

# Messenger

Summerfield | WALDORF SCHOOL AND FARM

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## Growing Up in the Digital Age

SCREENAGERS MOVIE COMES TO SUMMERFIELD

By Kate Hammond,  
Parent and Adult Educator

Last week, about 100 people enjoyed a showing of the movie *Screenagers* at Summerfield, followed by a panel discussion. The day before, students from Grades 7-12 watched the movie and had much to say on the issues it brought up. On the night of our showing, there were community screenings in 15 different locations, including Chicago, Philadelphia, various cities in California, Washington, and even in New Zealand! How interactive media is effecting us and our children is in the forefront of many parents' minds—one of our panel of speakers, filmmaker Paul Zehrer (creator of the short movie *Media and Waldorf Education*, available on YouTube), reported that, based on his recent interviews of teachers at the International Conference for Waldorf Education, this is a worldwide concern. One of the intentions behind the film is to stimulate community conversation and sharing, and we certainly met as a community here at Summerfield when we followed our own provocative screening with a lively discussion!

*Screenagers* follows the journey of a mother (Delaney Ruston, a physician by profession) who is considering buying a 'smart phone' for her 12-year-old daughter. Delaney is concerned about giving Tessa a phone, based on her observations of just how absorbed young people become with their devices. So she begins to investigate



what having this phone will mean for her daughter.

The “pull” of technology was a theme throughout the movie, and one that we as parents could all relate to. A question came up in the discussion: “Would gradual introduction of electronic media serve to minimize the urge to ‘binge’ once the teenager has full access?” Summerfield Class Six teacher Saskia Pothof spoke about how a sense of discretion and self-regulation matures throughout the teenage years—she shared that her daughter, who waited until her late teens to have her first phone, easily picked up the technology skills, and also showed herself able to use self-control. If teenagers first develop a solid sense of their own well-being, they will be much better equipped to deal with the “pull” of technology as young adults.

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### JUNE EDITION AS WELL!

Please note there will be one more edition of *The Messenger* this year, published on Monday, June 6, which will include more on the ...

### SENIOR GRADUATION

The Twelfth Grade graduation will be held in the Circus Tent on **Sunday, June 12 at 10am**. The keynote speaker will be America Worden. The graduates will each speak, and perform together in song. Refreshments will follow at Sophia Hall. Please join us in celebrating the accomplishments of the Class of 2016!

# Governance Council Update

By Bob Flagg, on behalf of the Governance Council

This has been a very demanding but ultimately instructive year for the Governance Council as we have navigated a range of challenging issues. We have communicated with the community more frequently this year through email, rather than using our quarterly slot in *The Messenger*, but wanted to close the year with an overview.

For anyone who does not know what the Governance Council is and what it does (see the accompanying article on the school's governance), it is a decision-making body, representing the three main sections of the school: Early Childhood, Lower School and High School. Governance Council is mandated by the Board of Directors to oversee, coordinate and finalize decisions in all matters concerning the day-to-day administrative and educational life of Summerfield. From each of the sections' Core Groups come the three representatives who comprise the Governance Council, currently Catherine Schlager for Early Childhood, Jamie Lloyd for the Lower School and myself, Bob Flagg, for the High School. Ignacio Garat, our Business Manager, is our administrative consultant, while school Registrar Cathy Torres acts as scribe. Many of the issues to be decided upon come to us as recommendations from the section Core Groups.

As happens every year at this time, the Governance Council is actively involved in the transitioning of faculty and staff, as some colleagues inevitably move on and we go through our hiring processes. Each section brings recommendations for hire to Governance Council for consideration and final decision.

We are also listening to parents seeking to clarify how they can offer their support to the school, and we have been weighing how parents can best contribute in our self-governance structure. Our very active Class Representatives parent group coordinates volunteer efforts amongst the parents of each class, and facilitates communication between the administration and the parent body—we thank this group immensely for its consistent supportive work this year. One idea that we are exploring is to reinvigorate an existing ombuds process. We are also reviewing policies and looking at safety enhancements throughout the school.

We would like to offer our thanks and appreciation for the patience and trust the parent body as a whole has given the Governance Council in doing its difficult work. We, and the other groups holding the school, do our best with equanimity around some very sensitive issues. This is intense, delicate work, but we feel well supported by the faculty, staff, Board, and parents.

In closing, we would like to wish all the families in the school a healing and renewing summer, and we greatly look forward to next year with twelve thriving grades, pre-school, kindergarten, and farm, all enlivened by the wonderful students we serve. We have much to be grateful for!

## A Familiar Face Returns to White Rose!

Many of you will have heard that Miss Cynthia is leaving us at the end of this year—her warm, artistic, and caring nature will be missed by all. The Early Childhood faculty is delighted to share the good news that Rachel McGarva has accepted the position to step into Cynthia's shoes as Lead White Rose Kindergarten Teacher. We are pleased that such a fine and experienced teacher will take up this most important work in Summerfield's Kinder Village.



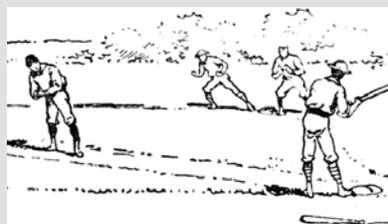
Awakening to the depth and breadth and wholeness of Waldorf education was a life-changing revelation for Rachel, and she has pursued extensive training. She did the Foundation Year through Rudolph Steiner College, the LifeWays Early Childhood Training and the Center of Educational Renewal Teacher Training. During these years of study, Rachel also had a home program for young children and then went on to work as an assistant in the White Rose Kindergarten here. She was actually offered the Lead Teacher position in White Rose when Miss Thalia retired, but had to decline—or as it turns out, postpone!—when blessed with a third child.

Working with children in this magical time of their lives and being able to offer them stories and games that make their eyes shine with wonder is one of Rachel's greatest loves. She looks forward, with delight, to her return to the children and to a school that offers an education that cultivates a child's blossoming self at each moment of their lives.

~ Sarah Whitmore, on behalf of the Early Childhood Support Group

## Eighth Grade vs Faculty & Staff Softball Game

Come cheer on teachers and students in our annual softball game on Wednesday, June 8, from 11am-12:45pm. Everyone is welcome! ~ Don Basmajian



## NEW LOWER SCHOOL COORDINATOR

Our aims here at Summerfield are to prepare a new kind of human being: free thinking, responsible, engaged, and creative. We do that by surrounding our students with adults who practice these same capacities, and care deeply about the children and their development, and thus we are self-governed, a school led by teachers.

Jamie Lloyd, who has been our Lower School Coordinator since 2013, is moving on to a new position at another school. At this critical time in the school's biography, the Lower School faculty thought it particularly important that a current teacher at Summerfield step into the role. Kibby MacKinnon, who is just about to finish teaching the Eighth Grade and was anticipating cycling around to teach the rising First Grade, was the unanimous choice to take on this key role.

As well as being a class teacher for five years, Kibby MacKinnon has served on the Lower School Support Group (LSSG) and the Board at Summerfield, and has extensive experience in leadership, communication and engaged communities. She was executive director of the Seattle Fringe Theatre Festival for five years, served on the executive committees of four non-profit boards, and helped create and was actively involved in various cohousing communities in Seattle for 10 years before moving down to Summerfield with her family in 2011. She holds a BA in Humanities from New College of Florida and a Masters Diploma in community-based theatre from Victoria College of the Arts, Australia. She completed her Waldorf Grades teacher training at Sound Circle Center in Seattle and the Curative Education course at Mulberry Farm.



Kibby and the faculty met with the rising First Grade parents to deliver this news in person on May 13, and we appreciate the gracious understanding and support shown by all. She is already working with the LSSG on the new hires. Once her class graduates on June 11, we anticipate a seamless transition over the summer and look forward with confidence and renewed energy to the next school year.

~ Jamie Lloyd, Cody Smout, Laura Sternik, Isabel Wundsam of the Lower School Support Group

## NEW ADMISSIONS DIRECTOR

### Welcome to Douglas Struble

Douglas will be joining the Summerfield Community this summer, along with his wife and young son, as our new Admissions Director. In his new role, Douglas will be working closely with the newly Board-formed Communications/PR/Marketing committee, bringing insight to the group garnered from a unique mix of experiences, which includes working as a teacher and enrollment director at two different Bay Area Waldorf schools, as well as working in the graphic/website design and marketing fields.



Douglas graduated with a B.A. in Art Studio from UC Davis, after which he moved to Europe to travel and build a graphic design portfolio. Returning to San Francisco, he worked as a graphic/web designer and hosted salon-style teas called etcTea in his home and garden. At these gatherings, he was introduced to the works of Rudolph Steiner and Waldorf education. He was inspired to enroll in the Waldorf teacher-training program at Rudolf Steiner College and began working as the enrollment director at Waldorf School of the Peninsula in Los Altos. Recently, he has been living in Mill Valley with his wife Leslie (a former Waldorf gardening teacher) and son Leo (a future Waldorf student) and working at the Greenwood School as a main lesson, art, woodworking and digital literacy teacher.

Douglas grew up on a family farm, playing in the fields and orchards, climbing trees and generally getting dirty. He mentioned, while walking around Summerfield, that he was brought back to that warm and innocent time, except his family farm never had a circus tent, which is quite exciting!

We're happy to welcome Douglas and his family to Summerfield and look forward to the new and varied perspectives and know-how he will offer our community.

~ Andrea Trinei, Office Manager & HR

# FAREWELL TO DEPARTING FACULTY & STAFF

As happens every year, we find ourselves bidding a sad but fond farewell to staff and faculty who are moving on to new things. We wanted to acknowledge the many years of dedicated service these dear people have given to Summerfield. We will miss you!

## FROM ADMINISTRATION

### Sallie Miller

It was the summer of 2007, and staff at Summerfield knew immediately that Sallie's warmth, enthusiasm, compassion, and impeccable aesthetic, along with her enthusiasm for and knowledge of Waldorf education, would make her an excellent choice to greet and welcome prospective new families as Admissions Director. Sallie has worked intimately with all parts of the school and has shared her creativity and joy with everyone. We give great gratitude for all of Sallie's work at Summerfield. We will all miss her, and we wish her well in her new endeavors! ~ *Tracy Saucier*



### Jamie Lloyd

Jamie Lloyd's unflinching dedication, humble service, and attention to detail, in a very demanding position, has been a great blessing and gift to the school. During his three years at Summerfield, Jamie's steady, selfless attention on what is most needed, along with his infectious laughter, has



supported the school through the most difficult times. Jamie will be taking the Administrator position at Woodland Star beginning July 2016, and we know how fortunate they are to have him there. Thank you, Jamie, and many blessings on your new position! ~ *Tracy Saucier*



## FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD

### Cynthia Vargas

We bid a fond farewell to our dear White Rose kindergarten teacher, Miss Cynthia. She brought much love and joyful caring to the children in her charge. Thank you Miss Cynthia for your warmth, your smile, your amazing storytelling and gracious presence. Buena suerte y amor! ~ *Catherine Schlager*



### Elizabeth Emory

We wish our Red Rose kindergarten assistant, Miss Elizabeth, a most fond farewell as she takes up her new work focusing on the remedial needs of the young child. Miss Elizabeth's deep love for children, her calm presence and angelic voice have graced the Red Rose kindergarten for five years and she will be missed ever so much. ~ *Catherine Schlager*



## FROM LOWER SCHOOL

### Annemarie Goslow-Zwicker

Annemarie will also be leaving Summerfield after taking her class from first through fifth grade. She has led her class with great thoughtfulness, creativity and care. For the past two years, Annemarie also led the College of Teachers, where her excellent organizational skills, flexibility, and creativity were greatly appreciated. We wish Annemarie all the best! ~ *Tracy Saucier*



## FROM HIGH SCHOOL

### Heather Concoff

Summerfield would like to extend gratitude to Heather for the ten years of service she has given in many roles in the high school. Although hired as a College Counselor and Registrar, she has also been the Guidance Counselor for grades 9-12 at different times and served on the HS Core Group. Heather has anchored every Accreditation team since her arrival, and supported many student activities and clubs from after school study sessions to "secret santas", the prom, and student government. Her wide-ranging competence, warm smile and gracious welcome will be much missed at Summerfield. Thank you, Heather! ~ *Beth Weisburn*



### Sandra Mitchell

Sandra has brought warmth, dedication and integrity to her work here at Summerfield. Her enthusiasm and energy to work creatively have infused her lessons both as a high school Spanish teacher and an aftercare teacher. Thank you, Sandra—we extend warm wishes to you and your family on your new adventure! ~ *Molly Sierra*

## FROM THE MUSIC FACULTY

### Cynthia Albers

We also wish Cynthia Albers warm wishes on her "retirement". Her high expectations and standards challenged students to give their best. The performances she led at Weill Hall and here at Summerfield, demonstrated the success the students were able to achieve under her leadership. ~ *Tracy Saucier*



### Maureen Caisse

Maureen, or 'Miss Mo' as she is fondly known by the students, has taught cello to grades four and five for ten years at Summerfield. She has brought hundreds of children incredible skills and will always be remembered as a strong teacher and cello enthusiast! ~ *Deborah Friedman*





## We Proudly Announce the Commencement of the 2016 Eighth Grade Class on Saturday, June 11, at 11am, in Sophia Hall

Luna Arteaga-Laak • Peter Bannister • Nathan Berger • Isabella Brenner • Antonio Carrillo • Nina Cauntay • Abigail Grundy • Reed Hays • Kai Hensley • Audrey Hollinger • Colby Houser • Aidan Kelly • Roman Krause • Joao Mesquita • Ella Morgan • Juan Armando Ramos • Gavin Sellors • Eva Silberstein • Joell Vaca • Lukas Westman • Colin Williams • Emily Young • Hudson Yoxall



## May Faire Appreciations

*By Andrea Jolicoeur, Lower School Secretary*

It is so wonderful to come together and create a day filled with flowers and music, dancing, games, and the sharing of food and each other's company. And it couldn't happen without the help of so many people!

A big, warm thank you is due our amazing May Faire Committee of first and second grade parents: Kristin McClung, Holly Trivan, Michelle Saxton, Patty Enochian and Julie Milcoff—your care and hard work made our Faire shine!



Thank you to all the faculty and staff who played a part—especially Skeydrit, Deborah, Ignacio and Craig. Thank you to all the activity organizers and helpers, the cooks and bakers, musicians and decorators, heavy lifters, parking attendants, and countless others who made this event happen—too many to name, but we know who you are, and I hope you know how much we appreciate what you do for the children by helping out with May Faire!

*Thank you to our official photographer Kristin McClung. Photos from the event available in the Main Office.*

## Accepted College List for Class of 2016

*By Heather Concoff, HS Counselor*

All of our students are college bound! Below is the impressive list of colleges where our students have been accepted. This is quite a coup for a group of 18 graduates. Please join us in congratulating our entire Senior Class on their achievements!

American University	Seattle University
Barnard College	Sonoma State University
Carleton College	Southern Oregon University
Chapman University	UC Berkeley
Chico State University	UC Merced
Eckerd College	UC Santa Barbara
Evergreen State University	UC Santa Cruz
Franklin & Marshall Coll.	UC San Diego
Grinnell College	University of Arizona
Hamilton College	University of British Columbia
Humboldt State University	University of Oregon
Kenyon College	University of Puget Sound
Lewis & Clark College	University of Redlands
Linfield College	University of San Francisco
McGill University, Canada	University of Southern California
Macalester College	University of Victoria
Mass College of Pharmacy/Health Sci	Wesleyan University
Montana State University	Western Oregon University
Oberlin College	Western Washington University
Oberlin Conservatory	Whitman College
Occidental College	Willamette University
Oregon State University	& our wonderful Santa Rosa Junior College!
Pitzer College	
Portland State University	
St. Olaf College	
Scripps College	

## NEWS FROM THE BOARD

*Every year in May, elections to the Board mean a new roster of Board members and new officers holding Board positions. This year also sees the retirement from the Board of two of our most dedicated and longstanding servants ...*



PHOTO BY MIGUEL SALMERON

FROM ERIKA STUART

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to acknowledge two incredible people who have served on the board for many years: Jeffrey Westman and Jefferson Buller (*pictured above*). Every May, we elect new officers to the board, and this year, Jeffrey and Jefferson are stepping down from their official board positions of President and Vice-President.

For those who may not have worked with them on school matters, Jefferson and Jeffrey often provided the spark of ideas, and the sustained attention to bring those ideas to light. In the past four years alone, they have contributed to the efforts behind the recent road and ADA (American Disabilities Act) campus improvements, the new septic system, and the Art Tech building—all while managing Summerfield's long-term financial stability, revitalizing the school's development work, coaching sports teams to winning seasons, and on at least one occasion, rounding up farm animals. They bring their professional expertise to situations, whenever and wherever it is needed, and show their personal dedication to the school at every turn. Their service on the board, and to the school, is greatly appreciated.

~ Erika Stuart, *Incoming President*

FROM GLENN BERGER

Many of you may know Jeffrey Westman and Jefferson Buller only as those charming men with the microphones at Farm to Feast who ask for money. And ask. And ask. And ask.

But as they wrap up a collective *two decades* of service on the SWSF Board of Directors (most recently as President and Vice-President) this might be a good time to point out how much these guys give. And give. And give.

I've known both men since my family moved to Sonoma County nine years ago. We are friends. Our children are friends. And yet we never seem to see enough of each other. And, frankly, I was beginning to suspect that they just didn't like me all that much. Well, this past year I joined the Board and discovered what Jeffrey and Jefferson were doing with all their free time! Board meetings... committee meetings... meetings with Banks... meetings with donors... impromptu meetings with parents in the parking lot... "quick" phone calls that lasted hours...

I was humbled by the time and energy these men gave to the school. (And relieved that it turns out they really were busy... and weren't just trying to avoid spending time with me.)

This school depends on volunteers. And I know that our community is filled with parents who are generous with their time—heck, I'm married to one of them—but the fact that I was so unaware of the truly massive amount of work these friends were doing behind the scenes makes me think that most of you aren't aware of it, either.

Jeffrey, Jefferson... On behalf of those of us who benefited from your efforts all these years... *thank you*. On behalf of those of us whose jobs will now be

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The SWSF Board of Directors is made up of a maximum of 17 members, 8 of whom are elected by the faculty, and 9 of whom represent the corporation (all of the parent community are eligible to be corporation members if they sign up).

'Interested' parties—anyone who holds a position at the school or has a spouse paid by the school—have to come from amongst the faculty-elected contingent. The corporation elects 'non-interested' parties, namely those with no paid connection to the school.

In addition to Jeffrey and Jefferson, other departing Board members are Julia McIlroy, Alain Serkissian, and Paul Sloan who are terming out. Renate Lundberg and Kibby MacKinnon are stepping down (Kibby because the LS Coordinator cannot be a Board member).

Newly elected members of the Board, as elected by the corporation, are Gina Martinelli (parent of Grace and Gianna) and George Wells (parent of Lucia). David Bloom (father of Zebi and Elan), and Dawn Ross (mother of Joshua) were re-elected. Erika Stuart was appointed by the Board for another term, and Chris Tara-Browne (father of Daniel and Alex) is a new Board appointment filling an empty seat.

The Board's officers for 2016-17 are: Erika Stuart (President), John Mutz (Vice-President), Paul Zehrer (Treasurer), David Bloom (Secretary), Dawn Ross (At-Large).

Glenn Berger, Dan Westphal, and Sarah Whitmore will continue to serve on the Board until elections next year, while Eric Rossin is up for re-election on the faculty ballot, currently in process.

~ David Bloom, *Secretary*

that much harder in your absence... *darn you!*

Your energy, experience and wisdom during Board meetings will be missed. But the Board's loss is my gain. Maybe we can finally have lunch?

~ Glenn Berger, *Board Member*

## SENIOR PLAY

# The Good Woman of Setzuan

BY BERTOLT BRECHT



BERTOLT BRECHT ©

Situated in westernized China, the play begins with Wong the water carrier, who is awaiting the rumored arrival of several gods. But when they arrive they are recognized and offered shelter only by Wong and the prostitute Shen Te.

As in many such fables, Shen Te is rewarded for her goodness with a gift (here, a small tobacco shop). But the shop is at the same time a test: Will providing her with modest but adequate means enable Shen Te to remain good and thus renew the gods' confidence in humanity?

In this masterpiece of questions without easy answers, we find a perfect reflection of one the graduating Seniors are faced with: "How shall I bring my wholeness into the world?"

Join the Graduating Class of 2016 as they explore, embody, and present as their final work together, Bertolt Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*.

~ Kevin Simmons,  
High School Drama Teacher

PERFORMANCES IN SOPHIA HALL:

**Wednesday, June 8, at 7:00pm**  
**Thursday, June 9, at 7:00pm**

Free admission but donations welcome to benefit the SWS Theatre Department. Suitability: this play deals with mature themes. Recommended only for seventh grade upwards.

(Portions of the above text adapted from Hirsch and Rainer, Dartmouth College)

## CREATIVE WRITING IN THE SEVENTH GRADE

# Five Minute Poems

Recently, during a creative writing main lesson, the seventh graders spent a short amount of time sitting somewhere outside on their own. Their instructions were simple: using all of your senses, observe what is here. What do you notice? What thoughts wander through your mind? What images do your sensory awareness evoke?

These observations were written down in a stream-of-consciousness fashion and later edited to build some of the delightful poems you will find on this page.

~ Laura Sternik, Seventh Grade Teacher

There are tiny purple flowers  
Hidden in between blades of grass  
The loud plane echoes  
Through the grey sky.  
Morning dew  
Droplets are rolling off a leaf  
Footprints in the sand  
Deep.  
A ladybug is crawling on leaves  
The trees branch out  
They reach to the sky.

—Liditza Saldana

The sound of birdsong fills my ears.  
Ragged oak tree on the verge of  
adulthood, slightly growing,  
Swaying,  
Blowing.  
The clouds race past in their own time,  
The newly cut bushes smelling of  
sweetness.  
Soaring higher and higher, a bird flies,  
Catching wind  
Transforming.  
The snap of twigs  
The tap of wood,  
The sounds falling, splitting into 1000  
pieces.  
Moving  
Whittling its way, until gone.  
The world forever changed because of a  
small sound.

—Ella Buller

Heavy mist dusts my face,  
Grey light shining.  
Brown dry plant  
Battered and withered through long winter  
storms and cold.  
Muddy flat.  
Playing ball, long forgotten.  
Bud scattered through empty sky by the wind,  
Neglected messengers.  
Donkeys cry out  
Through dismal grey mist.  
Trees lashed about  
By the wind,  
Sound like an angry ocean.

—Uma Baker

The dew is moist, calm and still,  
The sun is burning bright, like a candle.  
I hear a plane in the distance,  
Circling the airport,  
Scared to land,  
Only because nature can be cruel,  
Which it was in this moment:  
It sent high winds to wreck the plane,  
But too late  
The plane had landed.  
The wind sent two birds  
Flying to the sea,  
And that is why  
There are so many birds over the ocean.  
Winter is ending.  
The dirt is all dry and worn out.  
Luckily the rain will come and save our souls!  
Nature can also be loving and beautiful.

—Gabe Gelsman

# Teaching from Freedom: The Concept of Self-Governance

OR, WHO REALLY MAKES THE DECISIONS AROUND HERE?

By Adam MacKinnon, Editor

As we near the end of what has been a challenging year at the school, one that has brought both successes and triumphs as well as trauma and upheaval in different ways, I felt as Messenger Editor that it might be a helpful time to take a close look at why the school is set up the way it is.

Researching this article led me into the literature on self-governance in Waldorf education, and it was eye-opening for me, even as a ten-year Waldorf parent (five years at Summerfield). In the process, I spoke with many of our faculty and staff, board members, and long-time parent volunteers. One thing came up from several of them, that when we undertake major renovations or improvements—in other words, when the earth is literally dug up—it has an elemental effect on our campus, and questions are raised about our organizational structure too.

## Joining A New Organization

My own family has been part of a number of intentional communities, of which we can certainly call a Waldorf School one. At each, we've spent several years absorbing their philosophy, and figuring out if they're the right fit for our own values. We've seen the difference between communities that can weather a crisis and those where people run for the hills.

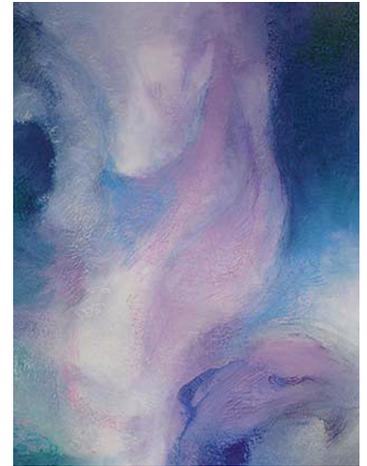
At each new community we've joined, I've had the urge to suggest changes, often in response to what has seemed, at an early glance, to be an incomprehensible way of doing things. But time, some greater perspective, and a gradual understanding of their institutional history, has helped me realize that their approaches made perfect sense for the organizations they had become.

When we first discovered Waldorf education, my wife and I were greatly relieved to have found what seemed like a haven from the rest of the world, a special place filled with beauty and wisdom. But we came to a gradual awakening to the fact that, however wonderful a school is, it's not perfect, and it's not insular. Everything that happens in the outside world happens here too.

What's special about this school is that we have a community of striving human beings consciously seeking ways to heal together and to make the best decisions possible in an imperfect world. It's a community that's trying very hard not to make decisions out of fear, something that seems to be happening in so many other places in our society.

It's certainly difficult to get a handle on how the school works, but I've learnt that it is held, and well-held, by circles of teachers and parents working hard to support the goal of a child-centered education.

Thinking about what it takes to understand and commit



THREEFOLD BY LEO KLEIN

to a new community, especially one that practices an unusual philosophy, led me to the story of the School of Pythagoras, something touched on in the middle school and high school curriculums. Initiates there had to undergo a period of observing only before they could participate. For the first five years, they weren't allowed to speak, and for the first three they had to observe from even outside the circle. They also had to give up all their worldly goods! Well, Summerfield doesn't ask that much from new families, but the notion of a period of respectful observation prior to asking for, or expecting changes, is one that makes sense in any organization, and especially in a school that has seen a lot in its 41 years of history.

## Why Waldorf Schools are Self-Governed

People often forget how radical Waldorf schooling is. Historically, education for the masses is relatively young. The first public schools can be seen as having been created in order to produce compliant factory workers, and the private independent schools were intended to produce the leaders for those factories. However, in 1921 in Austria, Rudolf Steiner intended Waldorf schools to be something entirely different, with a goal to produce free-thinking human beings who can advance the whole of humanity. And you simply cannot produce free-thinking human beings if you yourself are being told what to do (by a headmaster or a state-imposed structure). Children can only grow to freedom, creativity and responsibility if they are surrounded by adults who practice these same capacities.

So Steiner made it a core principle of Waldorf education that the schools should be run by teachers. Admittedly not all Waldorf schools follow this tenet, but it was, however, his clear intent:

“Thus we will give the school an administrative, not a governmental organizational structure, and manage it in a republican manner. In a true

teacher's republic we won't be able to simply lean back on the directives that come from above, but we will have to bring to bear what gives each of us the possibility to take full responsibility for what we have to do. Each must be fully responsible."

Jon McAlice, author of the excellent *Engaging Community*, and a former faculty member at the high school here, puts it this way,

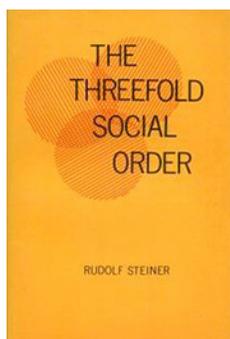
"Education, in Steiner's view, was not a policy issue like waging war or developing international treaties, but a question of individual human potential. Self-governance in education by those participating in the learning process was the means to ensure that this potential would not be channeled into fulfilling the needs of industry or the state. Education must be freed from the pressure to produce good citizens and workers in order to enable growing individuals to bring their own potential to expression. The task of schools must be to raise generations of children who can change society, drive its further evolution, not simply fit in and sustain it."

### The Threefold Social Order

One of Rudolf Steiner's many radical ideas was his concept of the Threefold Social Order. He said that there are three spheres in our society: the Cultural sphere, the Legal/Rights sphere, and the Economic sphere. Along with those spheres there are three ideals that were first championed in a major way in the Age of Revolutions, especially the French Revolution of 1789: these are Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Steiner held that each of these ideals has a place within a particular sphere in order for it to do the most good for humanity, and that when an ideal is misapplied it can have an opposite effect and do damage to the society.

So for example, if you try to apply Equality in the Cultural sphere, everyone has to have same beliefs, no-one can be smarter than anyone else, and there's no freedom of thought. If you apply Freedom to the Economic sphere then everyone can do what they want with no regard to anyone's else's welfare.

So Steiner's suggestion was that Fraternity belong in the Economic sphere since we are all inter-dependent (you need to have a market for a product, you need workers to manufacture it, etc); that Equality belong in the Legal/Rights sphere so that we all have the same basic rights and access to justice; and that Liberty (or Freedom) belongs in the Cultural sphere, so that we can think freely. This last sphere is where education belongs, in Steiner's view: schools are not there to produce workers



INSPIRATION BY LEO KLEIN

REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE ARTIST

or reflect the needs of the state (think of the corporate infiltration and state-mandated testing that affects public schools today), but to produce free-thinkers.

### So Why a Teacher's Republic and Not Other Models?

Summerfield did in fact go through a phase of having a School Administrator position; in fact, four people held the position over a period of a decade, but by common consensus, it didn't work. The individuals inevitably suffered burnout, as that person became a target for every complaint, and most critically, trust was almost impossible to maintain.

What about more parent control—can parents have a say in the running of the school? Well, as a non-profit, we have a Board of Directors consisting of parents, teachers and community members, and they have oversight of the school's legal and financial aspects. For the philosophical reasons outlined above, that's a logical place for parent involvement. In addition, there are practical reasons: I learned from one long-timer at the school that we did actually once have a Parent Council that had responsibility for hiring and firing. But we quickly found that no teachers were applying to work at our school any more!

In the early 2000's, the faculty went through a 3-year process of interim governance while discussing in depth how to restructure, and then came up with our current model of self-governance. It was a radical approach, born out of an impressive degree of intention and wisdom, and it has ultimately served as an inspiration to many other Waldorf schools throughout North America.

The thinking behind our structure was to create balancing forces to support the work of the teachers. On a simplistic level, the Governance Council (made up of active teachers) runs the school, making the management decisions on a day-to-day basis. The Governance Council takes its mandate from the Board of Directors, who themselves hold responsibility for legal and fiscal oversight, a construction that's required by our status as a non-profit corporation. The Board is made up of

*(Continued on Page Ten)*

## For the Michael Age

We must eradicate from the soul  
All fear and terror of what comes towards Man  
Out of the future  
And we must acquire serenity  
In all feelings and sensations about the future.  
We must look forward  
With absolute equanimity to everything that may come  
And we must think only that whatever comes  
Is given to us by a world directive full of wisdom.  
It is part of what we must learn in this age,  
Namely to live out of pure trust  
Without any security in existence.  
Trust in that ever present help of the spiritual world.  
Truly, nothing else will do  
If our courage is not to fail us.  
And we must seek this awakening within Ourselves  
Every morning and every evening.

— Rudolf Steiner

*(Continued from Page Nine)*

teachers, staff, parents and community members (often alumni). The dedicated parents and alumni who serve on the board bring their own special knowledge and skills from the outside world for the benefit of the school. Various sections of the school (Early Childhood, Lower School, High School, Farm, Circus, Administration) each have leadership core groups (or ‘support groups’) that mostly make their own decisions in a devolved manner—decisions that are then ratified by the Governance Council. The bigger decisions, or those that might affect the whole school, are sent to Governance Council. The intent, wherever possible, is to have decisions take place at the level, and with the people, most affected. It’s important to note that Governance Council members are not supposed to represent their core groups: when in Governance Council, they make decisions holding the best interests of the whole school.

And, at a deeper level, everyone is supported by the College of Teachers who hold the spiritual heart of the school and lend pedagogical wisdom to the deliberations of other groups. Widening the circle still further, the parent body first and then the greater community offer their trust and support in many varied ways.

This all might seem cumbersome and full of redundancy to the outsider, but the intention is all about how to hold everything in balance. That said, teachers, as well as the

Board, should periodically remind themselves of how it’s all supposed to work. Teachers can get caught up in their own world to the extent that the responses they give parents come across unwittingly as “We know Waldorf education best, so you can’t possibly understand the rationale for our decision.”

McAlice again, “Governance structures worthy of the ideal that lies at the core of the Waldorf educational impulse have one thing in common: They are there to support the striving individual. They are, in the best sense of the word, learning structures as opposed to control structures.”

### What Can Interested Parents Do?

“For parents their children are precious, and in sending them to a particular school they hope against hope that their children will be seen, loved, encouraged and educated to reach their potential. They also want to be able to understand the education their child is receiving and to be able to support it financially and with their time, energy and knowledge.”

— CHRISTOPHER SCHAEFER, AUTHOR OF  
*PARTNERSHIPS OF HOPE: BUILDING WALDORF SCHOOL COMMUNITIES*

The first thing I’d personally recommend is that we as a parent body educate ourselves. Read the Jon McAlice book *Engaged Community: The Challenge of Self-Governance in Waldorf Education*—it’s very interesting and accessible, and gives a great explanation of why it’s so important to hold onto this radical endeavor that we are a part of in maintaining a Waldorf school. Our job as parents is to bring our energy, knowledge, and above all our trust and faith in the teachers, knowing that every decision they make comes from a place that holds the child at the centre.

There is also a group of Class Representatives, made up of the class reps chosen by the teacher. They meet at least once-monthly with the aim of facilitating communication with administration and amongst classes. Together they share information and the knowledge of what’s worked for other classes in managing everything from festivals, volunteer commitments, and communication with parents. I had the chance to attend one of their meetings and saw first-hand the wide range of vital work they undertake as volunteers. If you’re looking to observe and get to know what’s happening at the school, this is a good place to start (and of course, the very process of volunteering is an invaluable way to find connection and engagement, and then understanding, in the community).

And to learn more about how the school is held in legal and fiscal matters, come and observe a Board meeting.

If you have concerns as a parent, the school does have a very clearly spelled-out procedure to raise them: speak to your class teacher as the first resource and then, if the issue is unresolved, contact the Coordinator for your area of the school. Only then, if further communication is needed,

a request may be placed for a meeting with the Core, or Support, Group for your part of the school.

The *School Handbook and Directory* (available online as well via the Parent Portal) has almost all the answers and, if you come up with a new question, asking Tracy in the main office will certainly lead you to the right person or group.

Ultimately Waldorf schools are based on trust. They can't operate without it. It's incumbent upon us all to give of that trust and to have faith. Not blind faith, but the kind of faith that comes from openness and from knowledge gained through experience.

Yes, we need to trust our teachers—but it's not about venerating them. It's our job as parents to read the materials that they send, attend parent evenings, come to community education events, bring questions or concerns directly, register yourself with the corporation of the school so you can vote for the board, really embrace the school's media policy, take a look at the books suggested at the end of this article—these are important ways in which you can trust your teacher.

Summerfield holds a strong value in working together and in bringing concerns directly to the people involved. It's a culture that has stemmed from the work many teachers and parents have done with Social Inclusion—the programs of Kim John Payne—and the school asks that parents practice those same approaches with other adults that are taught to the students. Payne teaches a simple formula: in talking about another person, ask yourself: is it kind, necessary and true? If it doesn't pass the test, it doesn't need to be said.

The year that we've been through presents an opportunity for renewal. A number of faculty, board, and staff members are moving in new directions, and that creates an opportunity for the school to find renewal, to reiterate our commitment to what it is that has brought us all to this place, and to the dreams we have for our children.

The structure of the school may at times seem lumpy and imperfect, but it's an 'imperfect' that's essential in order to truly be a Waldorf school. And it's an 'imperfect' held by striving human beings who recognize there is always room for improvement.

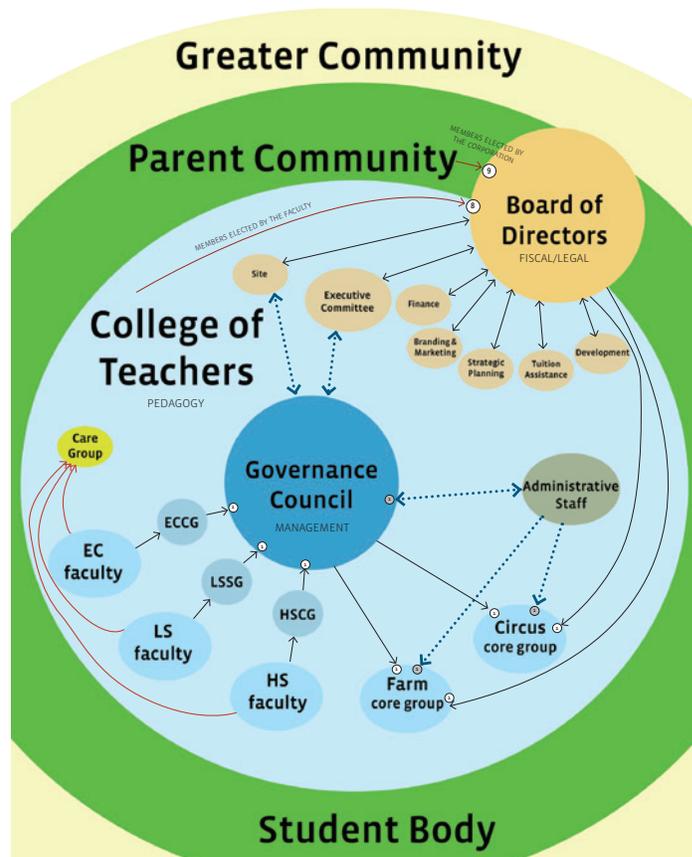
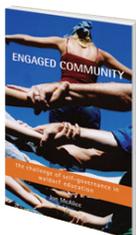
The message I have taken away from all my research is: practice direct communication, have an interest in learning how things work, and make a choice to work in trust and faith together.

*Further Reading:*

Jon McAlice, *Engaged Community: The Challenge of Self-Governance in Waldorf Education* (Lindisfarne Books, 2013).

Christopher Schaefer, *Partnerships of Hope: Building Waldorf School Communities* (AWSNA, 2012)

Torin Finser, *School Renewal: A Spiritual Journey for Change* (Anthroposophic Press, 2001)



THE AUTHOR'S OWN 'IMPERFECT' IMPRESSION OF OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AS A DIAGRAM. SOLID LINES INDICATE REPRESENTATION FROM ONE GROUP TO ANOTHER, DOTTED LINES INDICATE A CONSULTATIVE RELATIONSHIP. NOTE: BOARD COMMITTEES OFTEN INCLUDE FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBERS. LARGE VERSION CAN BE VIEWED ONLINE HERE.

Dating back to 2002, the SWSF governance structure reflects the nature of the school as a living, developing organism. It is a collaborative model with specific areas of work delegated to mandate groups, which strive to work with one another.

It is based upon the indications given in Rudolf Steiner's founding of the first Waldorf school, where there was a clear intention for the essential day-to-day management of the school to remain with those who were working most closely with the students: the teachers. So, rather than give authority to a principal or headmaster or have a democratic process of voting on decisions, ours is a republican model of governance.

For each section, a small mandate group, or core group, considers the will of the larger faculty, and consults experts as needed in making decisions. Governance Council must ratify section decisions which impact the whole school, and is tasked to act with a view of the whole school in mind.

The Board of Directors holds the fiscal and legal responsibility for the school, while the College—perceived as the spiritual heart of the school—is tasked with the work of anthroposophical and pedagogical research, as an academy of learning for teachers and staff. Questions might be brought to college for consideration or reflection that would then help inform decisions made by other groups.

While not perfect, and with the acknowledgement that clear communication is our ongoing work, our governance structure has been praised by AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America) accreditation teams as a healthy working model that serves Summerfield very well. AWSNA has noted that the model successfully entrusts representative core groups with decision-making mandates, which frees up section meetings and college work for child-study and deepening the philosophical foundations of the school.

# May's Summer Heralding

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE FARMYARD

By *Farmer Dan*

Daniel Berrigan, a well known peace-loving former priest who died last week, wrote that “If you want to be hopeful, you have to do hopeful things.” Hopeful things are what we try to do at school with our students every day. When we receive the children with reverence, educate them with love, and send them forth in freedom, we are doing hopeful things. The young Pakistani girl Malala, who was shot by the Taliban and recovered, receiving the Nobel Peace Prize at the tender age of 16, said in her Nobel speech that “A conscience exists in the world that extends beyond all boundaries. It says that children have a right to childhood.” Essentially, Waldorf education strives to preserve that sacred right that so many of us have personally enjoyed. That right to a healthy childhood.

Today on the farm, the Kindergarteners were gathering and topping beets for our cow, May, who has a new calf and likes to stand munching on fresh beets while being milked. Somehow the kids managed to meander over into the strawberry patch, so we decided to have a little snack ourselves while we were at it and, as the juice dripped down their sweet and mischievous faces, we all watched Farmer Dana preparing the beds for the third grade potato planting later in the day. After taking our last romp through the maze that

was scythed into the towering cover crop of bell beans, peas, wild oats and vetch, we had a quiet (sort of) visit with the nine-day-old calf before gathering chicken and duck eggs. We shared a moment of gentle sadness when we entered the dark coop, with sunlight filtering in through the cobwebbed, chicken-wired windows, to find an older hen laying in her nest, drooped over the edge of the nesting box, obviously dead. And we mused together about her long and happy life on the farm, her abundant gifts of many eggs, and how the angels had called her home since, even in heaven, they love chickens. And then we gently carried her out into the sunlight to be laid to rest in the newly planted fields. And of course after a cold cup of fresh apple cider, we had a good round on the swings and climbed into the newly leafed-out walnut tree before heading back to the Kindergarten Village.

Soon the third graders arrived to plant out the entire potato crop—seven rows of Colorado golden spuds, under the ninety-degree California sun—that the sixth graders had cut up from seed potatoes the day before. It was hot work, rewarded by a treat of organic watermelon popsicles which seemed to cool everyone down before heading off to lunch. Right after lunch, out came the fourth graders to do a thorough cleaning of the duck pond and chicken coop in order to get everything spic and span for our Farm to Feast guests due the following weekend. Half of the class went to work with wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes, laying down a golden carpet of ten yards of yellow-bark chips to set the stage for the Farm to Feast tables, fortunately

under the newly emerged shady canopy of walnut leaves. While working, some of the students began reminiscing about their earlier years on the farm and wanted me to know that the dresses we had cut for them out of a pile of old feed sacks one day in first grade were still hanging in their bedrooms. Amazing!

“The natural world is by definition an incubator of creativity and offers or engenders ‘eureka’ moments when the brain is relaxed and in a positive state. Geniuses share one trait: transcendent experience in nature in their early years,” writes the nature writer Richard Louv. Outstanding, or standing outside ourselves, or “ek stasis” (ecstatic) moments are “radioactive jewels buried within us, emitting energy across the years of our lives,” writes Louise Chawla of the University of Colorado, and “such moments are often experienced during formative years.” Nature stimulates the mind and the soul and our love of place, and there is no electronic substitute, particularly for infants and young children. Exposure to the natural world restores the brain’s ability to pay attention, and it not only restores us, but excites us by stimulating all the senses. Focusing narrowly on a screen in front of one’s eyes blocks out many of the human senses which means being less alive. And what teacher or parent wants his or her child or student to be less alive? Who among us wants to be less alive? Even Steve Jobs, when asked by a reporter, “So, your kids must love the iPad?” responded, “They haven’t used it. We limit how much technology our kids use at home.” As a farmer and gardening teacher, I am only sharing Richard Louv’s insights, as summer holidays fast approach, with the gentle reminder that the more high-tech we become, the more nature we need. (Recommended is Mr. Louv’s new book *Vitamin N* which offers 500 ways to build a nature-rich life).

MAY AND HER NEW BABY CALF





A MEDIEVAL SOPHIA HALL FOR THE KNIGHTING CEREMONY

Oscar Wilde once famously said: “Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.” Recently, the sixth grade class took a step towards being themselves with a profoundly moving rite-of-passage “Knighting Ceremony” in Sophia Hall. After washing each other’s feet and silently walking a labyrinth in the Kindergarden yard, while parents decorated Sophia Hall in elegant and creative medieval fashion, parents,

teachers and family-friends gathered as each student presented, with sincerity and poise, a verbal picture of a task or service they had taken up to work on over several weeks to bolster an area in their lives that needed attention and strengthening. Their unflinchingly honest, courageous, warm and humorous presentations, graced with images from their fertile Waldorf years, were very moving and inspiring and worthy of the step they took from Squires to Knights in their community’s eyes and hearts.

For just a moment, try imagine a life where you are never bored. Popular stand-up comedian Jerrod Carmichael recently said that when he was young he had a special gift that one of his teachers inspired in him, and that was the gift of enthusiasm for figuring things out. Today with the third graders, we were trying to figure out how the wind pollinates corn from tassels and how bees pollinate almond blossoms from flowers. The seventh graders were trying to figure out how Algebra worked. The eighth graders were exploring Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and trying to grasp the secret impulse that draws us to one another before we know that person’s worth, and wrestling with whether it is love or conflict which creates the most inner disorder. Eurythmy students grappled with the meaning of the word ‘dance’, and whether just waving goodbye, or kneeling down to pray, or raising your fist in the air because you believe in something, was dancing. Education, according to Malala, “Gives you the power to question things. The power to challenge things. To be independent.” So much to learn...

Malala also spoke to the assembly of the United Nations, saying, “We realize the importance of light when we see darkness.” I think of this incredibly courageous young woman who has gone through so much but still stands tall and as I walk my puppy under the almost full moon and look up at it from the small park in my quiet neighborhood, inwardly musing to the moon that, as yet another school year winds down, “You’re the only thing that is the same.”

Summer’s richest and carefree blessings to all from the Summerfield farmyard.

Warmly, Farmer Dan

## Farm Guild

will continue to meet in the summer. Please join us for our Tuesday volunteer days. We work from about 9am–noon, breaking halfway for a potluck snack and food. We’re happy to help with your gardening questions, and you also get to leave with a basket full of produce. RSVP and questions to Farmer Dana at [dana@summerfieldwaldorf.org](mailto:dana@summerfieldwaldorf.org).



## Update on the Costume Cottage

A big “Thank You” to Simon and Yea-Yunn Turkalj, Kristi and David Bell, and Bill and Barb Kobabe for



their generous donations, including insulation, light switches, hanging rods, shelving, and flooring!

**The Costume Cottage** is located next to After Care—it was formerly the Music Storage Shed..

Below is an updated version of the materials we are still seeking. Help us create a weather-tight place for costumes!

- Cedar siding sealer (low VOC, clear)
- Door - 3ft. x 6ft. 8 in, outswinging
- Plywood, any width (10 sheets)
- 2 x 4’s
- Great Stuff (Gap Filler Insulating Foam Sealant)
- Electrical wiring
- 4 LED can lights - 6” preferred
- Electrical boxes (2 double; 2 single)
- Paint
- Wire shelving (24 ft.)
- Sheetrock for ceiling and walls
- Insulation (R19 or greater for ceiling and walls)

If you do not have these materials on hand, we will gladly accept cash donations to purchase items that are not donated.

Do you know anyone who is an HVAC specialist? We are looking for advice about purchasing and installing a temperature and humidity control system.

For donations, leads, or questions please call or email Colleen Wimmer at (510) 684-5143, [pomegranatetrail@hotmail.com](mailto:pomegranatetrail@hotmail.com).

In gratitude, *The Costume Guild*

# The Senior Project Presentations

TWELFTH GRADERS ON A CULMINATING EXPERIENCE OF THEIR TIME AT SWSF

By Adam MacKinnon, Editor

At the end of April, the senior class brought to the community presentations on their Senior Projects. Lasting in some cases over a year, these projects offer the twelfth graders the chance to explore a chosen topic in depth and experience methods of research that will serve them well in college and beyond. For most, their projects involve a great deal of practical activity too. *The Messenger* spoke to three of the Senior Class, Austin Kamin, Molly Lockwood and Theo Tebbutt, to learn more about their projects and what the experience gave them. (See the descriptions at right & on the next page)

## How did you find the process of working like this?

**Austin:** I like to take on big projects, not to come up with a finished product. For me it's all about the chance to acquire new skills, to learn and grow as a person.

I loved tackling something huge—something I knew I was probably incapable of doing. Going through the process... looking at a big block of wood and wondering what I am going to do with it to end up with an actual, functional cello! I read an enormous amount about the history of instrument-building, but it's different when faced with the block of wood! Although I didn't finish it, I've put in a lot of work. I felt like I was doing something outside school, for myself. It didn't feel like a school assignment at all. In fact, the school was pretty hands-off... until it came to the matter of writing the final paper.

## How do you see this kind of approach helping you at college and afterwards?

**Molly:** I know I'll have to reevaluate how to be zero-waste at college. But more important for me is the underlying change of values I've had. Living with less is the key for me: being a minimalist, pursuing other ways of living sustainably.

**Austin:** You see the world differently. I never noticed wood before. Now I look at every piece of wood, and I can see that it might have these properties. I think about how hard it might be, where the grain is, how it might be shaped. It's been such an immersion in the project, that it lasts... it really gets into your head.

**Molly:** I see everything differently since doing the senior project. I'll go into a store, and now it's a whole bunch of things that

are not necessary and just a few things that might be useful.

**Theo:** I enjoyed this challenge to my comfort zone. Miti Shamba has gone beyond a senior project to a life project. I am taking a Gap Year to further pursue my work in Kolunga Village, among other things. I will be serving as Project Developer, and have been put on the board of Kolunga Village Foundation. The whole process, including grant writing, has taught me quite a bit about the non-profit world and human capacity for resilience in the face of struggle.

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The students talked about the challenge of distilling the information they had learned for the purpose of a public presentation. For Austin and Theo, writing the final paper took them right out of the work. There was the feeling that they would rather have just pressed on with what they were doing. Molly, though, really appreciated the chance to step outside the project to write about it: "Writing the paper gave me clarity of thought."

For these seniors this is likely the first time they've researched a topic in such depth (at least a narrow one), and where they've had to synthesize the content of everything they knew for the benefit of others, an invaluable preparation for college and beyond.

Austin found that direct personal interviews with the cellists were the most rewarding part of his extensive research, in which he discovered things impossible to learn otherwise. The books on lutherie were amazing too, since many of them are old, rare and valuable. For Theo, his project opened up a new world of connections: on the basis of it, he was able to talk to a high-level NGO leader in

## Delving into the Art and History of Lutherie



AUSTIN KAMIN

In his role as principal cellist of the Santa Rosa Youth Symphony, Austin had the privilege of attending a masterclass with Christian

Poltéra, one of the world's leading cellists. Inspired by the chance to see up close his 305-year-old cello, built by Antonio Stradivari himself, Austin decided to delve into the world of Lutherie: the arcane processes of making some of the world's most difficult and most beautiful instruments. His goal was to find out how, and then to actually undertake himself, the making of a cello from scratch. He read extensively (some 200 hrs of research) on the history of cello-making and tracked down master cellists to hear about the provenance of their own instruments and find out more about how a cello reacts to being played. And then it was off to the garage, to start work on the monumental task of transforming a block of wood into an instrument capable of playing notes of divine perfection. He hasn't finished... yet... but the progress he made is incredibly impressive.



Washington D.C. who was heading off to give talks at the Paris Climate Summit. It was an introduction to how things get done out in the real world.

The students closed with insightful comments on how the Senior Projects represented a culmination of their high school experience, an independent working on skills they will need in later life. Austin said, "Yes, the purpose of schools is to give you these tools, but most schools don't require projects like this. For me, this felt like an accumulation of all the work we do here: it was really interdisciplinary, and we had to do it all on our own."

## Transcending Trash

MOLLY LOCKWOOD

Molly opened her presentation by showing the jam jar which contained the sum total of trash she had accumulated in the course of the year. She had taken a personal approach to exploring the ever-growing problem of trash and how it's affecting our planet. She spoke of how the service trip to Bhutan last year had opened her eyes... she'd seen how little value the people there placed on 'stuff' and yet how happy they were, and so resolved to learn more, go zero-waste, and share with others what she discovered. She found most habits easy to change and that, with a little research, there were package-free alternatives to just about every product. She took a jar and utensils with her everywhere, and helped spread the word by joining the Surfrider Foundation and travelling to schools to speak to students. In her part-time job at Taylor Maid Coffee Co., she became Head of Waste Abatement. She described how she now led a simpler and healthier life, and closed with a quote from Winston Churchill: "You can always count on Americans to do the right thing, having exhausted every other possibility."



## Miti Shamba: Agroforestry Nursery, Kenya

THEO TEBBUTT

Theo's project was economic in emphasis, but with a huge practical element, taking place overseas in Kenya. He was interested in exploring the relationship between 'power' and 'money' and got involved with a non-profit foundation in Kolunga Village, near Lake Victoria. It's a heavily deforested area badly affected by the AIDS epidemic, and he shared details of what their 'lose-lose' economic model meant in practice. Theo then spoke of how economic empowerment and regeneration might take place and outlined the development of small agro-forestry projects in which he participated, including the building of hippo-proof fences which, "actually, are more of a deterrent than anything, since it's pretty hard to stop a hippo!"



## Alumni News

*Lidia Tropeano (Class of 2011) has returned often to the school to speak, with great eloquence, at Open Houses and other events. Seeing her at this year's Senior Project presentations, cheering on her younger sister LiaSofia and her classmates, the Messenger asked her to reflect on her own senior project and what she learned at Summerfield, and to share what she's been up to since.*



As I sat among familiar and friendly faces at Summerfield to watch the Twelfth Grade class present their senior projects I was overjoyed to witness the students' passion and mastery. Memories of my own senior project five years ago came flooding back. I remember learning about myself in ways that surprised me. The need for determination, diving deep into a topic, continuously seeking support from my mentors and going within myself to ask questions.

The experience of taking on a senior project in high school influenced my desire to pursue a research thesis in college. At UC Santa Cruz I obtained a degree in Environmental Studies with a focus in sustainable agriculture. My passion for working on the land blossomed from tending gardens at Summerfield. I wanted to bring the skills that I learned throughout college to revitalize an elementary school garden in Watsonville. I worked intimately with my professor, the faculty and students at Calabasas Elementary School to develop an after-school program that would allow students to learn in an outdoor garden classroom and have more opportunities to try fresh, organic produce that we grew together.

As the program gained momentum throughout the year I established an internship for UCSC students to be involved and wrote grants to support the infrastructure of the garden. In collaboration with Calabasas Elementary School and UC Santa Cruz I helped facilitate the development of a community garden for families at the school. In the process of creating the after-school garden program, and researching and writing a thesis, I revisited lessons I learned from when I was at Summerfield. I sought support from my mentors, my professor, teachers at Calabasas and local farmers in Santa Cruz County. I reflected on my experiences and relationships at both school sites and learned more about experiential learning, organic gardening and food resilience.

As graduation approached I submitted my written research paper but the project itself was just beginning. With gratitude and excitement I was able to continue working with my professor on the project post graduation as the program coordinator and after-school garden educator at Calabasas Elementary School.

Diving into a thesis, in high school or college, is a wonderful opportunity to grow in a multitude of ways that will lead you into the next steps on your journey.

## 2016 Athletes of the Year

Four SWSF high schoolers were honored at the *The Press Democrat's* Athletes of the Year Annual Awards ceremony earlier this month. Congratulations, and thanks to each of you for your years of enthusiastic participation in Mustang Sports!



L-R IN PHOTO: 2016 Female Scholar Athlete of the Year: **Molly Lockwood** (Grade 12)  
2016 Male Athlete of the Year: **Cody Hartsook** (Grade 12)  
2016 Male Scholar Athlete of the Year: **Javi Ramos** (Grade 11)  
2016 Female Athlete of the Year: **Sophia Nielsen** (Grade 11)



*(Continued from Page One)*

One of the threads running through the movie is the impact of ‘smart’ phones on learning. Various high school teachers are interviewed about how cell phones are handled in their classrooms, and we hear from students how distracting it can be—from playing video games during lessons, to checking messages, to the negative impact of a neighboring student focusing on their device. Sherry Turkle, a Professor of the Social Studies of Science and Technology at MIT, reports how science has now proved that the brain cannot multi-task. But while we are multi-tasking, we feel that we are succeeding, whereas in fact we are not doing as well as if we focused on one thing at a time. Some schools have tried banning personal phones but had to call off the ban because it was too hard to consistently implement.

Other studies have found that the introduction of interactive devices have led to lower grades at school, particularly in families in the lower socio-economic bracket that may have no adult at home after school. In the movie we are introduced to a teenage girl, whose dream is to join NASA. She reports on the difficulty she has getting off her iPad (given to her by the school district)—in spite of the fact she knows that social media is affecting her focus on her homework and therefore her grades.

We meet a grandmother who is concerned about her grandson’s gaming habit: “When I ask him to stop playing, he sometimes becomes violent and turns into someone else...” she says. The movie also explores the link between video games and violence, and how

many video games have been created by the military to desensitize soldiers. Later we are introduced to Andrew, a college student who becomes so addicted to video games that he loses a college scholarship, and subsequently his family supports his treatment in a media rehabilitation center.

Fast-changing images in video games, television and movies and rapid screen-switching leads to an overloading of the brain. An experiment on learning and overstimulation has been conducted by leading brain scientist Nino Ramirez. In his experiment, young mice subjected to stimulating lights and sounds took three times longer to navigate their way through a maze. When the scientists examined the mice’s brains, they found fewer nerve cells in the areas responsible for learning and memory. And, most chilling of all, the effect was permanent.

Another strand in Delaney’s journey was that of the social impact of electronic devices. For many young people, having a phone can be an easy escape route in situations when you feel left out, shy or uncomfortable, to the detriment of building real social skills. Social media is a way of connecting—but how do teenagers use social media? One aspect that the movie explores is the influence of social media on body image. One girl, Idun, is interested in photography—she has a professional camera on a tripod—but the only photos she now takes are of herself. These are posted on social media sites. We then see how others respond to such images: comment after comment focuses on physical attractiveness. Sherry Turkle reports how girls are often striving to find that “perfect balance between looking cute and hot.” We are also introduced to a young woman who naively sends a boy a photo of herself in a bra—and suffers social exclusion and bullying as a result.

In Delaney’s own family, there is a poignant moment when her husband “recognized” that their daughter “needs” her phone in the morning to get dressed—so that she can consult her friends on her looks. Panelist Paul Zehrer reminded us that one of

the underlying aims of technology is marketing. He pointed out that big business is constantly trying to create a feeling of hurt or deficit in us in order to motivate us to try and find fulfillment and/or healing through consumerism. Young people are incredibly vulnerable in this regard.

As Delaney’s research draws to a conclusion, we see how she struggles as a parent to help her daughter develop a healthy way of using her smart phone. The family works on a contract (a copy is available, among other resources, at [screenagersmovie.com](http://screenagersmovie.com)) and introduces “Talk Tech Tuesdays” when they meet to reflect on their use of technology. We also hear some of the dialog between Tessa and her parents, including her reminders to them to reflect on their own use of screens.

We followed the movie by talking in lively small groups, and then held a full group discussion. We talked about the way technology affects our family lives. Jane McCoy voiced the question, “How do we as parents help our children navigate their way to a healthy use of technology?” Andrea Trinei, a parent of two teenage girls at Summerfield, spoke from the panel about her family’s journey. Bringing up her girls in a Waldorf community has been a great support to her and her husband, but the firm and constant reiteration of their own beliefs as parents—“This is the way we do this”—has been a foundation in raising her daughters. Ground rules such as ‘no phones for teenagers in bedrooms at night’ and ‘only texting something if you are prepared to speak the content face-to-face’ have also been helpful. Another aspect that she mentioned was that they as parents continually encourage their girls to maintain a living connection with the world by leading active and engaged lives.





Saskia Pothof described how the adolescent at age 12 or 13 begins

to be tuned in to their inner feelings, and with that they become very sensitive to how they think others are perceiving them. If at this stage we give our children access to social media—which is advertised as your ticket to be connected, and grooms people to be hyper-aware of their looks, and give peer-ratings of attractiveness and cool—the risk is that they get more and more removed from a sense of self, and develop a very shallow version of friendship and relationship. Instead, as parents and educators, we need to foster a true interest in the world—to encourage connection in real time and face-to-face. This is the path to empathy, morality and goodness.

If we can offer something more valuable, more engaging to our children and teenagers in those moments when we say no to technology, this changes our gesture from one of deprivation and restriction to one that invites our children’s interest, connection and engagement.

Saskia gave the example of a non-media child visiting a cousin’s house who is watching a movie. She suggested that if we prepare for visits with games/activities/hikes we invite the relatives to participate in, we will become fun to be with, rather than the one who is forced to pass a judgement on others’ choices. In this way we can teach our children that *real* encounter, *real* life and relationship is where we all can truly find meaning.

I would urge all parents to see this thought-provoking movie. This is an issue that affects us all.

FIND LOCAL SCREENINGS AND MORE RESOURCES AT [SCREENAGERSMOVIE.COM](http://SCREENAGERSMOVIE.COM)

[CLICK HERE FOR FURTHER READING LIST.](#)

KATE HAMMOND’S OWN BOOK *WHY BE SCREEN FREE?* IS NOW AVAILABLE IN THE SUMMERFIELD SCHOOL OFFICE.



## The Archetypes of Spring

By Debra Gambrell, D.O. and former SWSF parent

What archetypes is nature feeding us at this time of year? What gifts do we digest with our senses? We see all types of beautiful, vibrant colors in the flowers, we smell the sweet nectar, and too much of it makes us sneeze. Our body seems to know how much we are able to take in, and some of us can digest more than others. The flower is the soul portion of the plant that blossoms in the spring. All the forces that have been saved up through the dark winter are pulled out of the ground by the sun and burst through the very ends of the plant. The bees and butterflies, in their flight from flower to flower, show us how the very life of spirit touches our soul.



In West Sonoma County, I am out with my children collecting flowers from our property to bring to school on Monday. The first thing we notice is the purple-tipped milk thistle is in full bloom. It seems these hearty plants shot up overnight! Many a landowner with his/her tidy yard gets frustrated by these “invasive” plants. If not caught early, before flowering, the entire area is overtaken by a purple, spiny sea of thistle. The milk thistle is known medicinally as a liver-process, immune-supportive plant. There is a poke to the immune system, a waking up of sorts, to enable the highest consciousness of a person to recognize self versus non-self. This liver process is seen also in the gardener who needs to exert great will to keep the milk thistle in check.



We also have fragrant, soothing lavender, which seems to be an assembly hall for the bees. You can hear the chatter and excitement of the bees as they weave in, out, and around this flower, which itself looks like a strong, soft, purple bee. This plant is hearty and will spread wildly with great force when it is left connected to the earth. When harvested and left out of water for even a few minutes, we begin to see the “bees” fall back towards the earth.

The stunningly bright orange aster flower invites us in to experience the soul quality of warmth, like that of the sun. We can experience the feelings of patience and forgiveness that come with facing a challenging situation with the utmost discernment. Greek mythology teaches us about the god Jupiter’s decision to flood the Earth in response to the ongoing fighting. The heartbroken goddess Astraea asked to stay behind as a star. When the flood waters receded, she appeared as thousands of orange and red asters representing the tears she shed for the loss of lives. In this way, Astraea gave us back the warmth that was needed for healing the hurt.



So, get outside and enjoy the bountiful archetypes that nature freely gives to us this time of year. Although it is fun to explore what these archetypes are saying to us, nature will give these gifts whether we are aware of their significance or not. Make sure to bring your children with you, as they are particularly sensitive to the gestures of these plants. No words are needed—just sit back and behold their beauty with awe and reverence. Oh, and don’t forget to check for ticks upon returning home!

# The Messenger Marketplace

Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm is not affiliated with, and does not endorse, any of the individual initiatives or services advertised in this classified section. Advertisements are screened for appropriateness and made available to community members to use at their own discretion

## Classes/Camps



### Classes at Circle of Hands

#### Circle of Hands Children's Village at the Barlow

**Street Fair:** Each Thursday from 5-8pm throughout the summer, the Barlow in Sebastopol will be hosting a Street Fair, complete with food trucks, craft vendors & live music. Now it will also have a Waldorf-style children's area with crafts led by Waldorf alums, giant

bubbles by a local wand-maker, a balloon animal-maker, music and games. Free entrance for all activities. (With a preview fair on Saturday, May 28).

**Childrens' and Adults' Weaving Classes:** on Sats 6/23 and 6/30, 10-3pm (w/ lunch-break). Weave an original tapestry on wooden looms.

**Circle of Hands' Waldorf Shop.** 6780 McKinley St. #120, Sebastopol—in the Barlow, 707-634-6140. circleofhands@sonic.net. Reserve your class spot with a deposit or by paying in full at the store or on our website: circleofhandswaldorfshop.com.

### Summer Sewing Camp for Kids

Join us for a fun-filled sewing camp for ages 7-12, Jun 27-30, 10am-2:30pm. Your child will gain skills and confidence using a sewing machine, and create unique projects in an engaging, supportive environment. Camp ends with a fashion show for family and friends! Cost: \$425, incl. most supplies. Location: littlefour, 120 Morris St #100, Sebastopol (in the Barlow). For more info contact: Nictcha Cohen, 707-889-6888, bowlandspooncrafts.com, or Danielle Rodrigues, 707-861-9886, littlefourstore.com.

### Engaging Art Camp

@ Summerfield for children ages 6-12. Walks in nature, exploring and creating with a variety of art forms: drawing, painting, sculpting and print-making. Dates: weekly 06/20; 06/27; 07/04. Register at artcampkuprian.weebly.com or call (707) 495-7543.

### Camp Tamarack

Sponsored by The Christian Community, Camp Tamarack has been offering a quality wilderness experience for children ages 9-14 years old since 1971. More information: camptamccsummercamp.com or call Hans Walser at (650) 995-3414.

### Summer Camp at Marigold Playgarden

3-7 year olds are invited to join us for summer fun in Sebastopol. Wonderful nature crafts, organic snacks, story-time and creative play with a former Summerfield kindergarten teacher and helpers. Mon-Thurs, 9am-1pm, 7 sessions offered June 20 - Aug 4, \$185 per 4 day session. Contact Jennifer Bowen, 824-9127 or jennybee@sonic.net.

### Cherry Ridge Nature Camp

There is still room in Ms. Donna's Nature Camp for the summer for children ages 3-6 yrs old. One week in June and all of July. Email Donna for camp info: dstusser2@comcast.net.

### Voice In-Sight: Creative Writing Workshop

Taught by Adam Shemper, MFT, at SWSF, HS Math Rm, August 1-12 (Mon-Fri each week) 10am-12pm. Open to ten 12-18-yr-olds. Cost: \$350. This is a creative writing intensive to refine and clarify authentic expression in prose and poetry. Students will learn: to practice writing from a place of presence, feeling, truth and clarity of vision; to work with resistance and feelings of stuckness; to trust the unique expression of their individual voices; to learn the basic elements of good story-telling: character development, a sense of place and how to develop the action of a story; to use images to evoke stories, poems and descriptive vignettes • to explore the dynamic relationship between words and images. Workshop culminates in the editing and production of a bound magazine called *I Am a Camera* (as well as a digital version). Bio: shemperphoto.com/about. Register: call 415-690-3430 or email adamshemper@gmail.com.

## Coyote Camp

### at Ocean Song

A creative, playful, and inspiring adventure for children ages 5-12 amidst the wild beauty of Ocean Song

- swimming
- nature games
- creative arts
- tracking
- herbal knowledge
- caring mentors
- singing & storytelling
- wilderness exploration

for registration information: [Annie Klein Director](mailto:annieklein@oceansong.org)  
707.318.6948  
annieklein@oceansong.org

www.oceansong.org

Five week-long sessions beginning June 27  
Attend one week or all Mon.- Fri. 9am - 4pm

## Camp Chai

### Summer Day Camp

Finley Community Park

**Session I: July 11-15**

**Session II: July 18-22**

Sports

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[ellenb@jccsoco.org](mailto:ellenb@jccsoco.org) or [www.jccsoco.org](http://www.jccsoco.org)

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## Services

### *Nourishing Meals for Busy Families*

Custom family meals hand delivered to your home. All meals and kitchen staples are created using organic local ingredients & immune supporting herbs to keep the whole family vibrant! For more info on monthly packages, email sarahkate@thegreatkosmickitchen.com.

### *Singing and Piano Instruction with Mary Beard*

I am an experienced teacher, a Summerfield Waldorf founding parent and original creator of the school's instrument music program. My studio is located in Santa Rosa. Please visit my website marybeardmusicstudio.com. Contact me at marymezzo@sonic.net or 707-546-8782.

### *Now Accepting New Clients in Sebastopol!*

Allie A. McCann, MFT, ATR-BC (mccannmft@gmail.com, 707.219.8484). Allie is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Art Therapist. She is a Waldorf-inspired mother of two and is sympathetic and supportive of Waldorf-inspired values and lifestyle choices. She supports children, adolescents, parents and adults, specializing in anxiety, mood, behavioral and relational issues, life transitions, and grief and loss. Allie has a holistic view of health, tending to mind, body, and spirit. She incorporates both art and a connection with the natural world into her healing practices.

### *Farmer Dan available for Spring Break or Summer Projects*

Do you need a chicken coop, fencing, a new or repaired deck, deck refinished, painting, shelving, sheet rock repairs, book cases, inside wall removal or added, garage shelving, etc.? Many favorable SWSF references, child-safe and friendly, reasonable rates. Call Farmer Dan at 707-526-3917 to inquire or schedule a visit and/or a summer work date.

## For Sale/Rent/Needed

### *Rick Concoff Violins*

Quality string instruments for rent or sale at below-market best prices. Rent to own as well. Accessories available too! Special offer: get two months free rental (with 10 months paid rental). Call Rick at 477-9196 for more info or to make an appt.

### *Looking for Housing*

Long-time community members Ben Mew (HS Teacher) and Chelsea Young (Roots & Shoots Asst.) are looking for housing starting this summer, ideally beginning in August. They would love to exchange, at least in part, gardening, landscaping, animal care, and/or child care, for rent. Please contact Ben or Chelsea: benjamin.j.mew@gmail.com, chelsea.lynne.young@gmail.com.

### *Beautiful Home with Pool for Rent in Cuernavaca, Mexico*

Former Summerfield family and Spanish teacher offers home for weekly, monthly, or year lease! 3BR, 3.5 bath home in gated community, with pool, sauna, stunning views, access to creek. Known as "City of Eternal Springtime" due to its great climate and lush vegetation, Cuernavaca lies 50 miles south of Mexico City, close to cultural and tourist spots, and home to well-developed pre-K to 9th Waldorf school. Several SWSF families and faculty have stayed here. First \$2,000 goes directly to tuition program at SWSF. See Airbnb link: www.airbnb.com/rooms/394538. Contact Señora Nora (even just to say Hola!) at nora@alkimia-living.com.



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*presents*

*a most lamentable Tragedie*

*by*

*Wm. Shakespeare*

*Friday, Twenty-Seventh May*

*Eight forty five am and  
Seuen o'clock pm*

*Saturday, Twenty-Eighth May*

*One o'clock pm and  
Seuen o'clock pm*

J