



WPG NEWS

Winterberry Parent Guild Public Meetings are held at Winterberry on the first Thursday of most months @ 6pm. See the School Calendar for meeting dates.

Hello Winterberries - my name is Oona Martin and I became President of the Winterberry Parent Guild in October 2017. I've learned so much about this organization and continue to have deep appreciation for the leadership of those who came before me.

Over the past few months, I've watched with awe and gratitude those who hosted our events; our annual giving campaign GARDEN (Thanks to Lalia Bunn), Enchanted Village (Thanks to Crystal Reeves, Laura Krip and Jennifer Porter) and Winter Faire (Thanks to Cheryl Lyon and Amy Knutsen). We also acknowledge that these events would not have been made possible without you - the volunteers who coordinated, decorated, helped, cleaned and more.

Our annual Head Heart & Hands Auction is on Saturday, April 7th at the 49th State Brewing Company from 5-10pm. Our theme this year is 'Of the Earth'. As a community, I feel like we are in a stage of renewal after a period of transition. It's important to me that we begin with nourishing the roots of our community by celebrating what works well and makes us feel grounded and strong.

In that spirit, this is the time of year we look ahead to our 2018-2019 school year and imagine our way through it - how will we breathe in rhythm together with our students and faculty? How can we support each other as we navigate our beloved festivals and traditions? What can we change? What must stay the same?

These are the big questions we are getting ready to ask - if you have something to offer now - winterberryparentguild@gmail.com

I am not alone in this - I am very grateful to our WPG board - Vice President Sam Beckett, Treasurer Barbara Amy, Secretary Sue Armstrong, Fundraising Chair Jessica Gardner, WCC/WPG Liaison Jessie Menkens, Faculty Rep Sarah Robicheaux. PLEASE thank your Class Representatives and Alternates - they are doing an outstanding job and overall, attendance and engagement at our meetings is inspiring.

Thank you to the WCC, Faculty and Principal Andersen, Ms. Colleen and Shana Garrels, Alicia Besh-Barber. And to all of you - keep up the good work! Oona Martin, WPG President and Parent

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 7th HHH Auction
5pm @ 49th State Brewing Company - <https://wpg.schoolauction.net/hhh2018>

April 12th-20th Grade 8 Class Trip

May 3rd Pentathlon

May 22nd Graduation

May 23rd May Fest, Classroom Cleaning, Classes End



NEWS THROUGH THE GRADES:

Our Annual Winterberry Circus was established during the 2009/2010 school year, it is a tradition that the Winterberry Community looks forward to each year from our 8th grade class. It is a community offering that showcases a smorgasbord of skills both creative and collaborative. The theme varies each year, but the tradition will forever inspire as it passes from one class to the next.



Throughout many months, Ms. Christenson's 8th Grade students demonstrated self-discipline, patience, cooperation and teamwork in creating mastery over various circus skills with Ms. Barber. Students learned how to juggle with scarves, balls, rings and/or clubs where they

practiced eye-hand coordination, concentration and finally gratification that they could JUGGLE! 8th graders learned basic tumbling skills such as the forward roll, backwards roll, cartwheel and two-person summersault. They learned partner Acro-Balance skills including the Mermaid, Table Top, Sitting Thigh-Stand, Standing Thigh-Stand, Candlestick, Inverted Candlestick, Flying

WCC NEWS

Winterberry Charter Council Public Meetings are held at Winterberry on the third Thursday of most months. The WCC next meeting is April 19th @ 6pm

What is Winterberry Charter Council (WCC)?

The WCC is our governing board that includes parents, staff and community members who are elected by Winterberry parents and staff. The main job of WCC is to ensure we are following the Anchorage School District contract requirements that are in our Charter (which was renewed the beginning of the year). WCC members are tasked to hire and supervise the Principle while ensuring the contract is being followed. We discuss a variety of topics that range from budget decisions, safety, approving contract or purchasing requirements, and how to increase our student enrollment while still having enough space (and much more). WCC meets every third Thursday of the month at 6pm during the school year. We highly encourage parents to attend a WCC meeting to gain a better understanding of the work we do to support our students and staff. If you have any questions, contact our WCC President, Meggan Judge or Vice Chair, Claire LeClair.

WFC

Winterberry Faculty Council is committed to holding our School's Mission:

Winterberry nurtures and promotes the development of healthy, responsible and creative human beings. Our aim is to provide a holistic learning environment and demonstrate that all children are natural and inspired learners who can achieve. Inspired by Waldorf educational methods, our integrated curriculum seeks to provide each student with meaningful, hands-on, developmentally appropriate experiences that inspire learning and personal growth. WFC Meetings are closed meetings held most Thursdays from 1:30 - 4:00

Our Eurythmy Instructors

Our visiting eurythmy guests, Peter and Rebecca Karnowski from California graced the classrooms with the gift of eurythmy for a Fall and Spring Block. Eurythmy is one of the gems of Waldorf education. It is a social movement art that develops our sense of self, and how we relate to the world and others. The lower grade classes are held within a story with exercises woven throughout, such as learning to mirror each other or how to skip properly. Much work was done with copper rods in the upper grades, such as how we toss and how we catch, learning to boldly take the rod from the air as well as tossing it with a warm heart. Patterns embracing the space around us were worked with, as well as different rhythms. We took great steps in learning to look out at the circle as a whole and to accord our movements to create harmony with the whole circle. We explored all the different sounds of speech and how to create the proper gesture-movement for that given sound in eurythmy. There has been much enthusiasm from the students, and it is wonderful to see them putting their best foot forward. This has been a wonderful winter eurythmy block!

Circus continued...

Angle, and Titanic poses. But they didn't stop there—8th graders went onto mastering the 4-Stack, the 5-Stack and the Class Wall where they learned that trust and responsibility to the whole group is paramount! Students interested in other various circus skills such as the unicycle and stilt walking took up great feats of balance while students who took up the diabolo wowed us all. Students interested in clown acting learned how to express human emotion in an exaggerated way. All these circus skills were attempted, practiced, and finessed to forward roll and showcase our Annual Winterberry Circus—all the while speaking in Shakespearian tongue!

Congratulations 8th Grade on a spectacular circus performance!

Thank you dear Lynne Jablonski & Jennifer Porter for writing the Shakespearian play for the circus and for all your help producing!

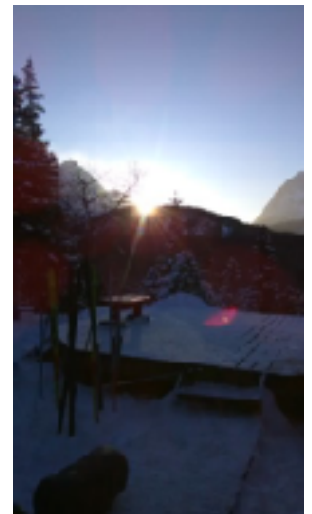
Cheers, Ms. Alicia Besh Barber,
Pedagogical Mentor



Grade 7, Ms. Bennet

We are currently finishing up our Renaissance and Reformation block. Inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's curiosity and enthusiasm, students are learning about, or how to do, something new. After stories of the great contributors to the Scientific Revolution, students drew charcoal portraits of the scientists. Michelangelo was brought to life as we lay on the floor reaching up to paint Adam's hand (fortunately this did not take us four years!). By the end of this week, we'll have created our own colossal Mona Lisa. History is full of intrigue, struggles and great triumphs.

Recently, the class spent a night out at the Eagle River Nature Center. The kids were spread out amongst the three yurts and one cabin. They skied out carrying their own gear, pulling wood, water and food, survived the night at -10, enjoyed s'mores, played in the snow and had the best time together. After all of that, several students raced in the cross-country ski meet the same day!



MARCH VIRTUE: UNDERSTANDING

Dearest Winterberries!

Understanding is using your mind to think clearly, paying careful attention to see the meaning of things. An understanding mind gives you insights and wonderful ideas. An understanding heart gives you empathy and compassion for others. Understanding is the power to think and learn and also to care.

You know you are practicing understanding when you concentrate and pay close attention. Reflect on the meaning of things. See the whole picture. Resist distractions. Put yourself in other people's shoes. Forgive others and yourself when you make mistakes.

Affirmation: I have an understanding mind. I see the truth about things. I have an understanding heart. I have empathy for other people's feelings.

I will put the Virtue on my desk to match the newsletter if we use one and I can also make a few practice pages to have next to the Virtue for parents to take if they are interested.

Ms. Colleen, Front Desk

WATER FILTER COMMITTEE

Call to Action: If you are passionate about school-wide water filtration, and would be willing to fundraise for water filters (\$900+/- annually in support of all classrooms, please step forward and contact us at winterberryparentguild@gmail.com.

The Water Filter Committee is currently inactive. In 2015, this committee provided Under-the-Sink Water Filtration systems for all classrooms. Unfortunately, there is annual cost to the school of \$100/classroom + labor, and the Winterberry Parent Guild has been asked to pick up the burden of managing this system. The sinks do not work properly if the water filters are not replaced which adds a challenge for the teachers. The WPG is proposing to phase-out the system over the next year as it is not in alignment with our Mission to use money raised for teacher training for water filters.

To date, we would like to acknowledge and thank 2nd grade parent Neal Stanbury for voluntarily providing ongoing maintenance to the system, and to HIQ, a parent owned company for providing funds to help replace the water filters in 2016/2017.

Thank you,

Oona Martin, WPG President and 5th & 2nd Parent

Grade 4, Ms. Seiff

Alaska History and Geography Block in Grade Four: In February, Grade Four had a wonderful time meeting with the other Waldorf Schools for a Potlatch The Native Youth Olympic games were fun and the food was fantastic. Grade Four has been learning about the Regions of Alaska. Each region had an Anthropologist, Zoologist, Botanist, Geologist, and a Meteorologist. Each scientist researched, wrote, and presented information on his or her region. We learned how to draw maps to scale and how to create a timeline for the history of Alaska. A visit to the Anchorage Museum and having Mrs. Pepe visit our classroom rounded out the great experiences for our Alaska Block.

Grade 2, Mr. Crawford

Second grade has been enjoying the epic folk tale, The King of Ireland's Son, as the story to accompany our math block. We are all enjoying this wonderfully engaging story of adventure, love, and layer upon layer of tales. We are also absolutely loving cross country skiing, and as each recess comes, more and more skis appear on the play-yard. It is grand fun, and very contagious! And then there is the auction project. We are knitting a thick, warm blanket, and every child is well on his or her way to completing their square for this offering to the Winterberry Head, Heart, and Hands auction.



Highlights From Hybrid, Ms. Julie



Dear Winterberry Community,

This year I took advantage of the invitation to meet with all the specialty teachers to discuss my 7th grade student, Camper. It was incredibly illuminating! As a person who has been a parent in the school since the beginning I know there are a lot of questions about how Waldorf education works. A school without the traditional grading system and no textbooks????!! I realized that this opportunity, to sit down with these specialists, is essential to understanding a Waldorf education and how it truly delivers an education to the whole child. What does a 7th grader learn in Handwork? Movement, Spanish and Music? How is that related to each day's main lesson?

By meeting with each specialty teacher I was able to get a clear perspective on my child's growth at our school. I really appreciated each teacher taking the time to sit with me and I was surprised by some of the things I learned. Not only did I get to know more about these teachers and what it is like to teach these important subjects but I was also able to get a detailed account of how Camper is doing in their classes. It was great to hear about the things he is enjoying and get information about areas we might want to work on or talk about at home.

If you can, and I know it can be challenging to find the time, please try to meet with them. Music, Movement, Handwork and Language are all essential to a Waldorf education. Combined with the main lesson they are the parts that make up the whole. Like all the faculty at Winterberry, these teachers are giving more than 100 percent to our school. They are passionate about their subjects and Waldorf methods.

Happy Conference Week! Marya Pillifant, Grade 7 Parent

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

As you know, we are a public school and in large part our funding comes from what is referred to the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

Right now in the State Legislature, there two bills, HB339 and HB287, that affect this critical funding source - not just for Winterberry but for all public schools across the state of Alaska. There is no better way to support the financial stance of our school than to support BSA funding and timing of funding decisions.

HB 339, which proposes a \$100 increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA), and HB287, which would appropriate next year's funding for pre-K through 12 Public education early, and at the same level as this year.

We encourage you to learn as much as you can about this issue by going to the [Great Alaska Schools website](#) and signing up for their newsletter to be notified directly about these issues and how to help.

Kindergarten, Ms. Lisa

Kindergarten remains a busy and happy place. At the beginning of February our Nature Walk Thursdays changed into Ski Days. With significant help from the Kastning family, the generous loan of skis and boots from a local program called SKIKU, and the tireless and treasured assistance of all of our superb parent volunteers, every last one of our kindergarten children has been able to venture out every week on skis. On the morning of our ski days, we spend our circle time getting our feet into the right socks (sometimes the ones right off Ms. Lisa's own feet) and then into the right boots. On our first day, this process took 45 minutes – now we are shaved down to a little less than 10 minutes; no small feat (no pun intended) for 40 little feet to get into the right boots and get firmly laced up. We are venturing further and further afield and have made it through the un-trailed woods, all the way to the APU field and through shin-deep fresh powder. Our 3rd ski day we were joined by members of the UAA ski team and the UAA SeaWolf mascot Spirit. The children have learned how to get their boots on and tied up tight, how to work the bindings



of their skis, how to glide on one foot at a time, how to fall safely and then get back up, how to duck-walk up a hill and how to stop before running any one over. Their enthusiasm fills me with delight and we all look forward to our weekly adventure.

NEWS FROM OUR SPECIALITY CLASSES:

Spanish, Maestra Baker

Maestra Baker continues to work with all grades on their Spanish acquisition and cultural awareness. First grade already knows a variety of songs and simple phrases in Spanish and second grade is creating simple main lesson book pages. Upper grades are learning vocabulary to talk about their daily routines. Maestra Baker is looking forward to a week-long school visit during spring break at the Waldorf School of Cuernavaca, México where she will be observing classes and collaborating with teachers.

Music Teacher, Mr. Lind

Listed are some music lesson highlights Mr. Lind is especially proud of for Winterberry students accomplishing; if you have a student in a

corresponding grade, ask your student about: Grade 1: singing Alaska's Flag, Grade 3: Bad Bag (Hot Cross Buns in 4 ways) on recorder, Grade 4: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star on recorder, Grade 5: Midnight Snack on Orff instrument(s), Grade 6: Is Anybody Out There on Orff instrument(s), Grade 7: The Gift to be Simple on recorder, Grade 8: successful performance in December of The Gift to be Simple and J'ai Du Bon Tabac on recorder, audience being the 1st grade students.

The accomplishments are also accompanied by challenges; Mr. Lind's current focus is classroom demographics---since he travels from room-to-room, the furniture setup can negatively impact music lesson performance. Mr. Lind is ever-seeking respectful, responsible, and safe ways to adjust each room's environment and lesson plan(s) during music sessions.

Although this is only Mr. Lind's 2nd year at Winterberry, he has obtained a clear picture of what Winterberry students are capable of from both music classes and Winterberry community events; he feels fortunate to work with such gifted young musicians.

Handwork Teacher, Ms. Robicheaux

The Winterberry Community came out to celebrate the Knitting and Crochet Challenge the first week in February. At least 80 beautiful handmade items were made to be given to Catholic Social Services.

I am very appreciate of those handworkers who so happily gave of their time and their talents in order to help others.

Here is a little sampling of items that were donated. Thank you, All!!



Movement Teacher, Mr. Anderson

The bibs are washed, far fewer poles litter the hallway and I have managed to track down most of the tubes of kick wax that have been gunking up my pockets for weeks. That's right, the cross-country ski season has come to an exciting end, but more on that later! We must first focus on process not outcome (Thanks, **Calisa!**). That message, of process before outcome, was embodied by the Connoisseur of Cross-Country, the Scholar of Skating, the Victor of V2 (and V1), the Hotshot of the Herring Bone, The Dominator of the Double Pole, The Wizard of Wax, our own **Galen Johnson**. We were all benefited by his knowledge, attitude and experience, but no one more than myself! Thank you **Galen!**

The kids' growth was astounding! While I can't call out everyone by name I would like to recognize a few:

Satchel, **Amelia** will taunt you no more! Your passion

for skiing has eclipsed your passion for talking while Galen is talking! **Sam**, while 17th may not be "good enough" for you it was good enough to put us one lousy point behind Romig! Your growth and dedication over the last two years are unrivaled. **Bryce**, welcome to your new role as skier, participator and teammate, it suits you! To our "**B and C**" skiers, your enthusiasm will fill the void left by the departing 8th graders, and let me officially welcome you to "A!" **Willa**, or should I say Skade, good luck as you move on to pester other coaches and enjoy a lifetime of skiing!

Now we get to outcome! In relays the team of **Noah**, **Fern**, **Rowan** and **Maria** managed to finish only 7 seconds behind the first place team and more than a minute ahead of fourth! The results in championships were even more exciting! For the first time in Winterberry history Winterberry boys finished 1-2 and **Rowan** completed his undefeated season winning all the Besh Cup Races as well as Middle school races. For the girls, **Maria** simply ran out of race course as she pursued the 1st place girl and finished second overall. We will certainly miss the leadership that **Ms. Christenson's** class has brought us but look forward to others filling those roles and the enthusiasm and ability **Mr. Dyer's** students will bring us!

