOD DRIVE CONTINUES

Thank you for supporting the Thanksgiving food drive which was enthusiastically received by the food pantry!

The Eighth Grade would like to continue the food drive throughout the Advent season until the December holiday break. Each week we will take your donations to the Beverly Bootstraps Food Pantry on Cabot St. We have taken donations a number of times over the past few years, and they are always extremely grateful for our help and support.

So please keep the food coming for this wonderful cause.

8TH GRADE FUNDRAISER CONTINUES

Although the Eighth Grade has yet to determine a destination for their class trip this year, we are still busy raising funds. We have all kinds of wonderful gifts you can purchase that will support our class trip fund.

We have:

Beautiful laminated bookmarks designed by Eighth Graders for \$3 each or 2 for \$5. You can buy a complete set for \$20.

Durable and handsome aprons embossed with the CAWS logo for \$22.

DVD's of the 8th Grade production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for \$25

Sets of greetings cards designed by Eighth Graders for \$5 per set.

These items can be viewed on the bulletin board in the main hall. Please stop by the Eighth Grade classroom to order or purchase.

Thank you and Best Wishes
The Eighth Grade

A JOYFUL SUCCESS

The Holiday Fair is behind us. The Friday transformation happened. At 9 AM on Saturday the doors opened. By shortly after 8 PM that day it was all over. But what a day it was, and how to convey the incredible and good-natured investment of so many that was the source of the beautiful spirit behind the happenings of the day. Every class led by the class parents, every student led by the class teachers, and, of course the Enchanted Caravan's crew led by Jen Schafer took up their responsibilities and raised each area to a new freshness and new quality from the year before. There were hours of rehearsals, spontaneous outpourings, leaps of faith, unflappable resolves, meticulous organization, well-in-advance preparations, last minute rescuers, exquisite designing, cheerful willingness, hard-working laborers, patient planners, shopping shoppers, excited children, punctual volunteers, and much much much more.

There are, as always, a few names that should be mentioned. There is Heather Collis-Puro who stepped forward to co-coordinate this year and preparing to take the lead next year. There are Chris Dowley and Laura Freysinger who early on brought the Fair into focus and worked in so many ways to be sure it would be the successful and prepared event that it was. Then there is Jen Schafer who took on the management of the school store this year and special thanks to Rebecca Dawson who brought her experience to support Jen in the final weeks and days. Then there are the Millers who quietly prepared the candle dipping room and the Early Childhood faculty and the marionette show and the Early Childhood parents and the Wee Folk Shop and every class led by class parents and every student led by the teachers, as well as the other teachers and staff and – many thanks to everyone.

From Andrea on behalf of a grateful Holiday Fair Committee and the CAWS faculty

GATHER YE PLATTERS

Quite a few platters and dishes have accumulated from the pre-Thanksgiving events. They are set out on the table outside of the kitchen in the main hall. Please check to see if one of yours is there and take it home!

Thank you.

PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING THIS WEDNESDAY

Please join us for the next Parent Association Meeting to be held on Wednesday, December 5 from 8:30 to 10 AM in the Main Hall. Bring your ideas, concerns, questions. Join us for the conversation on how to build a stronger Parent Association here at CAWS. Coffee and muffins provided.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INPUT INTO CLASS REPORTS

The CAWS faculty meet twice a week after school. Our Tuesday meeting is our business meeting and used to report and coordinate events in the school. The Thursday meeting is the pedagogical meeting and its agenda is varied. Here we study the classes as well as individual children, participate in artistic activities together, and share insights into the curriculum and teaching.

Currently we have been reviewing our parent conferences and reports, both the long narrative reports at the end of the year and the progress reports provided twice a year in middle school. We have looked at the purpose of these communications and reviewed our practices. This work will extend over the next few weeks and will culminate in some renewed intentions and new procedures for the next school year.

We would like to invite you to share your reflections and suggestions on parent conferences and reports so that we can consider your responses in our conversations. If you wish to share your reflections please contact me

by email or in writing through the office. If you would like to have a conversation, please let me know.

Thank you.
Virginia McWilliam

EYE ON THE SKY for the week of Nov. 26, 2007

It is fun to trace the constellation ERIDANUS (er-RID-an-us) the River. This is a long, meandering constellation that begins very near the foot of Orion the Hunter at the star Cursa, which means "footstool of the giant" in Arabic. The foot of Orion is the bright star, Rigel, and Cursa is found immediately northwest of it. At first, wandering Eridanus heads west toward the "Wet Region" of the sky--Cetus the Whale, the Water Carrier and the Fishes; none of these stars are very bright. Eridanus gradually heads south and out of sight to us in the north.

NOTE: The region around Orion is the most splendid of our skies. Six bright stars form a vast hexagon: Capella, Pollux, Procyon, Sirius, Rigel and Aldebaran. In the center is brilliant Betelgeuse (BET-el-jooze), the right shoulder of Orion.

(Adapted by Tom Braden from The Stars by H.A. Rey and the National Audubon Society Field Guide to the Night Sky.)

THURSDAY MORNING HANDWORK

There will be two Thursday morning handwork sessions in the main hall from 8:10 – 10:10 on December 6 and 13 with Ineke who will be teaching how to make angels and holly children. Knitters are also welcome! See you there.

Laura Freysinger

FOOD RAFFLE SUCCESS

For some time, the seventh and eighth grades have planned to donate money to the Food Project. What is the Food Project? It is a non-profit organization which uses donated land to raise all-natural produce to sell at farmers markets and donate to food pantries in the Boston area. We spent two mornings this past fall at Long Hill in Beverly where we harvested fresh produce and prepared the garden beds for winter and spring plantings.

Our classes raised money from a very successful raffle of Halloween treats. We greatly appreciate the purchase of raffle tickets by CAWS' parents and children. The seventh and eighth grades are proud to say that we raised \$254 from the raffle and we will donate that amount to the Food Project.

The raffle was won by the Crowley family with children in the fourth and seventh grades. Congrats!

~Ethan Bresnahan, Seventh Grader

Who's Learning What?

Grade 1 – Letters

Grade 2 – Writing

Grade 3 – Old Testament and Grammar

Grade 4 – Human Being and Animal

Grade 5 – Ancient Civilizations

Grade 6 – Roman Empire: Christianity begins

Grade 7 – Physics: Mechanics

Grade 8 – Physics: Hydraulics

The Enchanted Caravan School Store

The Cape Ann Waldorf School • 668 Hale Street • Beverly, MA 01915 • 978-927-1901

✧ MANY HEARTFELT THANKS ✧

to all who volunteered time and energy on behalf of
The Enchanted Caravan to make the Holiday Fair happen!
We are grateful to the teachers, too, for allowing their classrooms
to become transformed into magical shops!

✧ TREASURES ABOUND ✧

The store is up and running again, with lots of treasures you may not
have seen at the fair. Come in and discover them!

✧ HOLIDAY PREPARATIONS ✧

Stay tuned for information on a pre-holiday book sale as well as
extended holiday hours!

We're looking for volunteers to help with the extended hours on Monday from 12 – 3,
Wednesday from 1 - 3 and Friday from 1 – 3. Please contact Jen if you're interested.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

*Current Store Hours: Monday and Friday: 8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.,
Wednesday: 8:15 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.*