

AWS Bulletin

ACACIA WALDORF SCHOOL Educating the Child: Head ~ Heart ~ Hands

SY 2015-2016 – Issue No. 5 (September 2015)

MESSAGE FROM THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

September 18, 2015

Dear Acacia Community,

Congratulations to all for a successful and memorable *Araw ng Wika* celebration! Hearts were moved that morning when students from classes 3 to 12, teachers and staff members alike shared their talents in both traditional and modern music, song, poetry, dance, and movement. From the Kundiman, the OPM to modern rap, the Tinikling, Singkil, Pandanggo Sa Ilaw, Maglalatik, and many more memorable performances, our Filipino culture was showcased and appreciated in a wholesome and artistic manner leaving the community with a sense of pride and gratitude.

Celebrating festivals, whether in a grand or simple scale, is a very important part of the annual rhythm of Waldorf schools. Rudolf Steiner mentions in one of his lectures how "Rhythm (be it daily, weekly, monthly or annually) restores power." Practicing this in community is a blessing and opportunity to be part of an extended family. Though the essence of a festival never changes from year to year, we ourselves are constantly changing, growing, and learning. Our daily choices in life continue to mold and transform us and we never remain the same. Every year, festivals are thus also renewed and we can choose to observe them afresh with new eyes and childlike wonder.

We are now approaching another significant festival of the year, the Feast of the Archangel Michael, known as Michaelmas. The central image is the Archangel Michael, shining sword in hand, bravely setting out to overcome the fearsome dragon. The theme is Courage, Faith, Trust, and facing our dragons, those that ensnare and paralyze us and hold us back from truly living. Summoning the will to tame these dragons is an essential step towards freedom. Michaelmas is also a time to turn our gaze inward in thoughtfulness and reflection, just as nature itself is now slowly spiraling inward, with the days growing shorter and nighttime growing longer. Mindful of the season, we look at our daunting challenges and uncertainties in a different light, no longer as unsurmountable burdens but rather as opportunities to summon the courage that lies deep within us. Recognizing the ever-present help of the spiritual world throughout our lives, the virtues of Faith and Trust are rekindled and strengthened in our souls.

Our beloved Acacia Waldorf School is also in this process of growth and transformation. Our community, adults and children alike, spearheaded by our Parent Council, has enthusiastically stepped forward this year to undertake the eco-conscious project of building a school library with the deeper intention of awakening us to our social responsibility towards Mother Earth and our environment. And the presence of the Archangel Michael strengthens our courage and resolve to succeed in this endeavor. During this coming Season of Michaelmas, with renewed faith and courage may we guard in our hearts this sense of purpose and meaning.

With our warmest regards,

Trina Galvez For the College of Teachers

VPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Octobor

September

Annual Play

Jepienibei	-	October	
21-25	GS/US Practical Projects Week	21-22	"The Nose Competition" by James Sachs, adapted by David Mitchell
25	Idul Adha (Official Holiday)		for 7 th Grade, Kawayan Class 7 Annual Play, Michael Hall (High
24-25	Kinder: Health Break		School Building)
<u>28</u>	Regular Classes Resume for All Levels	23	UN Day Bahaginan
		24	"You Can't Take It With You", A
	Submission of Fun Run Registration Forms to the Main Teachers		Comedy in 3 Acts, by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman,
29	Michaelmas Festival		Kalachuchi Class Senior Play with
	Market Day (Parent Council)		the participation of Kaimito Class 10, AUP Finster Hall, Silang Cavite,
<u>October</u>			7:30 p.m.
1–6	Transformative Power of Art V	26–Nov 2	Upper School Practical Projects
2	Michaelmas obstacle course (Half-		Week
	day for GS)	26–Nov 3	Kinder Semestral break
11	Fun Run with the Sun!		Grade School Projects Week
20-22	"St. George and the Dragon" by Claire McConnell, Lily Class 2		

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Class 11—Guava Cooking Club

you Have ever wondered how hungry your children get after a long week's work? Then wonder no more. We have the place for you! Come feed their stomachs with the delicious food of the Cooking Club every Friday at 3:30 pm. Visit us at the high school building, Michael Hall.

For further information, please contact: AWS Administration Office Phone No.: 0917-554-0435 / 0998-980-8185

EVENTS



On our 12th year, the Admin office and Faculty Room finally have a permanent place they can call their own. With grateful and joyous hearts, teachers, staff, parents and students came together last August 19 for a simple ceremonious blessing of our new building.

With a more efficient and organized working space, we hope to serve you even better. Our teachers now have a haven for some quiet time in the middle of the day to prepare their lessons, unwind or just take stock and center themselves before their next class. Enjoy the privacy of our new conference room where we presently hold Parent Council meetings and the Adult Art and Book Study. When not in use for official school meetings or activities, adults and students alike are welcome to some quiet time reading in this bright and airy space.

Also, please take note that the Clinic has officially transferred to the Admin building, a much more convenient location closer to the entrance gate of the school. Parents can now more easily take their children home when they are not feeling well.



Buwan Ng Wika

Our kindergarten children experienced our rich Filipino culture as they concluded the Buwan ng Wika in the morning of August 27. They sang Filipino folk songs, played Filipino games, came in different traditional Filipino attire and learned about "Ibong Adarna" through a puppet show. They all went home with small tokens, which they got from the traditional "pabitin" game. It was truly a festive Filipino celebration for the youngest members of Acacia.



Eco-Brick For Our Clay Library

Indeed, lemon can be turned into lemonade. Better still, trash can be turned into treasure! The whole community is now starting to build the walls of the Clay library with 1.5 liter plastic soft drink bottles, soft plastic trash and a stick. Each student is requested to bring 3 bottles to complete the 500-bottle target.

Faithful to our mission to help save the environment, we encourage everyone to participate and in the process, create the sanctuary for our children's imagination to flourish. Let's come together and build our clay library!

A simple reminder! No need to buy more plastic bags to fill those bottles. There's enough to find on our streets, mountains, rivers and even our own neighbor's homes! Let's take this opportunity to clean up so Mother Earth can breathe better again!

EVENTS

AWS Among International Schools

Acacia Waldorf School participated in an International School Fair hosted by Crown Relocations last Sept 5 at The Union Church, Makati City with over 20 participating schools presenting their curriculum and locations. The fair's goal was to inform expats who have relocated to the Philippines about the different International Schools existing in the area.



Many thanks to our three enthusiastic representatives, Laarni Aranas, Lenifer Carlos and Binky Manlapaz for representing Acacia. They prepared a beautiful table with samples of our students' schoolwork. Teacher Laarni was chosen as one of the panelists in " Demystifying International Curriculums" where she opened the eyes and hearts of the audience to understand more about the Waldorf curriculum. Our Acacia representatives themselves were inspired to listen to other schools whose genuine aspirations are also to educate children the best way they believe in. There is indeed room for all, especially when in the center of our goals and intentions lies the child.



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Practical Projects Week

Next week is Practical Projects Week. There will be no regular classes this week. Instead, some classes are using this time to hold their camps and field trips. Students will also be assigned to do home-based projects at this time.

> Van James is back! And this time, the theme is the transforming adolescent.

The Transformative Power of Art Part V Art: Lifeblood of the Soul, Rite of Passage to Adulthood

Date: October 1-6, 2015 Venue: Prado Farms Lubao, Pampanga, Philippines

Adolescence means "to grow up", and it is a tremendously dynamic and dramatic time in the life of a human being -- physically, psychologically, and spiritually. It is traditionally a time of rites of passage into adulthood as it is the period of the soul's birth, the unfolding of an independent inner life of thinking, feeling, and impulses of will.

This Transformative Power of the Arts (TPOA) session invites adults to explore this year's theme on adolescence, particularly how art can aid the healthy development of the adolescent's soul-life and lead towards the discovery of a self-aware, independent "I," or individuality. We will see how the "pedagogical law" of Rudolf Steiner is applied to working with teens and how art and the inner path of the artist-teacher becomes an essential key to the transformation of the youthful soul.

In the words of Rudolf Steiner: "Art must become the lifeblood of the soul."

🔪 Featured Article 🧹

The Impact of Technology on the Developing Child (by Cris Rowan, Pediatric Occupational Therapist)

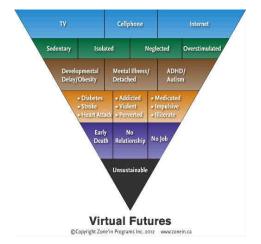
Reminiscing about the good old days when we were growing up is a memory trip well worth taking when trying to understand the issues facing the children of today. A mere 20 years ago, children used to play outside all day, riding bikes, playing sports and building forts. Masters of imaginary games, children of the past created their own form of play that didn't require costly equipment or parental supervision. Children of the past moved... a lot, and their sensory world was nature based and simple. In the past, family time was often spent doing chores, and children had expectations to meet on a daily basis. The dining room table was a central place where families came together to eat and talk about their day, and after dinner became the center for baking, crafts and homework.

Today's families are different. Technology's impact on the 21st century family is fracturing its very foundation, and causing a disintegration of core values that long ago were the fabric that held families together. Juggling school, work, home, and community lives, parents now rely heavily on communication, information, and transportation technology to make their lives faster and more efficient. Entertainment technology (TV, Internet, video games, iPads, cell phones) has advanced so rapidly, that families have scarcely noticed the significant impact and changes to their family structure and lifestyles. A 2010 Kaiser Foundation study showed that elementary aged children use on average 7.5 hours per day of entertainment technology, 75 percent of these children have TV's in their bedrooms, and 50 percent of North American homes have the TV on all day. Gone is dining room table conversation, replaced by the "big Children now rely on technology for the majority of their play, grossly limiting challenges to their creativity and imaginations, as well as limiting necessary challenges to their bodies to achieve optimal sensory and motor development. Sedentary bodies bombarded with chaotic sensory stimulation are resulting in delays in attaining child developmental milestones, with subsequent negative impact on basic foundation skills for achieving literacy. Hard-wired for high speed, today's young are entering school struggling with self regulation and attention skills necessary for learning, eventually becoming significant behavior management problems for teachers in the classroom.

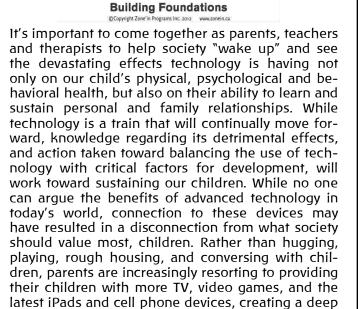
So what is the impact of technology on the developing child? Children's developing sensory, motor, and attachment systems have biologically not evolved to accommodate this sedentary, yet frenzied and chaotic nature of today's technology. The impact of rapidly advancing technology on the developing child has seen an increase of physical, psychological and behavior disorders that the health and education systems are just beginning to detect, much less understand. Child obesity and diabetes are now national epidemics in both Canada and the U.S., causally related to technology overuse. Diagnoses of ADHD, autism, coordination disorder, developmental delays, unintelligible speech, learning difficulties, sensory processing disorder, anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders are associated with technology overuse, and are increasing at an alarming rate. An urgent closer look at the critical factors for meeting developmental milestones, and the subsequent impact of technology on those factors, would assist parents, teachers and health professionals to better understand the complexities of this issue, and help create effective strategies to reduce technology use.



tion skills for eventual school entry. Young children require 2-3 hours per day of active rough and tumble play to achieve adequate sensory stimulation to their vestibular, proprioceptive and tactile systems. Tactile stimulation received through touching, hugging and play is critical for the development of praxis, or planned movement patterns. Touch also activates the parasympathetic system lowering cortisol, adrenalin and anxiety. Nature and "green space" has not only a calming influence on children, but also is attention restorative and promotes learning.



Further analysis of the impact of technology on the developing child indicates that while the vestibular, proprioceptive, tactile and attachment systems are under stimulated, the visual and auditory sensory systems are in "overload." This sensory imbalance creates huge problems in overall neurological development, as the brain's anatomy, chemistry and pathways become permanently altered and impaired. Young children who are exposed to violence through TV and video games are in a high state of adrenalin and stress, as the body does not know that what they are watching is not real. Children who overuse technology report persistent body sensations of overall "shaking", increased breathing and heart rate, and a general state of "unease." This can best be described as a persistent hypervigalent sensory system, still "on alert" for the oncoming assault. While the long term effects of this chronic state of stress in the developing child are unknown, we do know that chronic stress in adults results in a weakened immune system and a variety of serious diseases and disorders.



Calm/

Focused

Parasympathetic

Nature

Regulated

Tactile/Attachment

Strong/

Coordinated

Touch

Vestibular/

Move

6

(A frequent guest on CBC radio, TV, and featured in CBC TV's Doc Zone documentary "Are We Digital Dummies", Cris Rowan speaks passionately about how technology is eroding children's foundations for development and learning. Cris Rowan is a pediatric occupational therapist who has witnessed dramatic changes how children play, resulting in rising levels of obesity, developmental delay and mental disorders. Cris has first-hand understanding and knowledge of how technology has caused profound changes in a child's development, behavior and their ability to learn. Cris is CEO of Zone'in Programs Inc. offering products, workshops and training to improve child health and enhance academic performance. Cris designed Zone'in, Move'in, Unplug'in and Live'in educational products for elementary children to address the rise in developmental delays, behavior disorders, and technology overuse. Cris has performed over 200 Foundation Series Workshops on topics such as sensory integration and attention, motor development and literacy, attachment formation and addictions, early intervention, technology overuse, media literacy programs, and school environmental design for the 21st century for teachers, parents and health professionals throughout North America.)

and irreversible chasm between parent and child.

Reference:

http://www.waldorftoday.com/2014/06/the-impact-oftechnology-on-the-developing-child/

