



# ORCA

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

### November 3, 2009

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**Website:** [www.orcapta.org](http://www.orcapta.org)

#### November

3 – Picture Day

5 – Board Mtg.

11 – Veteran's Day

12 – PTA General Mtg.

13 – Field Trip

16 – Potluck

17 – Field Trip/SCT

23-25 – All School Conferences

26-27 – Thanksgiving Holiday

**Garden**

**7PM**

**No School**

**7PM**

**3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders**

**6PM/3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade Band**

**Rms. 104, 105 & 209**

**No School (Students only)**

**No School**

#### THOUGHTS FROM SAM, ....



Hello, my name is Sam Reich-Dagnen and this is our 4<sup>th</sup> year at Orca K-8. My 9 year old twins, Blaise and Logan are in Phiho's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class. Having entered Orca in kindergarten in the last year of the "old" Orca building, we've certainly seen our share of changes in the few years and sometimes it feels like a very long time ago. When I began looking for a primary school to transition my children to from preschool, I was looking for a community that felt like an organic fit to where we had come from— Giddens School. I was looking for a school that matched our values and one that I felt met the core needs of my children who seemed so little I couldn't even imagine them in a school with other big kids! I was looking for a school that had high academic expectations for their students, a program that was child centered and really valued and respected the way all children learn and a school that was focused not just on the tangible elements like the 3-R's but the intangible learning as well like social justice and social responsibility. I was daunted at how I would recognize those qualities in an hour long school tour or reading about it on the website. A good friend of mine suggested that instead of visiting a kindergarten class (which I did,) that I should also spend some time in a third grade class. I've always thought of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade as a huge transition year so that seemed like a good idea. I ended up spending an hour in Phiho's class and was fortunate enough to listen in on one of his class meetings. What I heard were two 9 year olds having a very respectful disagreement about a perceived "stolen" pencil. As the discussion played itself out I was absolutely amazed at both the level of critical thinking that the children were exercising and the patience and respect their teacher gave them to solve the problem. I thought to myself, "this is the kind of place that will truly prepare my children for what's next—this is where I want my children to learn."

When I use the word, "we" when referring to starting our journey at Orca I do it intentionally because I feel strongly that our Orca community belongs to our whole family. Through our years at the school our children have made incredible friends (as have I) had some amazing teachers (as have I) and felt incredibly supported. The sense of community at Orca is unmatched and one that I've come to know as unique and extraordinarily special. As the VP for grades 3-5, I see my role as the following: to continue to foster that sense of community—especially within our grade band, to be an advocate—a voice for parents who need/want to escalate issues but can't or don't feel comfortable doing so and to create a sense of open communication between our 3-5 grade cohort and the school at large (teachers, administrators and others.) We are still working on getting together a full contact list of all the grade 3-5 families and I know the room coordinators have been working hard on that—this is the first step in opening the communication amongst our group. We are also planning a grade 3-5 potluck for November 16<sup>th</sup>—this really is just an opportunity to get to know some of the other families in our grade band and enjoy some downtime with the children. I'd like to encourage you to feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns or just to introduce yourself. Email is usually best, [sam@braincandykids.com](mailto:sam@braincandykids.com). I look forward to meeting all of you and to another wonderful year at Orca K-8.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### PE/Yoga Update

Yoga is a scientific system of physical and mental practices that originated in India more than three thousand years ago. Its purpose is to help each one of us achieve our highest potential and to experience enduring health and happiness. With Yoga, we can extend our healthy, productive years far beyond the accepted norm and, at the same time improve the quality of our lives.

It is important to remember that Yoga is not just a slow-motion calisthenics workout or superficial exercise routine. Anyone who practices correctly soon begins to appreciate the depth and breadth of its benefits. For this reason, I always recommend the parents to enroll in an adult Yoga class; then they can experience the effects of Yoga for themselves. After a number of lessons, they may experience some of the following benefits: the relaxation and softening of deep inner tensions and blockages, a sense of body-mind equilibrium, and a feeling of energetic buoyancy that can carry one right through the most difficult of days.

In our Orca yoga centre, I often remind my students not to strain or force themselves. Yoga is not a contest or a "quick fix." Like the proverbial story of the tortoise and the hare, Yoga favors quiet, consistent application over theatrical displays and superficial accomplishments. It does not require that we transform ourselves overnight into something beyond our capacity. Yoga begins by accepting our limitations, whatever they may be, and working with this self-acceptance as a base. In our daily practice, we gradually learn to transcend our limitations, one by one, and in this way, real and lasting progress is possible.

At the beginning of each Yoga class, we employ several pranayama(breathing) practices in order to prepare students for the asanas(yoga poses) that follow. Pranayama and asanas work hand-in-hand to balance and integrate different physiological functions and to help dissolve emotional blocks and negative habit patterns that can obstruct the flow of vital energy within the body.

Purification (cleansing) practices include: a pranayama practice for eliminating excess phlegm and mucus from the respiratory system; an eye exercise; and a special technique for isolating and rolling the abdominal muscles. When properly performed, this last technique gives a powerful self-massage to the organs of the abdomen, resulting in improved digestion. Music and sound therapy use rhythm and melody, combined with hand movements and sound combinations, to develop concentration, breath coordination, communication and motor skills, as well as appreciation for the essentials of tone and harmony. In addition, studies have shown that the repetition of certain sound patterns can produce a calming and healing effect on the nervous system and psyche. The concept of sound therapy is as ancient and natural as the chirping of birds, the pitter-patter of a summer rainfall, or the internal rhythms of our own heartbeat and respiration. By combining sound therapy techniques with traditional Yoga practices, it is possible to create an ideal learning environment for all levels of Yoga practitioners.

Deep Relaxation is traditionally the conclusion and culmination of every Yoga session. During 10 - 20 minutes of quiet and immobility, deep relaxation allows the body to absorb all the benefits of the previous asanas, pranayama, and cleansing practices.

For children, adolescents and adults, deep relaxation begins as they lie down on their backs with palms up and legs spread one to two feet apart. Using soft background music and muted lighting, the instructor gently guides students through the relaxation process, encouraging the release of physical tension and mental stress by bringing the attention to various parts of the body. Visualization and meditation techniques are used in this part of the practice, as students direct their minds to points of tension and areas of blockage in their bodies. This is followed by a short period of unstructured relaxation, including noticing the in- and out-flow of the breath, and practicing awareness, undisturbed by distractions from the physical body. In life, it is necessary to learn how to relax after a period of activity. People spend approximately one third of their time in sleep, trying to recoup the energy and vitality they expended during the day. Unfortunately, many never achieve this objective because they haven't learned the essentials of relaxation. Relaxation practices in Yoga are different than sleeping, but their benefits are similar, and the principles of deep relaxation can be applied with equal effectiveness to our sleeping hours as well as our waking ones. When properly done, deep relaxation helps to anchor and stabilize the mind's awareness in a pool of deep tranquility and peace. – Jupinder



### **VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR NEWS.....**

### **MANY THANKS FOR A GREAT HARVEST FESTIVAL!**

The Harvest Festival was a fun day filled with great food, fresh cider, live chickens and lots of smiles! Special thanks to:

- Roberta Kranz, Sarah Hufbauer, and the Garden Crew (Anthony, Briahn and Beth) for organizing this event
- Kate Malkin for working the cider press station all day!
- Ms. Katherine's 7th and 8th graders for being so helpful at all of the stations
- Room Coordinators for organizing their classrooms
- The Farmers Market farmers who donated apples, pumpkins, tomatoes, onions, and garlic
- Everyone who contributed food, pumpkins and their time and energy!!

**STACY STILL NEEDS HELP WITH SET-UP AND CLEAN-UP!**

Can you help at 8:00 am for set-up or 9:30 am for clean-up any day this week?

Stacy's art class is painting a mural in the cafeteria and a couple of extra hands would really help!

**DEB KOON, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR [debkoon@comcast.net](mailto:debkoon@comcast.net)/723-7444 or 612-1080**

**PE NEWS**

The gym was transformed on Friday and filled with spooky PE activities for the classes who had PE, it was fun to change the gym's environment, lots of smiling faces came to awe and ooo :) If you see Ms. J rolling by in the halls it's because PE(B)"Sports" has begun a Skating unit, students will be learning to skate for the next 3 weeks. If your student(s) have skates or in-lines, they're allowed to bring them along with a helmet if they have PE w/Ms. J in the next 3 weeks. We hope to schedule an all school skate party just prior to winter/holiday break, more details to follow.

**Athletics update:** I've been busy acquiring our coaching staff for the upcoming Basketball season. **BOYS TRY-OUTS** will this Tuesday, 11/3 & Thursday, 11/5 from 3-4pm in the gym, please provide transportation arrangements for your student(s) after TRY-OUTS days. Boys and girls basketball practice begins the week of Nov. 16th, schedules to be sent home within 2 weeks. Basketball registration went home with students on Monday, please read and return all forms asap.

**Questions/info: 252-9614**

Thanks, Ms. J  
PE Teacher/Athletic Dir.



There will be a meeting to discuss the future of music at Orca on **Tuesday, November 10 at 3:00**. Our goal for the meeting is to gather input that will help form a vision of what we'd like to offer in our elementary and middle school music programs. In order to have the best representation of what we, as a community, would like to build, we need to hear from as many of you as possible. If you are unable to attend, please send your ideas on this matter to Deb Schaaf at [d.schaaf@comcast.net](mailto:d.schaaf@comcast.net).



**PTSA General Meeting - November 12th at 7:00 pm - Cafeteria**

Please come join us for our monthly meeting in the cafeteria for a community discussion on a 3 part topic: "Student Well-being". Our first topic will be Behavior expectations. What type of environments do our students and teachers thrive in most? This and many more thoughts and ideas will be discussed. Come join us. Childcare is provided in the library. At the next GM in January, we will talk about Positive Discipline. Thank you!! . koichi kitazumi . 206.856.0571 . "don't swim alone, be herd"



Hello grade band 3-5!!! To kick off the new school year (well, kind of—I know it's a bit late) and foster community, cooperation and communication, we're organizing a pot luck for all of our families on **Monday, November 16th at 6pm in the Orca cafeteria**. This is a great opportunity to meet some of the other families that you may not know, ask questions, eat, drink and have a good time! It is a potluck so the way we'd like to organize is by last name.

**A-G:** Salads/sides  
**N-S:** Sweets

**H-M:** Main  
**T-Z:** Drinks

If you can bring something to contribute, great—if not, no worries, we hope you'll be able to come and share. We hope to see you there!!!  
Sam



### **PCC Scrip Cards!!**

Every purchase you make at the PCC Natural Market should be benefiting Orca! If you do not already have a PCC Scrip card, or would like additional cards for friends & family, please contact

[Sabranie@hotmail.com](mailto:Sabranie@hotmail.com) or 206-618-1280 to order!

PCC scrip cards are used like a debit card at checkout. They come pre-loaded and can be re-filled at any PCC register. Orca earns 5% cash back on every purchase made using these cards which amounts to thousands of dollars each year. Please help support our PTSA by ordering your PCC Scrip card today!



### **Say "CHEESE!"**

Our second round of student portraits has been completed! If your child was photographed on October 5<sup>th</sup>, you should have received a notice containing instructions and a password to access their online photos last week. If you did not receive your password, please call or email so that I can get that to you.

Students whose portraits were taken on 11/3 will be sent home with a password to access their online photos in the next few weeks.

\*\*Remember, every portrait purchase benefits our PTSA! Questions or ordering assistance? Contact [Sabranie@hotmail.com](mailto:Sabranie@hotmail.com) or 206-618-1280\*\*

\*ORDER DEADLINE IS JANUARY 30<sup>th</sup> before prices go up 20% (yes, you can still order throughout the year, but you'll pay more!)

\*Enjoy your portraits!!

Classroom \_\_\_\_\_, Password \_\_\_\_\_

Questions? Contact [Sabranie@hotmail.com](mailto:Sabranie@hotmail.com) or 206-618-1280



**Alvarez Brothers, Kittitas Greenhouse, Tonnemakers and Full Circle Farm all donated/discounted their fresh goods for ORCA's Harvest Festival this year.**

**If you'd like to know more about today's local farmers, check out GOOD FOOD the movie TV premiere - tune in!**

Thursday, November 12 – 10 p.m.  
KCTS/9 Seattle and KYVE/47 Yakima

Brief description of the program:

As we discover how precarious the global food system may be, something remarkable is happening in the fields and orchards of the Pacific Northwest. After leaving the land for 50 years, family farmers are making a comeback. They are growing much healthier food, and more food per acre, while using less energy and water than factory farms. For decades Northwest agriculture has been focused on a few big crops for export. But climate change and the end of cheap energy mean that each region needs to produce more of its own food and to grow it more sustainably. GOOD FOOD visits innovative farmers, farmers' markets, stores, restaurants and public officials who are developing a more sustainable food system for all.

<http://www.goodfoodthemovie.org>

Sarah Hufbauer Garden/Nutrition Committee



the  
**COLUMBIA CITY COMMUNITY CHOIR**

directed by Kathleen Tracy

Tuesdays 7:30-9p  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
3818 S Angeline Seattle, WA 98118  
\$10 suggested donation

The Columbia City Community Choir is launched, and we are having a blast! Here are a few comments from some of your neighbors:

"The choir is definitely a joyful noise. It soothes my busy mind and sends me back into my week refreshed and humming."

"This choir is *exactly* what I've been hoping to find. Getting together once a week, close to home and singing in a group with a leader. I like the spiritual and multi-cultural songs."

"Thanks for directing the choir - it's a treat to sing with a creative, accomplished, laid back, inclusive director with neighbors!"

The Columbia City Community Choir is not affiliated with any religious organization and welcomes people of all ages and cultures to come together in a fun, inclusive and spirited singing community. There is no audition, and no singing experience is required, just a desire to sing in harmony with others. No music reading ability is necessary as much of the music is learned in the oral tradition. The repertoire includes a rich variety of songs and chants from many different cultures and singing traditions.

If you have always been a singer you'll love this choir. If you are new to singing or have been told you can't sing . . . this is the place for you. See an example of what we're up to at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CA1-L9vQIk>

Kathleen Tracy is a singer/songwriter, composer, teacher, workshop presenter and choir director who has lived in Southeast Seattle for the past 20 years. She can be contacted at: [kathleentracy@speakeasy.net](mailto:kathleentracy@speakeasy.net) 206 725.0342