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WOODLAND STAR CHARTER SCHOOL

Learning to think, to care, to create.

17811 ARNOLD DRIVE, SONOMA, CA 95476

Just the Facts

January 6, 2009

Upcoming Events

First Grade Class Meeting, Wednesday, January 6, 6:00pm
Sixth Grade Class Meeting, Thursday, January 7, 6:00 pm
Woodland Star Ed Foundation Meeting, Saturday, January 9, 9:00 am
Second Grade Class Meeting, Monday, January 11, 6:00 pm
Grant Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 12, 8:30 am
Values and Virtues Presentation by Rick Cancoff, Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 pm
Parent Council Meeting, Thursday, January 14, 6:30 pm
Miniature Golf Kick Off Meeting, Saturday, January 16, 9:00 am
Martin Luther King Day Holiday, **Monday, January 18, 2009**
The Waldorf Approach to Academics, EugeneSchwartz, Tuesday, January 26 7:00 pm

Admin/Finance Deficit Reduction Proposal -

The Admin/Finance committee has been hard at work developing a plan to recoup a portion of the deficit created by mid-year state budget cuts. Below are our ideas. If you are interested in lending your input, feel free to contact an Admin/Finance member directly (e-mail contact information listed below) and/or you can attend the January 20th Charter Council meeting where we will be voting on this proposal. Thank you all for your continued support of our wonderful school. *Sheila*

Budget Reductions – As you may remember from our process last year, we have a very lean operating budget. Cuts here do not represent fat needing to be trimmed but instead cost savings resulting from very frugal spending. This is a very tight budget offering very few if any, possible additional cuts beyond what you see below.

- Decrease teacher contract days by two professional development, post-service days. These post-service days are when we gather as a faculty after the school year has ended to review the current school year and begin planning for the coming year.

Net Savings: \$6,000

- Decrease equipment line item by \$1,000

Net Savings: \$1,000

- Decrease accompanist by \$1,000. This would impact music classes, assemblies and possibly eurythmy classes.

Net Savings: \$1,000

- Decrease Professional Development line item by \$2,000. The cost of attending Waldorf training conferences would no longer be covered for teachers.

Net Savings: \$2,000

- Special education costs are trending below previous levels and with the influx of some federal grant monies we are on track to save about \$5,000 from this line item.

Net Savings: \$5,000

- Insurance costs are trending below projections and we are on track to save about \$1,000 on this line item.

Net Savings: \$1,000

- Water costs are trending below projections and we are on track to save about \$500 on this line item.

Net Savings: \$500

Total cost savings: \$16,500

Budget expansion opportunities:

- Continue efforts to increase family pledge amounts and get participation numbers to 100%. All efforts are needed here. Let's all be certain we are doing everything that we can and giving as much as we can to support our amazingly rich curriculum.
- Increase outreach activities with the goal of increasing enrollment. The Outreach committee will organize in January to start talking about this important piece. Parents can help by promoting our school in the community, tell your friends, neighbors and take part in upcoming Open Houses and other Outreach events.

- The Parent Council is considering taking on some of the Market Days and donating the profit back to the school's general fund as opposed to a specific class fund.
- The Development team is working on a marketing/solicitation piece to present to investors as a way of creating an endowment fund.
- Emphasis will be placed on getting 100% participation in E-scrip programs and encouraging family members and friends to also sign up with proceeds coming to WSS.

Admin/Finance Committee Members:

Sheila Reilly: Sheila@woodlandstarschool.org

Janis Lynne: jlynne1@comcast.net

John Arntz: jwarntz@pacbell.net

Ben Dewees: bdewees@bmrn.com

Poppy Darby Mann: ifigureitout@yahoo.com

Johnny Graham: wsfacultygraham@yahoo.com

Open Enrollment

Season ~ Spread the word to friends, family and neighbors that Woodland Star is now accepting lottery applications for the 2010-11 school year. Our first younger Kindergarten lottery will be drawn on January 31st with additional lotteries drawn at the end of each month thereafter. Our first lottery for all other grades starts on March 31st. Encourage all interested parties to attend a school tour where they can speak with Sheila about the curriculum as well as get a glimpse into each classroom and see the curriculum in action. School tours occur monthly from 8:30 - 10 am and are listed on our website:



Last Year's Miniature Golf Tournament.

Miniature Golf Tournament Kick Off Meeting:

Save the Date! This year's Sonoma Valley Miniature Golf Tournament will be held on Saturday, May 15, 2010, at the local Miniature Golf course. We had such a blast last year, you will not want to miss the event this year. The first committee

WSEF

Update: The new Woodland Star Educational Foundation (WSEF) Board meet over the break. The new board members are Anastatia Chiruco and Elizabeth Daniels. There next meeting is this **Saturday, January 9, 2009** to discuss Fundraising options to help bridge the budget gap. Please call Monica Conway if you would like to join this group. We still have board positions to fill!

Why I pledge

woodlandstarschool.org.

These are adult only events as we will be in classrooms. Upcoming tour dates: 1/21, 2/11, 3/10, 4/15, & 5/13.

Building a strong enrollment with healthy waiting lists is a key way to circumvent state budget cuts. Please help out by passing the word about our great school and invite prospective families to talk to Sheila and/or attend an enrollment event.

Also later this month, date TBD, we will host a Kindergarten Open House for all interested Kindergarten families. More details to come.

From the Costume Shop:

The "Play Season" will be upon us shortly, and as the "costume coordinator" (along with the help of many great moms and dads) I have some guidelines for pulling costumes that will help us to keep some order in our wonderful costume shop.

1. When you are ready with your costume needs please call me at 363-8721 to make an appointment. Sheets are available for you to fill out with all of your needs.
2. If you prefer to do it on your own, that is great, but please call so I can explain the filing system.

meeting to plan the event will be Saturday, January 16, 2009, 9:00 am at the Barking Dog down town. I'll pay for the coffee! I am looking for a chair to be in charge of this year's tournament. Please speak to me if you want to lead this very very fun event. Email Monica Conway, pmgconway@sbcglobal.net, if you can make it or just come! If you cannot come, just email and let me you know want to be on Team Mini! This event is a school fundraiser and bring in much needed funds to the school.

Annual End of the Year Mailing:

Hopefully you received your beautiful Annual Fund mailing. We mailed 1,820 over the Holiday Break. We still have copies available so you can mail to a grandparent, parent or friend. Just come in the office and get a copy or call Monica Conway 225-5557 and I will be happy to mail one for you.

Thank you to all that worked on the mailing, Shirryl Bayless for the layout work, Mara Lee Ebert for writing the letter, Andrea Gregory, Jane Schneider, Helen Batten and Poppy Mann for helping assemble the mailing. I really appreciate all the help.

cMarket is coming Soon!

Our Annual online auction will be held from March 9-March 30. We have accepted many donations from local wineries, restaurants and artists. If you can donate an item, please bring into the office. Donation forms are kept in the office.

Community Education:

Rick Cancoff Coming January 12

Having issues with your child or teen. Just wander how to deal with everyday situations. Rick has the answers. Rick shares his wealth of parenting solutions and

every month to the school:

My children are excited to come to school every day, their teachers know who they are just as good as I do, they look forward to what they are learning, feeling fully engaged in what they are learning by hearing, seeing and touching with their hands, (yes Waldorf uses all three learning styles). They learn Spanish, Eurythmy, gardening, water color painting, form drawing, history, fractions, chemistry, language arts, flute, singing, and perform in a play every year. As a parent I am supported by other parents to not watch TV or own an Xbox, I am supported in using organic food, aluminum lunch pales and glass water containers. I learn the development stages of my children and my hand is held by my teacher when I go through these

Each class is responsible for putting back whatever they use. This is VERY important! If you are pulling costumes and leaving them in the room for use at a later date, please label rack as such.

3. If you are donating new items, please let me know so we can add them to our catalogue and number the pieces. Nancy Hyde and helpers did an amazing job of creating this space and I want to keep it that way!

Thanks so much, please call and let me know your needs. I will be away January 10-22, but can help you over the phone if need be.

Jamie Love
Costume Shop Guru!

Parent Council Updates:

Parent Council met in December and discussed:

~ new draft of the dress code that is being proposed

~ installing a water alkalinizing filter at the school and selling the water to make money for the school.

~ fundiraising ideas to help bridge the funding gap.

Thank you to the parent Council for hosting the Winte

his perspective on how to deal with conflict, ethics and values and being a role model for all children.

Please join us on Tuesday, January 12, 7:00 to 8:30. Rick's talks are worth leaving your nice cozy house for on a cold winter night, Rick will warm you with his ideas. Community Ed Events suggested donation is \$5.00 and childcare is also \$5.00.

Eugene Schwartz coming Tuesday, 1/26/10

The Waldorf Approach to Academics

Waldorf-inspired schools are recognized for the attention they pay to children's social development, and they are renowned for the artistry that permeates the work of teachers and students alike. These achievements can sometimes overshadow the dedicated and innovative way in which academic subjects are also cultivated in the Waldorf setting. Tonight's lecture will pay particular attention to the development of academics in the Middle School years. Eugene will discuss the relationship of main lesson books to textbooks, class work to homework, and how Waldorf students are made ready for secondary school and beyond. Suggested donation: \$5-10. Childcare available at \$5/child. 7-8:30 pm in the Main Hall

Attainable and Sustainable, Eugene Schwartz Course Part 3: Wednesday, January 27, 6-9 pm: Education and Child Development with Waldorf master educator, Eugene Schwartz. A deep look into the Waldorf-inspired curriculum and a rare opportunity to ask questions of one of the most noted Waldorf educators in the country. Don't miss it! 6-9 pm, contact Sheila if you are interested. We have a few vacant spots left, act fast!

Local Happenings:

Sonoma Stage Works announces An Evening With. Marty and Aidan O'Reilly,

stages. We walk through these stages hand in hand. All these aspects of Waldorf Education are what live at my children's school, and it is priceless. Waldorf Education will live in my children for the rest of their life and I get all this for just \$.30 a day (\$600/175 school days = \$.30). I pledge because I get so much in return.
~Monica Conway

Pleedge Update by class:

10/5/09 - 1/5/10

SPK	53%	-	78%
MGK	58%	-	77%
1st	73%	-	95%
2nd	45%	-	74%
3rd	52%	-	67%
4th	72%	-	91%
5th	47%	-	56%
6th	42%	-	65%
7th	55%	-	81%
8th	45%	-	56%

<p>Parent Social.</p>	<p>January 8th, 7:30 pm in historic <u>Andrews Hall</u>. The concert, offered to help raise funds for upcoming theatrical improvements, features Marty on guitar and Aidan on piano, doing original music as well as Prine, Dylan, Thompson and more. The O'Reilly Brothers brought down the house with a concert to benefit the Community Center in August of 2009, and are ready for a repeat performance.</p> <p>The Concert will take place in Andrews Hall <u>January 8th, 7:30</u>. Tickets are \$10.00 at the door and all proceeds benefit soon to be announced theatrical, innovative improvements within Andrews Hall. Call Jaime Love or Todd Evans at Sonoma Stage Works at 996-6003 for more information.</p>	
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Volunteer Coordinator Corner

Enrollment at Woodland Star requires a commitment on the part of parents to the education of all children in the school community. Each family is asked to devote at least thirty hours of volunteer time per year.

There are a number of ways parents can become involved in the life of the school and fulfill their parent participation commitment. There are various ways to support your class teacher both in school and out of school. Assisting in specialty classes, making crafts, cleaning the classrooms, doing laundry, sewing and making costumes, organizing camping and field trips all describe some of the help needed. Playground, garden, and site beautification are important tasks affecting the quality of classroom life and the need for parent support.

Festivals and fundraising events are two other areas that need parent involvement, not only for the success of the event, but to strengthen the bonds of the community. Fundraising is integral to our financial prosperity. Parents' involvement in fundraising activities is in direct relation to Woodland Star's continued ability to offer a full artistic curriculum. It is desired that all parents participate. The public funding model for our school meets the bare minimum of our school's financial health. The gifting of money, time, and resources is what we must rely upon to ensure our school's financial health. Participating in the Family Pledge Program, working on fundraising programs and events, development of our resources both within and outside of the school, solicitation of monetary gifts and involvement in outreach activities all contribute to raising the needed monies to support our school's operations. To help with fundraising activities, watch for announcements in our newsletter or contact the office.

~From the WSCS Parent Handbook, 2009/2010

If you have any questions regarding 'How to Volunteer', please contact

Andrea Gregory, jacogregory@hotmail.com or 529-2600

Remember to log your hours!!! Every hour volunteered counts! From working on play costumes to fundraising...no hour turned down. Remember to count prep-time too..your time at the grocery store purchasing food for a field trip or the time taken to trim your trees/bushes for 'greens' used in the spiral walk! These hours are crucial for grant money. A lot of grant providers want to know how committed 'our' community is and giving true numbers is an obligation from our school. To keep track of your hours, please use the forms located in the office, send me an email or write on a scratch piece of paper and place it in the Volunteer Coordinator box, located at the copy machine area of the office.

Volunteer Jobs:

Data Entry volunteers. Work from the comfort of your home, on your time.

cMarket volunteers to help inputting items online can be done from home, training will happen next two weeks.

Miniature Golf Chair - To lead this year's miniature golf tournament, this person will get all the help they need from Monica, please contact to discuss.

Parent lending library - Person needed to inventory the parent lending library in the Main hall and publish the list so parents know what is available.

Please contact Andrea at jacogregory@hotmail.com or 529-2600 to sign-up or for further information.

Thank YOU for all the work you do in support of the children at Woodland Star!

Andrea Gregory
Volunteer Coordinator

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