

## *Curriculum Updates*

### **Third Grade Studies Shelter**

*-by Rebecca Rugo*

The third graders recently finished a block in which they learned about and built different types of shelters. The students began the block considering the question of what qualities a shelter or dwelling should have.

The class spent time in the woods by Wenham Lake creating simple shelters from fallen branches, leaves, and grasses. Some children chose to work on their own while others worked in small groups. By the end of the first week, a small village of beautiful and unique structures had been erected near the shore. The children then learned about various traditional dwellings made from materials found in other terrains and climates and how the form and construction of a dwelling are shaped by the local environment.



*(Photos: Sharing model dwellings built at home; taking a break inside one of our shelters by Wenham Lake)*

Peter Rudd brought a collection of intriguing, antique building tools to the class and explained the journey a tree takes from forest to lumberyard. As an independent project, each child made a model-sized dwelling at home and brought it in to school.

*Thank you to Tony Cheng and Rebeca Rugo for all these photos of the children at work!*



The students began the final project by applying the skills learned in a prior arithmetic block to measure the kindergarten playhouse and calculate the lumber needed to build a similar house for the nursery children.

Finally, with much excitement, the students began constructing the playhouse. Thirteen enthusiastic

workers wielding hammers made the work go swiftly and we had a “topping out” celebration by the third day with the children signing the final rafter after it had been nailed into place.

On the final day, one scant hour before the assembly, the eighth graders came to put into practice their physics lessons on pulleys and helped the third grade move the house into the nursery garden (*Photos next page*).



Much appreciation goes to Bill Indresano, Linda Platt, Peter Rudd, Barry Rugo, Deb Telep, and Chris Thomas for their generous help with the final project.



*Photo: moving the house into place on the nursery playground with the help of the eighth grade students and their pulleys.*

*Photo below: third grade and eighth grade students following a good days' work moving the playhouse into place (with their teachers and Mr. Rudd).*



Post Script: after receiving their new playhouse, the nursery children treated the third grade to a delicious thank you gift -- big jars of their homemade applesauce!

**Please see more curriculum updates by CAWS teachers (and one by sixth grade students!) following today's announcements, which begin on the next page.**

## **The Eighth Grade's Last Play Performance, This Week!**

*Please Join us for The Servant of Two Masters, Thurs., Friday*

You're guaranteed to laugh. Please join the eighth grade's final play performance at CAWS.



To help ensure seating for everyone this week, families with younger children (Early Childhood/ Lower Grades) are encouraged to attend one of the Thursday performances. **TIMES** for the two-hour show:

Thursday, Jan. 26 12:30 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 27, 10:00 a.m. and again at 7:00 pm.

*The eighth grade rehearses The Servant of Two Masters (Photo by Tony Cheng)*

## **Learn About First Grade Readiness Tomorrow Night**

On January 24 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., all interested parents are invited to attend our First Grade Readiness and Curriculum Presentation led by our kindergarten teachers and a grades teacher. During this evening, the teachers will share the developmental milestones they observe in the children to determine readiness for first grade and, if the child isn't ready, how a second year in kindergarten can be a true gift to the child. All rising first grade parents are required to attend. Kindergarten and nursery parents with younger children are warmly welcome to attend. Please let your child's teacher know whether both or just one of you will be coming.

## **Strategic Planning, Fireside Chats Continue**

Seventeen parents braved the wintry weather to attend the second of CAWS' Fireside Chats on Saturday January 21. Once again, participants offered valuable information and insights about their experience at the school and their opinions about how we can strengthen the school over the next three years. A wide range of topics was discussed, including the necessity of improving our marketing efforts, the importance of educational support, and the need for continuing work in achieving transparency in school policies and procedures.

The third and last Fireside Chat will be held on Thursday February 2, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. We strongly urge all parents who have not yet attended one of these meetings, to come and let

your voice be heard. We need your input as we plan for the future of our school!

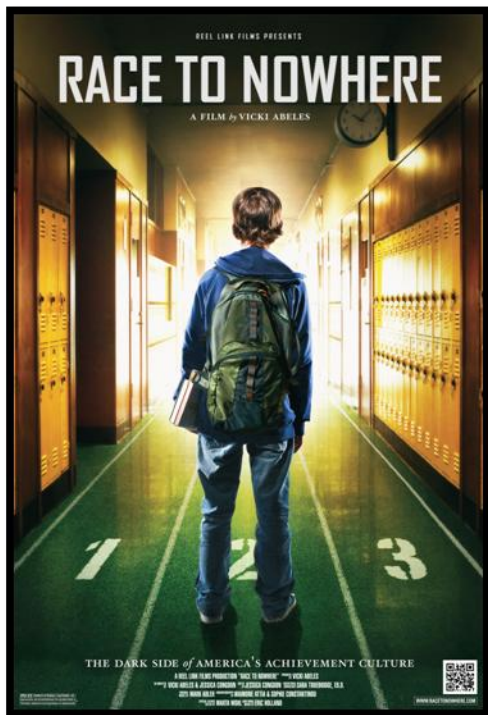
Our thanks go out to all those who joined us on Saturday: Pat Carrington-House, Beth Dowd, Denise Frame Harlan, Karen Williamson, Matt Stella, Leanne Scarcella, Adam Scarcella, Pilar Perez, Peter Rudd, Gretchen MacKilligan, Scott MacKilligan, Kim Woods, Laura Freysinger, Dana Dooley, Jocelyn Serio-Miller, James Kennedy, and Jon Cosco.

A special thank you to those eighth grade students who provided free childcare to many young ones so that parents could attend the session: Madeleine Harlan, Joseph McGaunn, and Helen Kilburn.

## **Film *Race to Nowhere* is ‘A Call to Mobilize’ Showing at CAWS Feb. 3, 4**

The Waldorf Community Association will host *Race to Nowhere* on Friday evening, Feb. 3, and Saturday morning, Feb. 4 here at CAWS. The WCA, our school’s parent association, sponsors a learning conference for parents and teachers every year. This year’s conference will include the movie and facilitated discussion.

The 85 minute movie is “a call to mobilize families, educators, and policy makers to challenge current assumptions on how to best prepare our youth to become healthy, bright, contributing and leading citizens,” according to [www.racetonowhere.com](http://www.racetonowhere.com).



A one-hour discussion will follow each screening. On Friday, Feb. 3, Beth Crowe will facilitate the discussion following the 7:00 p.m. movie. Beth is a CAWS parent, grandparent, and long-time educational advocate and consultant. Friday night’s viewing is open to the greater North Shore community.

On Saturday, Feb. 4, Dan Butin, CAWS parent and dean of the School of Education at Merrimack College, will facilitate the discussion following the 9:00 a.m. screening. This viewing is open only to the CAWS community.

Admission is free but reservations are required!

Editor’s note: support the eighth grade’s class trip by lining up an eighth grade sitter for this event! Contact parent Joanie Wendt at [meepadog@gmail.com](mailto:meepadog@gmail.com).

## **Anthroposophical Beekeeping**

Looking for individuals interested in beginning a study group toward a biodynamic/sustainable approach to beekeeping. I'd like to start by reading Rudolf Steiner's Bee lectures given to the workers at the Goetheanum. Time and place can be decided once we have a group of six or more. We can incorporate visits to the apiary once the warm

weather comes. No experience in beekeeping or anthroposophy is required. Please contact Dave Mansur at [dave.mansur@gmail.com](mailto:dave.mansur@gmail.com).

## **News from and About the World of Waldorf Education**

Are you aware of the Waldorf-related news coming out all the time from our umbrella organization, the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America?

Some recent articles:

- Summer youth program at the Rudolf Steiner Health Center in Ann Arbor, Mich.
- Insight into the teaching of science at Waldorf schools
- British actress Tilda Swinton mentioning her children's Waldorf education in an interview with an international news site ("It's an alternative schooling which talks about soul values, a child developing at his own rate and developing a socially conscious attitude to the universe, and a feeling of social responsibility," Swinton tells an international news site.)
- Student takes eighth-grade project to Burma.

Connect to the AWSNA newsletter here, at the [Why Waldorf Works web site](#).

### *Curriculum Updates*

## **News from the teachers on what the children have been studying during main lesson**

### *Bluebell and Sunflower Nursery*

*by Elizabeth Stubbs*

In the Nursery, we have received many gifts recently. In early December, we had the good fortune to have some hardworking moms and dads build us a new fence in our play garden. Now we have lots more space to play in as well as a feeling of being able to go right out in the woods. Just before the holiday break, the third grade finished building a beautiful new play house for us. It was an exciting day when the eighth grade helped them haul it into the Garden. We love to play in it every day. And we are thankful to all those who helped us.

Since the holiday break, the Nursery children have been longing for snow. We tried all sorts of ways to summon it up: stories, songs, verses and drawings. We even made snow out of wool felt and salt dough. In recent days, our wishes have come true at last. Here is one of our favorite songs:

Little Jackie Frost, he nipped my nose.  
Little Jackie Frost, he pinched my toes.  
So I ran into the house and I shut the door,  
So Little Jackie Frost couldn't nip me any more.

But we really do want to play in the snow, so we sing:

Please Jackie Frost, don't nip my nose!  
Please Jackie Frost, don't pinch my toes!  
With my mittens and my hat and my boots so warm,  
Little Jackie Frost, you can't do me any harm!

### ***Yellow and Red Rose Kindergarten***

***by Mary Mansur and Lindsay Miles***

*Oh where do you come from you little flakes of snow*

*Falling softly, softly falling to the earth below.*

*On the trees and on the bushes*

*On the mountains so far*

*Tell me snowflakes do you come from*

*Where the angels are.*

We finally got to sing this song this last week! We also finally got to do our first round of sledding at our new home here at Moraine Farm and it was a smashing (not really because we set up bales of straw for the children to land in) success.

The children are hearing the story of Mother Holle: how when her featherbed is shaken it makes it snow; Star Money and the rewards of generosity; Sweet Porridge and how it is best to ask someone's permission before using something of theirs.

In circle we are marching through the snow, building snowmen and visiting King Winter's castle.

Our current handwork project is crafting vests from felted wool sweaters. The children blanket stitch around the edges with embroidery floss or yarn, cut out and sew on pockets and decorate them with ribbons, felt and buttons. Some children come up with very unique ways to fashion their sweaters. Each year it is a joy to see what they come up with.

First grade is just around the corner for the older kindergarten children who are playing the Red Queen movement journey game with their teachers. Observing the children while they move through this game gives us valuable insight into their physical development.

### ***First Grade***

***by Brian Macdonald***

First grade discovered the Kingdom of Math has some very unusual characters who are the prime actors in our stories. Those characters are: Sir Plus, a jolly fellow who loves to eat, collect things and wear green suits; his wife, Dame Minus, a thin, kind and wise woman who loves to give things away, (usually her husband's collected items). She is also known for her propensity to lose things and for wearing blue; Knight Divide, a strong and bold woman known for her fairness and her red wardrobe; Times the Fool, the Jester/Magician, whose cartwheels produce plentitude, (usually restoring Sir Plus' collections). The students follow the stories while manipulating jewels either individually or in teams. We have drawn these characters and their family crests or signs in our Main Lesson books along with some of the story mathematics. The Nursery is aware of our rhythmical counting circle activity. The Fourth Grade will soon be introduced to our newest activity of pentatonic recorder playing. Learning can not only be fun but LOUD!

### ***Second Grade***

***by Ariadne Nevin***

The second grade has begun the new year with a deeper dive into the realm of numbers, following the goblin Ricky Douse on his journey up from the heart of the mountain. We've just discovered the caverns where a red-clothed gnome gathers crystals until a blue-clothed gnome comes along looking for ten of a single kind of crystal, and carefully packs them away in his blue sack. We were a bit puzzled about this whole business until our small red counting gems were suddenly joined by some larger blue gems,

which are equivalent to ten of our red ones - what excitement ensued then! This week we'll hear more about how these fellows work with each other, and indeed we'll also meet a green-clothed gnome who waits until there are ten sacks ready, puts them in his big green cart, and hauls them off to the king.

Along with these adventures, we continue our work with times tables, walking and hopping, stomping and jumping so vigorously that the third graders have had to ask us to please jump rope a little more quietly during Main Lesson. Luckily, the rope is quite portable, and has started coming out to recess with us as well. (As long as we first peek at the cemetery next door in case of a solemn moment needing to be respected, we can jump as energetically as we wish outside.) There is a magical moment when a determined second grader discovers how to approach the rope while it's turning, without getting beamed on the head. It may take several tries to firmly establish that new ability, but then there's no turning back. Woe to our neighbors' peace and quiet this week...

***Third Grade, by Rebecca Rugo***, Please see the cover story of today's *Newsletter*!

### ***Fourth Grade***

***by Connie MacLeod***

During the nine year change the children were more subdued, inward, and reflective. At ten the children again look into the world, and a new, extroverted quality has emerged. As fits this shift, the story content swings from sober and moral Old Testament Hebrew stories in third grade, to the study of the Norse Myths in fourth.

The Norse Myths are filled with joy and humor, temper and wit. The gods, with their strong wills, love of adventure, and distinctive characteristics, act as a remarkably clear reflection of the ten year old child. Despite their power and beauty, the Norse gods carry the burden of knowing their destiny, to suffer Ragnarokk, the end of the world as they know it.

We are currently near the end of our Norse Mythology block. During our next block, after we have heard many of the favorite myths, we will go on to learn how the Norse peoples and their traditions have impacted European and North America culture. The children will read and hear stories of Viking exploration, and hear examples of how the Norse gods live on in American "tall tales" and in the English and (thanks to Frau Kati) the German languages.

### ***Fifth Grade***

***by Dianne McGaunn***

Currently, the fifth graders are immersed in the study in Geometry. Geometry is a branch of mathematics principally concerned with the study of lines and figures, and properties of these figures in space. While the definition of the topic may seem uninteresting, the fifth graders are very enthusiastic about it! In addition to learning the basics about figures such as the triangle and circle, we are learning the history of geometry and how human beings have discovered their world through it. The ancient Egyptians depended on geometry to build pyramids and for marking out plots of land when the Nile River flood waters receded each year. In these ways, Geometry was integral for the social health of the community and for advancements in human society.

As we have learned, Geometry is about relationships and proportions of figures to each other, and at a very deep level is tied to form drawing in a Waldorf school. Students can strengthen their relationship to the world around them, even to each other, through the study of forms and Geometry. In fact, the students find it very satisfying to work with these figures, and to spend time concentrating and drawing these figures in an artistic manner. While we reserve compass for shape construction in sixth grade, we

work hard in fifth grade to hone our free-hand drawing skills, which will be a great support in next year's Geometry studies.

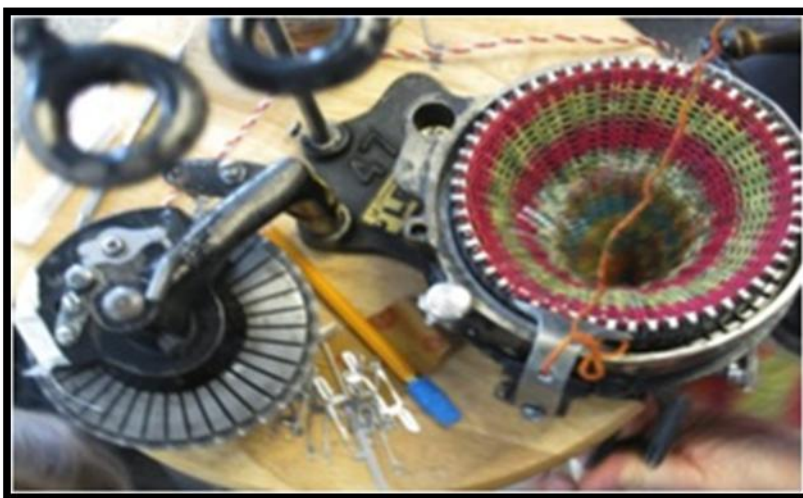
Another fabulous thing we have learned about Geometry is that it is all around us: in the five-petaled flowers of the fruit trees, in the gorgeous spiral of a snail shell, or even in our own bodies. For example, the Golden Ratio shows that each segment of the human finger is 1.6 times the smaller, and so on. This ratio can be seen throughout the human body in many ways, and even other aspects of nature and our world. While we have discussed this only briefly in fifth grade to show the amazing order and brilliance of the human body and nature, we will "spiral" back to this topic in middle school.

A main goal for fifth grade Geometry is the cultivation of and appreciation for the topic not as a means for abstract calculations, but a true "connection" with the world through the discipline of Geometry. This truly enhances the understanding of, say, the right triangle, not simply as an abstract concept but something with real meaning, as we learn the history behind its discovery. In addition, the satisfaction of the beauty, order and harmony discovered in the study of Geometry the Waldorf school is palpable. Steiner said that the proper study of Geometry has a harmonizing effect on the children and the adults that study it. In the classroom, we move geometrical shapes with our own bodies and within the group; we discover shapes in the world around us, and we draw them carefully in artistic expressions, in addition to learning the properties of these figures. All of this brings about some degree of satisfaction and calmness in the classroom, which indeed can be harmonizing on many levels.

While most fifth graders may not admit that they are having a fun time with Geometry, I can attest to their enthusiasm and interest in the subject. Even the most skeptical of students have sheepishly admitted that they never thought the subject could be so interesting. Who knew that Geometry had so many practical applications, and have such a rich history? If you are interested in more, pick up the book *String, Straight Edge and Shadow, the Story of Geometry*, by Julia Diggins, which the fifth graders are currently reading. It is a wonderful peek into the ancient origins of Geometry. Personally, I have found this block inspiring as well, and I now have a new appreciation and respect for Geometry, which I wish I had several years ago!

### ***Sixth Grade*                      **Sock Knitting Machine Comes to CAWS**** ***--by students of the sixth grade***

On November 18, 2011 a woman named Barbara came to Cape Ann Waldorf School and showed our class and the fifth grade her sock knitting machine. The machine used thin yarn. It was circular with a



hole in the middle, black, and had a crank. It had small needles and a piece that makes it purl. It weighed 30-35 pounds. The machine takes about 45 minutes to make a pair of socks. One time a man made a 10-foot long string of socks in one day.

Barbara's machine was made in the 1920's. She traded a couple hundred dollars and silk for her machine. A new machine costs \$1,200. In the olden days the ads said that if you bought one you would get richer, but they were lying. People lost money. When they tried to sell their socks

back to the company, the company usually wouldn't take the socks. The modern machines knit 35,000 stitches a minute. The fastest machines are made in Japan. When we made our socks it took us four months. It only takes 45 minutes to make them on a sock-knitting machine.



***Seventh Grade***  
***by Laura Quayle***

***Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika.*** Lord bless Africa. The seventh grade has been singing these words each morning as part of the South African National Anthem, the only national anthem that is written in four languages and two different musical keys, symbolic of the diverse cultures and geographies that exist in the country. We have read these words also in Nelson Mandela's autobiography, when he describes protests against ***apartheid***, where Africans break out into this song in the face of police officers, who are trying to silence them.

We have learned of Africa's abundance: of the diamonds and oil that lie underground; of the diverse plants and animals that thrive in its savannas, rainforests, coastal lands, and deserts; of the way humans have adapted to the environment, such as the Tuareg nomads of the desert, the Masai of Kenya's high grasslands, and the Pygmies of Congo's rainforests. We have learned about the despair that Africans have faced over the course of history, due to famine and drought, the slave trade, colonial governments that did not allow Africans to be educated, civil wars, and continued poverty, even in countries with vast natural resources. Most notable however, were the individuals and movements that have arisen across Africa's history as beacons of hope and light amidst these challenges, such as Nelson Mandela. Studying the biography of such remarkable individuals, who fight tirelessly for their vision of truth and goodness, is especially valuable to adolescents, who are forming a new connection to the world outside and developing ideas of how they want to participate in this world, often with a healthy dose of idealism.

The geography block has been an opportunity to hone in on skills such as note taking, studying for exams, and writing analytical essays that compare and contrast two groups of people. Most powerfully, however, it has shed light on the continent about which most Americans know the least and shown us what an extraordinary place Africa is, rich in resources, culture, and powerful figures of hope who have fought for justice and truth in the face of despair.

***Eighth Grade***  
***by Sabrina Babcock***

The eighth grade has been busy rehearsing their last class play since returning from the winter break. They will be performing Carlo Goldoni's Commedia dell'Arte play ***The Servant of Two Masters*** this

week. It is a rollicking comedy written in the eighteenth century (a period we are studying this year) and takes advantage of the class's energy and enthusiasm for physical comedy and humor. Due to the layout of our amazing set, and more limited seating than usual, we will be performing the play four times. The class invites the entire community to all of our performances and would greatly appreciate your support. It is suitable for all ages and as it is also a little over two hours long, please arrive no later than five to ten minutes before the scheduled start as we will begin promptly. Dates and times are on the attached flyer and on posters around the school. We hope to see you there!

## CAWS Calendar January 23 – February 11, 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22	23  Basketball Games vs. Brookwood both Boys and Girls at 3:30  7:00- 8:30 First Grade Parent Evening	24  Basketball Games vs. Landmark at Landmark Boys 3:30 Girls 4:45  7:00 – 8:15 First Grade Readiness for Rising First Grade Parents	25	26  <b>Note time change</b> 12:30 – 2:30 8th Grade Play Performance for Grades 1 – 3  3:15 – 5:00 Boys Basketball Practice  6:00 8th Grade Play Performance	27  Pizza Day  <b>Note time change</b> 10:00 – 12:10 8th Grade Play Performance for Grades 4 – 7  3:15 – 5:00 Girls Basketball Practice  7:00 8th Grade Play Performance	28  10:00 – 12:00 Prospective Nursery Parent Gathering
29	30  2:40 Basketball Team Photo  3:15 – 5:00 Boys Basketball Practice	31  3:15 – 5:00 Girls Basketball Practice  7:00 – 8:30 Nursery Parent Evening	1	2  Basketball Games 3:30 Boys 4:30 Girls  7:00 – 9:00 Fireside Chat: Strategic Planning Meeting	3  1:00 – 2:00 Kindergarten Play Group for Applicants  3:15 – 5:00 Girls Basketball Practice  7:00 – 10:00 Learning Conference	4  9:00 – 12:30 Learning Conference
5	6  3:15 – 5:00 Boys Basketball Practice	7  8:15 – 10:30 Grades Tour for Middle School Grades 6, 7 and 8  Basketball Games vs. Lexington at Waldorf HS of Mass Bay 3:45 Boys 4:45 Girls	8  7:00 – 8:30 8th Grade Parent Evening	9  Basketball Game vs. Glen Urguhart 3:30 Girls 4:40 Boys	10  Early Childhood No Classes due to ECH Conference  8:15 – 10:00 Nursery and Kindergarten Information Session	11