



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

AWS Bulletin

SY 2015-2016 — Issue No. 8 (December 2015)

MESSAGE FROM THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

December 22, 2015

Dear Acacia Community,

"Emmanuel, Emmanuel, what are we that you have loved us so well?
A song on high, a Savior's nigh, Angel hosts rejoice Thy story to tell.

- *Emmanuel, by Maureen Ward*

From ancient times, mankind has always used stories to teach and pass on wisdom from one generation to the next. We learn best through the images and pictures that the story brings. Stories penetrate our lives and our consciousness in its deepest levels. It is a fundamental part of the Waldorf pedagogy. The children listen to the stories and eventually come to realize that they, too, have their own story to tell. And like our own lives, the significance of certain events comes to the fore only when the story is seen in its entirety like essential pieces that complete a puzzle.

The Christmas Story has always been considered one of the greatest stories ever told, with its message of Peace, Joy, Hope, Courage, and ultimately, Love. Last week, for the first time in Acacia, the faculty and staff retold this wondrous story for the older students and the community by presenting *The Shepherds' Play*, an annual tradition in many Steiner schools around the world. The following day, a much shorter, solemn reenactment of the Nativity was presented to the younger children. The stormy weather just days before created some challenges and uncertainties for these productions. Yet, like all adversities we are able to weather, it contributed to a perfect atmosphere for both evenings by bringing in a cool breeze most fitting to the scenario. Putting these events together was a test of wills. But in the end, the story was told, all in the effort to usher in the Spirit of Awe and Wonder as it happened two thousand years ago. It is truly our inner preparation that allows this glorious and sacred event to quietly live anew in our hearts each year. To be able to share this in community is the ultimate gift.

Christmas Eve and the nights that follow right up to the eve of the Epiphany are known as *The Twelve Holy Nights*. It is a time for inner reflection, a blessed opportunity to ponder in gratitude over the year that was and the year that will be. It is also a time when one may gain answers to living questions and inspiration for the coming year.

Acacia Waldorf School also continues to write its own story. It has been an amazing and fruitful journey since our story first began. On the second week of the New Year, members of the community which will include the Board of Trustees, the College of Teachers, the Parent Council, the Administration and other members who have been carriers of Acacia all these years will hold ***A Gathering for Acacia's Future*** (a planning weekend). Together, we will reflect on where we have come from as a school community and where we would like to see ourselves in the coming years. We ask that you keep Acacia in your thoughts and hearts during this sacred season that we may have an enlightened and fruitful gathering.

We wish you all a Peaceful, Blessed and Meaningful Christmas.

With our warmest regards,
Trina Galvez
For the College of Teachers

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

December

- 1 Lighting of 1st Advent candle
- 4 Kinder Advent Spiral
- 5 Grades 1-3 Advent Spiral
- 7 2nd Monday of Advent
- 8 Market Day
- 14 3rd Monday of Advent
- 17 Christmas Festival (Gr 3-12)
- 18 Christmas Festival (Pre School (PS)-Gr. 4)
- Faculty Christmas Party
- 18-Jan 4 US Christmas Break
- 18-Jan 5 PS/GS Christmas Break

January

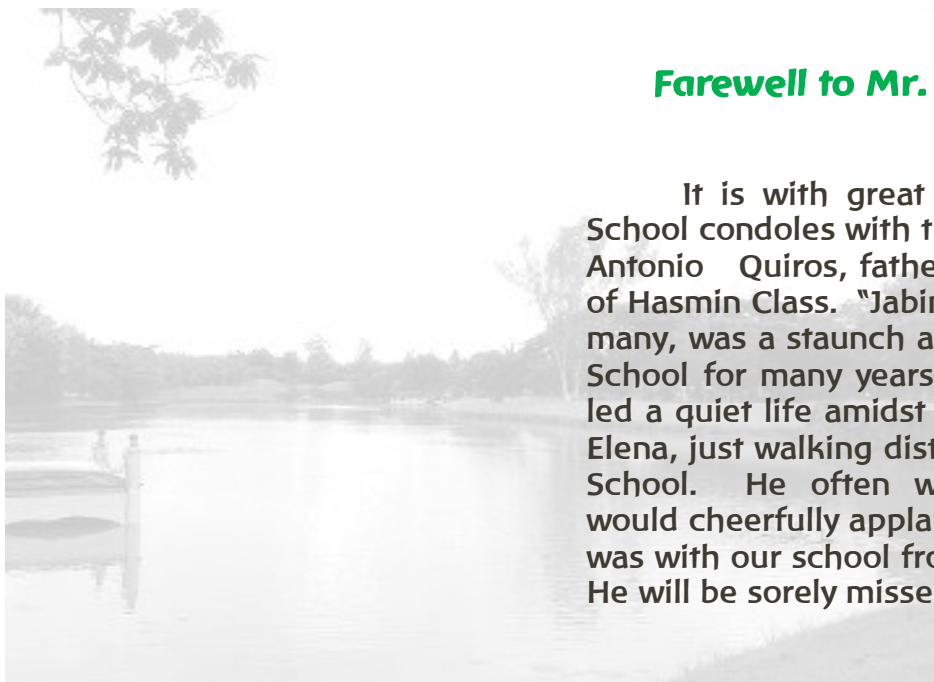
- 2016 Happy New Year!
- 5 US Classes Resume
- 6 PS/GS Classes Resume
- 9-10 A Gathering for Acacia's Future (a planning weekend)
- 12 Market Day (PC)
- 18 Sikhayan Festival (Sta. Rosa)
- 21-22 Mirasol Class 8 Play
- 28-29 Camia Class 5 Play



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Farewell to Mr. Javier Antonio Quiros

It is with great sadness that Acacia Waldorf School condoles with the family of the late Mr. Javier Antonio Quiros, father of our former student Javier of Hasmin Class. "Jabing", as he was fondly called by many, was a staunch advocate of our Acacia Waldorf School for many years. Jabing loved nature and he led a quiet life amidst the greens of Hacienda Santa Elena, just walking distance from our Acacia Waldorf School. He often watched our bahaginans and would cheerfully applaud for his only son Javier, who was with our school from Kindergarten up to Class 8. He will be sorely missed.



HIGHLIGHTS

Martinmas Festival

St. Martin's Day is on Nov. 11, in honor of St. Martin of Tours. This feast marks the beginning of winter or advent and is usually celebrated in the Waldorf schools during the month of November. This festival brings to our consciousness the generous and selfless gesture of St. Martin, a soldier born to a pagan family, who while on a journey, noticed a beggar shivering on a bitterly cold winter's night. Right away, he took out his cloak, cut it in half with his sword, and covered the shivering beggar with the cloak. St. Martin became Bishop of Tours in 371 A.D.

Kindergarteners celebrated Martinmas festival during their morning circle, and had a puppet story of St. Martin at the close of the day. The young kindergarteners also made lanterns and



baked St. Martin cookies in their classrooms. Middle and Upper School students gathered together at the school for a twilight lantern walk to celebrate Martinmas on November 20th. The students sang a song or two at the school court and lit the lanterns that they had made earlier before departing for a twilight walk together with their teachers.

The students used their lanterns to light their path as they slowly and contemplatively traversed the paved roads near the school. They then quietly shared simple local fare of *sapin sapin*, *puto* and *kutsinta* laid out on banana leaves at the court right after the lantern walk.

Santa Lucia and The Festival of Light

The feast of Santa Lucia is on Dec. 13th. This day is celebrated in honor of the life of St. Lucia, a medieval saint who, according to stories, gave out food and drink to families of a province in Sweden during a period of famine. Sicilian origins of Sta. Lucia speak of her bringing food to the poor people living in the catacombs.

This day celebrates the light of Sta. Lucia during the longest night of the year (also known as the Winter Solstice in the old Gregorian calendar). Sta. Lucia is seen as a symbol of hope and light in the darkness of winter, and this feast is still celebrated in Scandinavia, Italy and other countries. During this feast, the eldest girl in the family wears a white dress, sometimes with a red sash and a wreath of candles on her head. She wakes up early and bakes buns to bring to her parents during the early morning hours. She is assisted by her female and male siblings, acting as her attendants and



all dressed in white.

At Acacia, our second grade students celebrated this feast at the school on Monday,



Dec. 14th, in connection with their class theme of saints and fables. They gave out home made gingerbread cookies to each student during the morning main lesson time. The young students wore crowns of roses and leaves on their heads and carried their cookies in baskets, as they visited each class at the school.

EVENTS

Finding the Light Within



Advent and Christmas Festivities

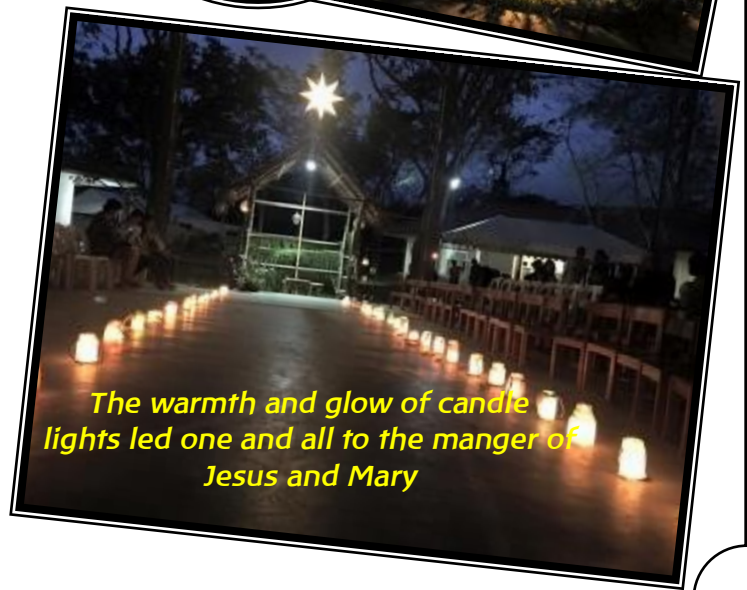
Our school community gathered for heart-warming and simple Christmas festivities that once again brought awe, joy and wonder to the hearts of all during our last days of the year.

Our young students from Adult Toddler and Kindergarten up to Class 3 “walked” and lit a candle at an Advent Spiral inside our new clay library during the afternoon and early evening hours of Dec. 3 and 4. On Dec. 18, they beheld a most beautiful, solemn and joyful Christmas festival lit with candles, a parol above a live manger with an Angel, Joseph, Mary, farm animals, a Christmas story read by Acacia parent Sebastian Schaffer, and singing of Christmas carols around a live Christmas tree.

On Thursday, Dec. 17, our school teachers touched the hearts of many in a heartfelt Shepherd’s Play. This was followed by Christmas carols around the live Christmas tree and traditional Filipino yuletide fare of *bibingka*, *puto bungbung*, *salabat* and *tsokolate*. A highlight of the evening was an awe inspiring performance of the Acacia school youth orchestra.



Youngsters
“walked” the
Advent Spiral and
lit a candle



The warmth and glow of candle
lights led one and all to the manger of
Jesus and Mary

EVENTS



Acacia Youth Orchestra

Students from Class 3 up to Class 12 led by Orchestra Teacher Ford performed Christmas songs together at the school court .

Acacia Upper School

Ensemble

A group of Upper School students led by Orchestra Teacher Sol, shared some solemn and contemplative yuletide music



The Shepherd's Play

Teacher Bernice sang as the young Mary, together with Teacher Ralph as Joseph.

Teacher Trina was Angel Gabriel.

Teachers Marivic, Anina and Edna were the innkeepers.

Teachers Binky, Laarni and Armi were the shepherds.

All the other teachers and staff made up the chorus for the Shepherd's Play.



FEATURED ARTICLE



The Effects of Media on Your Child's Context for Life (by Nancy Banning)

It is our fondest hope as parents and teachers that our children will be allowed to encounter the world directly through the freshness and unprejudiced vision of their own eyes, ears, and hands. I think of our grandson's dedication to snail-watching last spring and summer. Nothing was more interesting to him. And through his devotion to watching these small creatures, he began to form his own personal image of "snail-ness." Another child has a special attentiveness to sounds: bird song, bug buzz, and the carefully articulated speech in nursery rhymes that invite her interest in the spoken word. She loves to sing and echoes back the simple, sweet sounds of her mother's voice. At the very beginning of life, touching (and, of course, tasting) are the avenues for learning about the world. This begins with the warmth of the parent's nestling chest, the sweet taste of milk. Then the child learns so much about the texture and character of different materials: wood with its slivers and splinters, pine cones with their pungent smell and rough surface, and the softness of the favourite blanket that one cannot sleep without. These are all first-hand experiences and they resonate deeply into the child.

We want these impressions to be good ones. We know that first impressions are often lasting ones. The first time we experience something, we tend to assume that this is what a particular experience is like. How things are portrayed makes a huge impression upon us, especially on young children. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, described young children as "total sense organ[s]." The little child has no filters and no capacity to discriminate as adults are able to do through years of experience; and to know if something is desirable and true or untrue. Little children accept all experiences equally. They are quite defenceless.

These simple experiences are available to our children, but it is getting harder and harder to find them in unadulterated or unexaggerated form. Children and adults alike are bombarded with media imaginations of how the originator of the video, toy, song, or advertising piece wants us to view the product. These products are usually loud, with stylized speech, stereotyped with unrealistic and distorted body parts and facial features.

They show exaggerated behaviour, louder, faster, and more clever and slick than we know real people to be; and more importantly, than we want our children to be. These impressions are taken in deeply where they lodge in the child's memory collection of "this is what the world is like."

There are many good reasons to reduce children's screen time and other media exposure. Without the distraction of media, children have richer opportunity for free, creative play; for exploration of the world; for developing social play with others; for developing healthy sensory systems through lots of unstructured movement; for helping with practical life in the home to learn how real people live their lives. In these ways, children can experience life actively rather than by passively sitting and taking in someone else's ideas of the world.

As a Waldorf educator I have shared all of these points with families over many years. But recently it has struck me strongly that a most compelling reason to shelter our children from media is to protect them from other people's representations of the world that we know are not true. These impressions are difficult to erase. Waldorf education is all about supporting the development of free and independent thinkers, who have the capacity to chart their own course in the world. Our media-dominated society is working hard to saturate our minds with ideas of how they would like us to think about the world. Speaking personally, I do not want these people (whose motives probably have more to do with profit than the welfare of our children) to form the children's view of the world and their view of human relationships. The next time you consider letting your child see media, please ponder: Whose idea will my child be thinking? Does it have worth that will guide my child well in life? Will it add to the foundation upon which an upright life can grow?

There are so many things in life we cannot control. Our children's media exposure is something we can.

Nancy Blanning has been a Waldorf early childhood educator for nearly thirty years, emphasizing therapeutic and developmental support with young children. She also serves on the board of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association (WECAN) and is co-author with Laurie Clark of Movement Journeys and Circle Adventures, a therapeutic movement resource book for teachers.

www.waldorfearlychildhood.org

OTHER EVENTS

Integrative Music Education
Awakening Soul and Body in Today's Child

A Workshop by Andrea Lyman
Co-Founder & President, Association for Waldorf Music Education

Overview of music's importance to the human being • 7-year cycles
Pedagogy in music curricula • Place of teachers • Fostering a healthy music lesson
Practical music work • Uncovering your natural singing voice through freebass method

January 13 to 17, 2016
8:00am to 2:30pm
PETA Theater Center
5 Eversand Drive, New Manila, Quezon City

This workshop includes a full range of musical opportunities for teachers, parents and music enthusiasts.

Early bird fee: Php 8,000 until December 24, 2015
Regular fee: Php 13,000

Application for earlybird is open to qualified individuals until December 26, 2015. Limited slots are available on a first come, first served basis. Email us for details.
For inquiries and registration, please contact:
0916 6445806 or shapingsophia@gmail.com

15-DAY INTENSIVE BEGINNER'S COURSE IN WALDORF/STEINER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION 2016

For parents, teachers & individuals seeking self-development

Venue:
1166 2nd North Ave.
Quezon City

Dates:
January 28, 29, 30,
February 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13,
14, 15, 20, 25, 26, 27

Time:
(Sat) - 4:30pm

Fees: (workshop fee)
Early bird fee: Php 13,000
(paid on or before November 27)
Regular fee: Php 15,000

Course topics:
• Foundation studies in Anthroposophy
• The philosophical/psychological basis of Steiner Education
• Overview of the process of child development in the Waldorf curriculum
• Understanding the development of the child from conception to 7 years
• Encouraging you to tell a your kindergarten
• Pedagogy and
• Practical work:
• Music, singing, painting, line playing, recorder playing, eurythmy, watercolor painting, clay modeling, form drawing, storybook and puppet making

To register, contact Rudolf Steiner Education in the Philippines
1880721@yahoo.com.ph • (+632)2414224 • (+632)79344315 • info@rsd.ph

Healthy Habit
PROMO

Pay for a set of 4 Holy Carabao Veggie Boxes and get special treats - a HealthyHabit coupon!

Each box contains a variety of veggies based on our daily harvest:

- PINOY BOX (P950/wk)**
veggies for most Filipino dishes
- JAPANESE BOX (P900/wk)**
veggies for Japanese-inspired dishes
- CHINESE BOX (P950/wk)**
veggies for Chinese-inspired dishes
- CONTINENTAL BOX (P950/wk)**
veggies for most Euro/American cuisine
- SALAD BOX (P750/wk)**
veggies for wonderful tossed salads
- JUICING BOX (P950/wk)**
veggies for juicing and smoothie recipes

Choose 4 of the same box or mixed-match, 1 box set is good for 2-4 people for about 1 week (depending on consumption).
*Maximum of 1 HealthyHabit coupon per customer.

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10TH WORLD TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

Overcoming Resistance: Courage for an Independent Spiritual Life

10. WELT-LEHRER- UND ERZIEHERTAGUNG

Gewinnen am Widerstand: Mut zu freiem Geistesleben

The Waldorf school movement has achieved much since its foundation almost a hundred years ago. Its main concern is to help young people find their inner goals and create the preconditions they need to realize their ideals in adequate ways.

This endeavour is shared every day anew in kindergartens and schools around the globe. From the very beginning, the aims of the Waldorf school were social as well as educational.

The 10th World Teachers' and Educators' Conference will focus on this theme to encourage schools to stand up for their ideal of an independent spiritual life. A free spiritual life needs people who strive in freedom.

We each of us have the possibility today to keep a part of our soul free from external influences. This enhances individualization.

New social forces will emerge if we manage to defend the soul's intrinsic future impulses against the resistance and anti-social trends of our time.

We are looking forward to working with you at the 10th Teachers' and Educators' Conference on finding the courage to tackle the tasks that lie ahead.

Die Schulbewegung hat in ihrem fast 100-jährigen Dasein viel geleistet. Ihr Herzensanliegen ist es, heranwachsenden Menschen den Weg zu ihrer inneren Aufgabe zu öffnen und in ihnen die Voraussetzungen aufzubauen, ihre Ideale dem Leben angemessen zu verwirklichen.

Dieses Anliegen wird täglich neu in Kindergärten und Schulen rund um die Erde umgesetzt. Vom ersten Schultag an lebte in der Waldorf-Schule das Ideal, dass ihre Gründung nicht nur eine pädagogische, sondern auch eine soziale Aufgabe lösen will.

Die 10. Welt-Lehrer- und Erzieher-tagung will hier ansetzen, damit die Schulen in voller Öffentlichkeit für ihr Ideal des freien Geisteslebens eintreten können. Ein freies Geistesleben können nur nach Freiheit strebende Menschen schaffen.

In jedem von uns ist heute die Möglichkeit veranlagt, einen Teil seiner Seele frei von jedem Einfluss der Aussenwelt zu halten. Das fördert die Individualisierung. Gelingt es uns, die in ihr liegenden Zukunftsimpulse gegen Widerstände und antisoziale Tendenzen durchzusetzen, entstehen neue Kräfte für das soziale Leben.

Wir freuen uns auf die gemeinsame Arbeit mit Ihnen an der 10. Welt-Lehrer- und Erzieher-tagung. Sie wird Mut für die anstehenden Aufgaben schaffen.

P.F. Urschel-Reiter C.E. R. Röhl

28 MARCH - 2 APRIL 2016 GOETHEANUM

Pädagogische Sektion am Goetheanum

MARCH 28 - APRIL 2 Goetheanum