



ORCA

WEEKLY BULLETIN

December 16, 2008

Phone: 252-6900

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Website: www.orcapta.org

December

- 18 – Festival of Children
- 19 – Professional Development**
- 20 – Planting party
- 22 – Jan 2 Winter Break**

6:30pm
Early Dismissal
10am-2pm East garden
NO SCHOOL

January

- 10 – ORCA Garden Mtg
- 12 – Leadership Council Mtg
- 16 – MLK Jr. Celebration
- 19 – MLK Jr. Holiday**
- 21 – PTSA General Meeting
- 26 – Day between semesters**
- 29 – Middle School Open House

Orca Greenhouse
3:30pm Orca library
NO SCHOOL
Topic: What is Alternative Education?
NO SCHOOL
Orca Middle School

THOUGHTS FROM Ben

As we head towards winter break, Orca continues to juggle several balls. I can't help but notice how good we are becoming at keeping multiple things in the air. Somehow while incorporating new staff, new grades and classes, a new science annex and garden, and everything else, we continue to learn and grow. As I move through classrooms, I see children and teachers starting to think of themselves as writers, and teams developing together. In the new year, you can expect to hear more about what's happening in Writers Workshop, the plans emerging from our no-longer new PE teachers, and some of what it will look like to have a full middle school. The economic crisis exacerbated a serious Seattle Public Schools (SPS) budget problem. School closures are the most visible and painful sign of many significant budget reductions that are coming. Capacity management raises enough issues that it affects everyone. Providing and managing feedback alone takes a significant amount of time. Public feedback has significantly influenced many of the recommendations, and is one reason they continue to evolve.

One of many ripples from school closure is a different schedule for SPS' open enrollment period. Open enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year will be between March 1-31 (rather than from mid-January through February 28 as usual). That means Orca's enrollment tours and open houses will occur during February and March. However, we will host a special open house for Orca families interested in learning more about our middle school on Thursday, January 29.

Don't forget to join us for the Festival of Children on Thursday, December 18 from 6:30 to 8:00pm. There's no better way to gear up for the holidays than watching a school full of amazing children show their stuff. If you are interested in helping out, contact volunteer coordinator Deb Koon at 382-5829. thanks! Ben

ANNOUNCEMENTS



It's almost here! **The Festival of Children will be this Thursday, December 18th, 6:30PM** on the Orca stage in the lunchroom. All students that auditioned will be part of the show! We have a wonderful line up of talent, and hope all Orca families will be able to join us. All performers must attend the dress rehearsal on Wednesday at 5:45 PM in the lunchroom. This excludes class room acts. Please make sure your child has dinner

before rehearsal. If your child is using music for their act, please send it to Koichi at kkitazum@starbucks.com in MP3 or itunes format if you have not already done so.

PLEASE BRING A CAN OF FOOD FOR NORTHWEST HARVEST! NW Harvest has run dangerously low on food in the past couple of weeks and if we could all bring at least one can of food to the festival to put in the bin, we could help them tremendously.

There will also be cookies and cocoa for sale for a dollar to raise money to buy grocery cards to help our Orca families in need. We're also selling out our inventory of Orca t-shirts to make room for new ones with a new design in the spring!

IF SCHOOL IS CANCELLED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER ON EITHER WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY THE FESTIVAL OF CHILDREN WILL BE POSTPONED UNTIL JANUARY 8th with rehearsal being on the 7th.

Questions? Contact Nina Beach at ninabeach@msn.com or Leda Westberg at leda206@hotmail.com



Orca Garden Meeting, Date changed to January 10

Brrrrrr!!! Freezing weather has forced us to delay planting party! Please come back on Jan. 10th (tentatively) and help us break ground for our beautiful new garden! Until then, look outside the main office to see the brand new garden plan that we will be implementing. Until then, hope that everything defrosts and warms up for us in January! THANK YOU!

Anthony Warner apwarner@seattleschools.org



Buckets needed for Music

Our inventory of instruments and equipment is growing by leaps and bounds, and Deb is looking for a few 5-gallon PVC buckets for storage of nifty musical things. Should you have any that you no longer need, please bring them to school. Also, any sort of office organization items or hanging baskets of any type would be put to good use. Many thanks!



First BASE Winter Break Child Care Schedule:

First BASE will be open December 22nd, 23rd, 29th and 30th. Sign up sheets are located in First BASE. Space is somewhat limited so if you are in need of child care please let Director Melodie Rogers or Assistant Director Barbara Kendrick know ASAP. 206-722.3658



Orca is collecting store food cards to give to Orca families in need. Please donate cards from the following stores in denominations of \$25 and \$50:

- o SAARS MARKET
- o SAFEWAY
- o FRED MEYER
- o QFC

Please bring your donations to the Orca office. Thank you!



Room 308 is coming together as a PTSA multipurpose room for this year, which currently houses Nutrition Committee, lots of PTSA & event supplies, Young Author's Project publishing center, and Volunteer Coordinator space. We've opened up gathering space for Scribbling Whale Café, after school classes, and informal parent meetings. Here's some things we still need to be ready to go in January, if you have any around the house:

- * comfortable chairs or loveseats in decent condition that will survive kids and hot chocolate spills
- * a coffee table, maybe a couple end tables
- * a couple more lamps



Safe Routes Mini Grant awarded to Orca Safety Committee:

The City of Seattle Transportation Departments Safe Routes to School Program just awarded the Orca Safety Committee a \$1,000 grant that will encourage alternative ways students get to school. Some of this grant money will be used to continue the "walking school bus" program as well as to encourage biking. Grant money will also be used to continue safety efforts at Orca. Some of these areas the committee will use funds for include equipment, signs, curb paint and more to increase traffic safety. In addition funds will be used for supplies to add a student cross walk guard program being developed by the Leadership Committee. A big thanks goes out to **Jeff Freshley** and **Tanya Vanderwey** for spearheading this grant.

- * colorful posters to hang up to inspire writing, community, etc.
- * books of all kinds for the bookshelf
- * someone who can tape down rolled edges of the carpet
- * a good cleaning (we did sorting/organizing, but the dust remains)
- * someone to hang already purchased curtains

Drop by and check it out, and see what you might like to add to make it an inviting space. Contact **Elise** elisedegooyer@msn.com, **Heidi** hgraykeil@comcast.net, or **Deb** debkoon@gmail.com with suggestions. Thanks!



ORCA ART AUCTION/GARDEN MOSAIC FUNDRAISER

Please join us as we seek art from our community for a one day only silent art auction to raise money to mosaic the garden beds in front of our school. We are asking parents, staff and other artists to donate a piece of art which will then become part of The Orca Art Auction happening on Friday, February 13th at our very own Columbia City Gallery, GATHER (www.gatherseattle.com). The show will be open during that day and culminate in an evening event.

Come Spring we will partner with SEED Seattle to create opportunities, through free after school classes and weekend work parties, for our students and community to participate in creating both handmade clay and mosaic art for our garden beds.

If you have a piece of art you would like to donate or would like to volunteer to help with this project please let us know. You can bring in your art and drop it off at Room 207A. Please also include your contact information.

Thank you! This will be an amazing event and will truly showcase what a creative community we have.

Lily Hotchkiss: lihotchkiss@seattleschools.org Emily Nagel: eanagel@seattleschools.org



VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR NEWS...

FESTIVAL OF CHILDREN 6:30 Thursday December 18th (weather permitting)

We still need a few more folks to help this Thursday for the Festival of Children. If you are able to shuffle kids, set up or take down chairs or anything else that comes along that night, then please let me know!

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES.....

Remember when we get back it will be time to gear up for New Family Recruitment and the Martin Luther King Celebration. Be on the look out in your email and the bulletin for a volunteer opportunity that works for you! Deb Koon, Volunteer Coordinator at debkoon@comcast.net/723-7444



From the After School Programs Coordinator

Our After School classes end this week. Catalogs and registration forms for both Powerful Schools and our Middle School Programs will be available the first week of January. The After School Activity Bus will be run through this Thursday and then will start again with our Programs on Tuesday, January 20th.



Our very own Orca Zine, The Sound: the Voices of Orca, will be coming out this week! There will be a launch party on Wednesday in Room 308 from 3:15-4:30pm to celebrate the editors, contributors and instructor Heidi Raykeil. Please stop by and pick up a copy. They will also be available at The Festival of Children and by the office in our zine box. The Zine Team would like to request a .25 cents donation which will go back to the zine class for future editions!



Many thanks to **Coach Curtis Brown** for all the work he has put into helping build our after school athletics program. We had two awesome games with The New School this Fall and along with Ms.J are gearing up for both Boys and Girls Basketball this Winter.

Thanks! Lily Hotchkiss, lihotchkiss@seattleschools.org



Math Game Night Wrap-up

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers who helped make math game night a success:

Jeffrey Riley (EDM math coach), **Jennifer Gaer** (Explorations in Math coordinator),

Elizabeth Scott Rifer, Mary Elder, Beth Scott, Rod Gleysteen, Teresa McCann, Lisa Richmond, Meg Richman, Andy Podolske, Deb Koon, Rebecca Rowland, Terri Lovins, Kate Carroll, T.A. McCann, Kelly King, Rob McCann, Rima Ellard, and David True.

Thank you to Betty for her game donations that will be used as rainy day recess games. And special thanks to Blue Highway Games for bringing and teaching us fabulous new games. Visit Blue Highway at the top of Queen Anne at 2203 Queen Avenue North.

December Math Challenge

Students can turn in their monthly math challenge to the office by the end of the day on Friday to be eligible for prizes. Take a math challenge sheet from the bulletin board at the south end of the 2nd floor hallway, or copy this onto paper and turn it in marked with the student's name and grade/classroom:

3RD GRADE & OLDER:

Xtremeland has two entry booths. Together they let in 6 people every minute. On average at opening time there are 144 people waiting to get in the park. How long does it take to let everyone in? How long would it take if they were to add a third booth?

KINDERGARTEN – 2ND GRADE:

Xtremeland has 2 entry booths. Together they let in 6 people every minute. How many people get into the park in 5 minutes?



Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Will be on Friday January 16th

Mark your calendars, and plan to join the Orca community in celebrating the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. In 2009, the celebration will revolve around the theme *Words of Power -- Speak Your Truth, Seek the Dream*. Using Dr. King's life as an example to build upon, Orca students will work with each other and their teachers to examine how **perspective** and **viewpoint** are key elements of **racial** and **social justice**, and how words have the power to uplift and empower or, alternately, to perpetrate negative patterns of racism and intolerance.

This year, Orca will join with **New School** for a march and rally in Columbia City, and following this Orca students will return to school for a special assembly with student performances and art exhibits. Orca family and friends are free to join the festivities, which will take place throughout the day on Friday, January 16 (more detailed schedule of events to follow in early January).

Volunteers are needed for the day of the event, as well as days leading up to it. If you are interested in helping make this celebration a terrific success, please contact event planning co-chair Becca Aue at beccaue@hotmail.com. We will need help with refreshments, setting up, decorations, safety patrols during the march, and more. Please email Becca to find out the best job for you!



ORCA AUCTION IS APRIL 18TH!!

The Orca PTA's annual auction fundraiser will be happening this spring. The big push for getting donations will be in February, but we'd like to put a bug in your ear before you spend the holidays with family and friends. Maybe your mom makes great handmade dolls or your uncle is a woodworker who makes wooden toys? Maybe your cousin is an artist? If you are seeing a family member who doesn't live in the area, the holidays are a great time to ask them about donating something for the spring auction. The funds raised will go toward providing music education, after-school programs, art and PE supplies, and all the other very important things our PTA dollars support! Thanks for your help, and have a great break! LuAnn Wangsness and Carrie Sellar, Procurement chairs



First BASE Recycle Fundraiser:

Did you know that every year 300 million ink cartridges end up in landfills worldwide? Did you know that Americans will purchase over 100 million new cell phones this year and that 500 million phones weighing 250,000 tons could be headed for our landfills?

Help the Earth and help our before and after school program, First B.A.S.E. Drop off used printer cartridges (inkjet, laser, fax and copier), cell phones, laptops (must include power cords) and Palm Pilots (PDAs, Blackberries, etc.) Bring them to Room 106, First B.A.S.E. Remember – a half gallon of oil is saved each time a laser cartridge is remanufactured and almost 700,000 cartridges are thrown away every day! With your efforts, we can decrease that amount!