



ORCA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

November 4, 2008

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November

1st week – Classroom POD potlucks
3 – Open Mic
7 – Picture re-take day
10 – Space Team mtg
11 – Veteran’s Day
13 – Explorations in Math Night
17 – Leadership Council Mtg
18 – Middle School Potluck
20 – Race Forum mtg
24-26 – Parent/Teacher conferences
27-28 – Thanksgiving holiday

TBD by grade band VP’s
Starbucks Columbia City

7pm, Orca
NO SCHOOL
5pm-8pm Rainier Community Center
3:30
6pm Science Annex
6pm dinner/childcare provided
NO SCHOOL
NO SCHOOL

December

1 – Open Mic
4 – Math Game Night
8 – Leadership Council
18 – Festival of Children
19 – Professional Development
22 – Jan 2 Winter Break

Starbucks Columbia City
7pm Orca cafeteria
7pm, library

Early Dismissal
NO SCHOOL

THOUGHTS FROM Ben...



It took a while to get our feet under us, but we’re finally up and running. Summer into fall construction, the largest bus headaches I’ve ever encountered, three open positions during the first month of school, three new classrooms, one new grade level, eight new teachers (including environmental coordinator and instrumental music), and three new instructional assistants. Orca has been dealing with real growth and change for the second year in a row! I feel great about the way staff and families have come together to support Orca during a critical period of growth. Teachers who look out for one another and all of our children, and parents who play key roles, are what makes Orca a special place. At times the line between parents and staff blur, when parents step up to fill key roles. Deb Schaaf has taken on the mission of creating a real instrumental music program. Lily Hotchkiss has helped develop a great K-8 afterschool program out of four funding sources and myriad requirements and needs. The majority of afterschool activities are taught by parents. Deb Koons works tirelessly as our volunteer coordinator to organize parents. Orca thrives because of an endless number of amazing contributions! Thank you all!

We finally have full possession of the garden/greenhouse/science building complex. Although it’s going to take a little while to fully develop the spaces, we are starting to get a taste of some of the possibilities. A special thanks goes out to Phyllis Daniels and all the others who pulled the Harvest Festival out of a hat. Anthony Warner has our garden/environmental science program off to an amazing start. Without access to the new facilities, he’s still managed to do some amazing work with

students. If you haven't logged on to his garden blog at <http://orcagarden.wordpress.com>, you're missing the details on some great experiences.

Last week's professional development early release was primarily focused on writing. We used a large chunk of time to look at student work in writing and plan around the needs that were observed. Students are doing some amazing things in their writing! Friday, November 21st we will be hosting a school-wide celebration of the stories students have produced during our first school-wide writing unit. Called "Small Moments," it has focused on teaching students to utilize the writing process and develop personal narratives. Ask to see your children's writing during Parent-Teacher conferences.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Orca Middle School Potluck, November 18

Please come *celebrate* our Middle School families.

When: November 18, 2008

Time: 6 PM

Where: Orca Science Annex

Why: To celebrate and share students' Family Personal Projects

Please bring your favorite family food to share along with plates and utensils for your family .



Math Game Night, Thursday, December 4

Thursday, December 4. **7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Orca Cafeteria.**

Mark your calendars now, families, for this highly anticipated event... Math Game Night will be held on Thursday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria.

Research shows that games are the #1 way for parents to reinforce their kids' math skills, and we have some fun games to show you. Come learn games from the Everyday Math curriculum. Get math tips from our Explorations in Math team. And play games brought to us from Blue Highway Games.

If you've attended math game night before, you know that we rely on a swarm of parent volunteers to help this event run smoothly. Volunteers need no experience -- we'll teach you a game, and then you can teach others to play it. It's all fun! Interested volunteers, please contact julie@softlabour.com to sign up for a game station or to help with organization of the event.



Our local Earthcorps has a ton of great fall/planting events for you to participate in! EarthCorps **CLIMATE ACTION WEEK** is November 01-08 and we have a wide range of volunteer opportunities all over the Puget Sound! For more info on projects and ways you can get involved visit

<http://www.climateactionweek.com/>. The 3rd Annual **GREEN SEATTLE DAY** takes place **Saturday**

November 08. EarthCorps will be co-hosting events at **Seward & Ravenna Parks** and we would love for you to join in on the fun! Volunteers (21+) will receive free admission to a Green Seattle Day concert starring Stone Gossard and more great local artists at King Cobra the evening after the event.

<http://greenseattle.org/> <http://greenseattle.org/green-seattle-day>

It's easy to register for EarthCorps volunteer opportunities. Just visit the volunteer calendar on our website at <http://www.earthcorps.org/volunteer.php>, choose the project that you would like to participate in and click on Sign up for this event and complete the on-line registration process and we will handle the rest. All you have to do is show up.



Please bring in your UNICEF boxes by Friday this week! We will tally the amount and let you know how much we have collected at Orca.



CANDY BUY BACK

What to do with all that candy laying around after Halloween? In an effort to spare your child's teeth and sugar intake, Nurse Liz and I are offering to buy back your candy. For every pound of candy you bring in to the nurse's office, we will donate \$1 to UNICEF! What a great solution to all the candy laying around. Thanks so much! Eve Soffer



Lost and Found!

Please take a minute to peruse the lost and found racks. It is located just inside the doors at the south end of the playground. Thanks!



VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR NEWS...

WE NEED A NEW ASSISTANT TREASURER!

Deb Schaaf is stepping down from her role as Assistant Treasurer as her role as Music Teacher here at Orca continues to fill more and more of her time! We're looking for someone to support the receivables function of the Treasurer's job which includes being a conduit to fundraisers, making deposits, and inputting data into Quickbooks. If you like crunching numbers then this is the job for you!


KITCHEN SUPPLIES NEEDED BY PADMA

Padma, in room 101, is wanting to work with her students on some basic cooking skills. She is in need of kitchen equipment such as cookie sheets, muffin pans, bowls, spoons etc. She could also use a blender, juicer and coffee/espresso maker. If you have these items taking up space in your kitchen and would like them put to good use, please donate them to Padma!

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE HARVEST FESTIVAL!

Thanks go out to all of the folks who helped with the Harvest Festival this year! A huge thank you to PHYLLIS DANIELS for chairing this event with great energy and enthusiasm and the Room Coordinators for organizing their individual classrooms; it was a fantastic day. I heard many kids say "This is my favorite event of the year" and one little guy said "Mommy, they turned it into a pumpkin patch"!

Deb Koon, Volunteer Coordinator debkoon@comcast.net/723-7444



Take Two!
Picture re-take day is
Friday, November 7
Re-order forms may
be picked up outside
of the office on the
2nd floor.



ORCA SPACE TEAM UPDATE

First of all, thanks so much to John Unangst and Kate Malkin for putting up the "Welcome to Orca" sign at the bottom of the north entrance ramp. It looks great!

Second, we're convening a group of people to plan some improvements to the West Garden Bed (between the building and the playground). We've identified the major stakeholders, including Native Plant Program, Garden Committee, Safety Committee, and Space Team -- if you think we've missed someone, let us know! We're meeting Monday, November 10th at 7 pm at school to talk about the various uses that space is put to, and how to make it work better for everyone, and look better too. We're working with landscape architect Emily Bishton, who has been hired by the Garden Committee to create planting plans for the garden areas all around the school. Anyone is welcome to participate in this -- staff, families, students, neighbors. We can provide childcare if needed -- please let Mikala know if you'd like to request childcare. We want to have this group develop a plan for that area, and then we'll start working on finding money and volunteers to make it happen. We hope to conduct a similar process for the front entrance, and possibly other areas -- talk to Mikala if you'd like to get involved! (722-5177/jojoma3@aol.com)

Third, nominations are due December 1st for capital projects to be included in the district's 2010 Levy. We're considering nominating Orca for a project to improve the entrances and public spaces in the school. It's a long shot that such a project would get chosen, and even if it did, most of our kids would be hitting voting age by the time anything actually came of it... But Wendell Berry tells us to "plant sequoias." If you're interested in working on this, let Mikala know (722-5177/jojoma3@aol.com). We will be discussing it at the November 17th Leadership Council meeting (3:30 pm).

Fourth -- PHYLLIS WILL BE ADDING STUFF HERE ABOUT MURALS AND/OR MOSAICS.

Cheers!

Phyllis Daniels, Lily Hotchkiss, and Mikala Woodward
Orca Space Team Co-Chairs

What you should know about Influenza and Influenza Vaccine

Influenza vaccination is the most effective way of preventing the flu. Beginning in October, flu vaccine funded by Washington state and the federal Vaccines For Children (VFC) program will be available through Public Health and private providers to cover all children ages 6 months through 18 years, regardless of ability to pay.

Large numbers of healthy children, adolescents and younger adults develop influenza infection each year, leading to doctor visits and missed days of school, work and other activities. In addition, healthy older children and adults can spread

influenza within families to persons at high risk for serious illness. Influenza-related severe complications and hospitalizations are most common in adults 65 years of age, children less than 2 years of age, and children and adults with a *high risk medical condition for severe influenza (like asthma, diabetes, and chronic heart, lung, and kidney disease)*.

Who should receive influenza vaccine?

- Influenza vaccine is now recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for all children ages 6 months through 18 years.
- Influenza vaccine is also recommended for
 - adults age 50 years and older,
 - persons of any age with chronic medical conditions (such as heart, lung, or kidney disease, or diabetes) that increase the risk of complications from influenza
 - pregnant women
 - household contacts of pregnant women, persons with high-risk conditions, or infants under age 6 months

In addition to being immunized, it is also important to wash your hands, cover your cough, and stay home (from work, school, or other activities) when you're sick. School age children can pick up influenza infection from each other at school and then easily spread it to young siblings and other family members in their household who are elderly or otherwise at high risk for influenza complications.

Either injectable flu vaccine (TIV) or intranasal flu vaccine (FluMist or LAIV) can be used when vaccinating healthy persons aged 2--49 years. LAIV should not be administered to children aged <5 years with possible reactive airway disease, such as those who have had recurrent wheezing or a recent wheezing episode. TIV should be used instead for children with possible reactive airway disease, persons at higher risk for influenza complications because of underlying medical conditions, children aged 6--23 months, and persons aged >49 years.

Children aged 6 months--8 years should receive 2 doses of vaccine if they have not been vaccinated previously at any time with either LAIV or TIV (doses separated by ≥ 4 weeks); 2 doses are required for protection in these children. Children aged 6 months--8 years who received only 1 dose in their first year of vaccination should receive 2 doses the following year. The 2008--09 trivalent vaccine virus strains are A/Brisbane/59/2007 (H1N1)-like, A/Brisbane/10/2007 (H3N2)-like, and B/Florida/4/2006-like antigens, the strains expected to be circulating during this flu season.

Where can we get flu vaccine?

Many private providers will have flu vaccine for children and adults. Additional flu vaccine locations are listed on Public Health's website at www.kingcounty.gov/health/flu.

If your school is interested in sponsoring a flu vaccine clinic for staff, students, or the community, Public Health can refer you to immunization providers.

Where can we find additional information about influenza?

Educators and staff can help slow the spread of colds and flu. A fact sheet on "Stopping Germs at Home, Work and School" can be downloaded from CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials/home_work_school.pdf.

Influenza information will be updated on our web site throughout the flu season, at www.kingcounty.gov/health/flu and you may call our immunization program at 206-296-4774 with questions regarding influenza vaccine recommendations or influenza surveillance.



Shop for Change

Even the toys made by [Ikamva Labantu's](http://www.ikamvalabantu.com) Community Creations were created with social justice in mind. During her years as an anti-Apartheid activist, Ikamva Labantu's founder, Helen Lieberman, often found herself looking for toys to keep the children of those present at meetings quiet so as not to draw the attention of police. In her search for dolls, Lieberman discovered that the only decent dolls produced in South Africa at the time had white skin. Recognizing the importance that children have dolls that look like them, she often stated that when apartheid ended, she would find a way to produce beautiful and proud black dolls. Indeed, when apartheid ended, Lieberman was approached by a woman from one of the communities where she had worked who offered to help her start production. She jumped at the chance to encourage social justice while providing young children with a sense of self, and the organization quickly blossomed into a business that provides jobs and training for community members to produce a number of dolls and stuffed toys representing African animals made from traditional Africa print fabric. Even [Nelson Mandela](http://www.nelsonmandela.org)-friend and colleague of Helen's in the anti-apartheid struggle-loved the idea and commissioned a doll to be made in his image. What better way to inspire peace and justice in our children than to give them one of these hand-stitched dolls? Through Global Goods Partners, you can purchase a variety of holiday items and toys from Ikamva Labantu including stuffed [hippos](#), [giraffes](#), [elephants](#), [ornaments](#), and the [dolls](#) that inspired the organization.