
VALLEY VIEWS

A Newsletter for Members of the Valley School Community
September, 2011 Edition



At The Valley School we believe that all children have a right to an unfettered start in life through a good education. We do this by honoring the proven developmental stages of childhood, understanding individual differences and helping children in all areas of development including the cognitive, social, emotional, creative and physical spheres. Our educational challenge is to create an exciting intellectual atmosphere while still emphasizing basic skills acquisition.

Upcoming Events

Sept. 22	Adult potlucks for all grades, 6 p.m.
Sept. 27	Picture Day
Sept. 27	Camille Hayward speaks to fifth grade parents about ISEE; Meeting Room, 7 p.m.
Oct. 6	Curriculum Night for all grades, 7 p.m.
Oct. 7 & 13	Parent/teacher conference days (no school)
Oct. 14	Teacher In-Service day (no school)
Oct. 1-2	Millersylvania week-end (see below for information)
Oct. 22	Gala and Fundraiser; 415 Westlake
Nov. 11	Veterans Day (no school)

Calendar Highlights

THE 2011 GALA & FALL FUNDRAISER: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

Save the date! This is our awesome and amazing dinner and fundraiser for the adult Valley community. You don't want to miss it!

There are lots of opportunities to join in the party planning!

Calling all:

- dessert makers
- calligraphers
- computer graphic artists
- and just willing and able folks!

To find out more - Contact Gail gail@thevalleyschool.org or any of the Gala Co-Chairs: Mary Anne Martin mastusser@comcast.net, Margaux Huchting margauxhuchting@comcast.net, or Lisa Bontje lisa@bontjeco.com. Thank you to the great parents who have volunteered to be classroom art project leaders:

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Yirim Seck (Pre-K); Anna Davidson and Sophie Barnett-Dyer(K); Marcie Lombardi and Anna Larocco (1); Tina McDermott and Emily Barrett (2); Karen Conover (3); Debbie Meisel and Maggie Orth (4); Chris Brauner (5)

Millersylvania Family Week-end This Fall: October 1-2

A Note from Parent Leaders, Maggie Orth and Damon Smith

For newcomers to Valley School: Held once or twice a year, this is an overnight all-school family event run by parents at Millersylvania State Park ten miles south of Olympia. Kids play games on the beautiful grounds, ride bikes, and boat on the lake. Adults make friends and cook and organize meals, events and games. Millersylvania starts with lunch on Saturday. Dinner and a bonfire follow. Families can stay in cabins, or go home. Breakfast and capture the flag happen Sunday morning.

We (Maggie and Damon) have only two more years as Valley parents. We are looking for four to six parents to train to take over the Millersylvania mantle in 2013. Parents with older kids, or with a spouse who can handle the kids alone, are best for this role. Please contact Maggie or Damon if you are interested.

We will be sending out sign up sheets and event information by email in the next week or so. To help make the experience safer and more successful, we will be asking parents to help with supervision at various locations and times. Contact: Maggie Orth morth@ifmachines.com or Damon Smith dsmith@ipc Allison.com

Board of Directors News

Farewell and Many Thanks to Retiring Board Members

Beth Weisberg and Paula Rees, long-time members, retired this spring after many valuable years on the board.

Beth was a classroom teacher in the early years of the school and a huge support to Founder Pat Overy. She was instrumental in facilitating the transition of the school into non-profit status. After leaving Valley, Beth earned a PhD in Religious Education and continued to make important contributions to the educational practices at Valley. Beth's granddaughter, Lila Greene, graduated from Valley this last spring.

Paula and her husband, Jeff Thompson, enrolled their daughter, Petra, in Valley's pre-primary program in 1989, and she was in the first fifth grade graduating class. Throughout their time as parents, they were instrumental in developing our expanding campus. After Petra's graduation, Paula joined the board bringing not only her commitment to the school but also

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her professional design expertise and talent. Their daughter, Petra, has recently joined The Valley School Board of Directors.

Welcome to Recent Additions to the Valley School Board of Directors

Two early Valley fifth grade graduates have now joined the board, Petra Rees Thompson and Andy Rupp. Here are details on their lives after they both graduated from Valley in 1996.

Petra: After Valley School, I graduated from The Northwest School and Western Washington University. After college I began working for lululemon athletica managing the Bellevue Square store. I then took a brief sabbatical and studied fashion history at Parsons in Paris and NABA in Milan. Returning to lululemon athletica, I am the regional manager for WA, OR and ID. I enjoy traveling for business and pleasure. You can find me practicing yoga and playing basketball regularly.

Andy: I attended The Northwest School for junior high and Roosevelt for high school. I went to The George Washington University in Washington DC and got a BA in International Relations. I am fluent in Spanish and speak Quechua. I have lived extensively in South America. I am greatly interested in Intercultural Bilingual Education and contextualized curriculum. Currently I am living in Queen Anne and working for Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

New Board Officers

Dave Walter—President and Treasurer

Susan Lammers—Vice-President

David Douglas--Secretary

Bulletins from the Board

New board president, Dave Walter, will be sending occasional emails to the parent body to keep them updated on important school news this year.

Community News and Information

Introducing Our New Music Teacher: Sari Breznau

Sari is the director and co-founder of *Singing in the Rain*, family choirs in Seattle. She is currently completing her Masters in Choral Conducting at Cal State LA in the summers, and she holds a BA in Music from Western Washington University, where she was the choir queen, acting as Concert Choir President, University Choir Assistant Conductor and Music Librarian.

Sari is Music Director at the Church of Mary Magdalene (serving homeless women) and a music teacher at TOPS K-8 alternative school. Sari is a performing artist with Circus Contraption, Seattle's one-ring circus, and Orkestar Zirkonium, a Balkan-inspired brass band.

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She believes wholeheartedly in music's ability to bring people together and inspire community. At Valley Sari is working with kindergarten through fifth grade students.

Room Representatives for 2011-12

Many thanks to the following parents who have generously volunteered their time and energy to be this year's room reps. The job description for this position includes:

- coordinating assistance to classroom teachers
- facilitating communication among parents, teachers and administrators
- communicating with administration on issues of general concern within the classroom or the greater community

Pre-kindergarten: Michelle Ward McGee

Kindergarten: Stacey Guerrero

First Grade: Paul Nyhan

Second Grade: Annalisa Gironi

Third Grade: Molly Bishop

Fourth Grade: Lauren Plawner

Fifth Grade: Amy Egger

Parking Rules to Protect Our Children

Thanks to all who have taken care to park carefully and safely at Valley! For the safety of your children, *please be sure all those who bring children to or from school know not to park across any street bordering the school.* Thanks for your cooperation with this important school policy.

Classroom Snapshots: Spring Thematic Units

Pre-K with Jill & Kathryn

Jill reports that pre-kindergarten is off to a superb start:

I am astonished at how quickly the children pick up all the little school routines. I see kids lending a hand to classmates they barely know and making up cooperative games. Inside they draw, work with play dough, make dinner in the dress up area, bead necklaces, and explore the sensory table, marble mazes and trains. Outside they wash toys, blast off to the moon in the rocket, push each other on the swings. They're a lively and impressive group who will keep me on my toes and teach me a great deal this year!

Kindergarten with Lindsay and Melissa

Kindergarten is starting off the year learning about trees. With summer coming to an end and fall approaching, we can take our cues from the natural world around us. We will observe

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and reflect on the importance of trees to us and our planet, as well as learn about the different parts of a tree, how to identify different types of trees, compare and contrast different categories of leaves. By creating nature journals, we will have many chances to draw trees, press leaves, do bark rubbings, and we might even climb a tree or two!

First Grade with Connie

Apples are everywhere in first grade this fall. The children are tasting and graphing their favorites. With an old-fashioned peeler, they prepared apples for sauce and fed long strips of peel to the delighted classroom guinea pigs. The students will learn about Johnny Appleseed and other pioneers who carefully planted apple trees across America through poems, songs and books. Science opportunities abound as the class sprouts apple seeds, makes leaf and bark rubbings and learns the inner workings of apple trees. On September 22, we will dance the Tango and listen to Jazz music to celebrate Johnny Appleseed's birthday while consuming Jazz, Tango and Jonathan apples!

Second Grade with Erica and Cindy

"Inch by inch and row by row," the second graders are getting their hands into the dirt and exploring the world of plants. Plants are being investigated in many ways, including being identified, dissected, and placed in terrariums, and used to dye and print on fabric. Employing all five senses, the class is coming to understand and appreciate the importance of plants in our world.

Third Grade with Brooke

Third grade is beginning the year exploring the diverse and fascinating world of the honeybee. Specifically, we will be peering into the complex social structure of these amazing insects, discovering parallels between human society and the bee colony. Democracy, community, and teamwork are all part of the daily lives of honeybees, just as they are part of our classroom community and the world at large.

Fourth Grade with Mary

Fourth grade is starting the year with the annual American Colonial thematic study. During this unit students will learn about the people who started the original 13 colonies and events of the American Revolution that led to the formation of our democracy. Fourth graders will compare and contrast the daily lives of early colonists, as well as participate in simulations of the major events that gave voice and power to the American people. Fourth graders will explore the meaning of freedom and the writing of our Constitution.

Fifth Grade with Laura

Our year is starting with a unit inspired by the Dr. Seuss™ book, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* This will be an exploration of physical places to go, involving mapping and orienteering skills, as

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well as places we can go in our imaginations and in our lives with creativity and goal-setting. Throughout the year, I will help the students explore underlying themes that connect units, such as interdependence, sustainability, and creativity. These recurring ideas will help students deepen their understanding of prior information, make relationships with new knowledge, and reinforce important truths that cut across multiple disciplines of study.

Extracurricular Offerings

After School Programs This Fall



- **Fall Cross Country** Time to lace up your running shoes and come join Erica and Macey for fun and games in the sunshine with your friends. Develop your running form, speed, and endurance through games and drills. Practice will be every Wednesday after school. Runners will receive their own t-shirt. During our first practice, runners will help design the t-shirt and workouts. The season will culminate with a longer run to a destination for a special treat! **It is not too late to join.**

Who: 4th and 5th Grade Students

When: Wednesday, September 14-October 26; 3:30-4:30 p.m. Cost: \$150
Please make checks payable to The Valley School. If financial assistance is needed, email Erica at erica@thevalleyschool.org

- **Chess:** Parent Sally Bock coordinates the Thursday afternoon (3:30-4:30 p.m.) chess class with chess master, Bill Schill. Third through fifth graders are invited to enroll on a first-come first-served basis. New and/or inexperienced players are welcome. As of 9/16 one last space is open. Class meets in the administration building starting Sept 22. The fee is \$130 for 10 sessions. Parents are asked to volunteer once a session to proctor and provide snack. Contact Sally : sbock@pyramidcommunications.com
- **Mandarin** language class with Sponge language school: Registration is now open for 2011-2012 after-school Mandarin classes. Taught by native-speaking teachers, children learn functional language and useful vocabulary through activities, storytelling, drama, music and art. Continuing and new students grades K-4 are welcome and will be divided by age and level if enough students are interested. For more information or to register email Sponge directly at info@spongeschool.com or call Kelly at (206) 227-7138.

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