



OHANA THE WHITE EAGLE FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Spring

Spring 2011 Issue no 13



A Happy First Birthday for our Shiningstars Playgroup

Our Shiningstars playgroup has just celebrated its first birthday. The group has provided a delightful environment for all the young children plus their mums, dads or grandparents who regularly attend on Friday mornings.

Equipped with lovely natural toys, the children enjoy a mixture of seasonal crafts, stories and songs and the all important morning snack (mostly vegan & organic!) Each session includes a walk in the beautiful grounds around the Temple, giving the children the chance to enjoy the beauty of nature around them. Do come and

Jos and Daisy view the Birthday cake join us any term time Friday 9.45–12.15.

Kara's publishing success!

Congratulations to Kara Coombs who at the age of 11 has just had her first book published. The book, called *Kara's Adventure*, is not only written but also illustrated and edited by Kara.

The book tells the story of a little fairy and her woodland creature friends, Odd Job the hedgehog, Bindo the badger, Oatly the woodpecker and Cheese, the baby mouse who decide to tidy up their own woodland. In Kara's own words, "I wrote this book because I just didn't think there are enough people looking after our planet by recycling. Hopefully this book will inspire children and adults to do just that." Certainly Kara's lovely book has a message for us

all about the importance of looking after the world in which we live. Well done Kara!

To order a copy log onto www.chocolate-muffin.com and search for Kara's Adventure.

Cost £9.50

ISBN No: 978-1-908114-33-4



'Have you ever noticed that so many of the spring flowers which push through the Mother Earth at this time, the daffodil, the hyacinth, and many others, manifest the symbol of the 6 pointed star? They have 6 petals; and deep within the flower you will see yet another little star in many of them?'

The star is within your heart as well as blazing in the heaven... 'You are all small stars: you are building the star of life within your own soul. Let that star in your own heart shine forth in full power, which will encompass and protect you.'

White Eagle





Spring Family Weekend

Friday 29th April—Sunday 1st May

Green Leaves: A Celebration of Spring

We still have a few spaces left on our Spring Family weekend so come and join us for a relaxing celebration of the Spring

There is the option to either stay in New Lands house, camping style (ie mattresses and sleeping bags for the children on the floor) or camping on the Temple field. Activities to include Spring crafts, songs, games, and maypole dancing.

All meals Friday supper to Sunday lunch provided.

The cost for these weekends, inclusive of food, will be £45 per adult, £20 per child over 5 or teenager, 5s and under free. Campers £25 per adult, £15 per child. Please contact Kathryn Bingham at New Lands for further details and to book your place (shiningstars@whiteagle.org).



YOUR STAR

Look for your star

Wherever you are

By day and by night

Just take in its light

If lonely or sad

Or just feeling bad

Your star will be there

For you it will care

It will be a part

Of you in your heart

To comfort and guide

Like a friend from inside

Whatever you do

Your star will stay true

You can always rely

On your friend from the sky

By Roger Parsons

Love for all things. White Eagle was once asked;

Is it advisable to teach children prayers which they cannot really understand?

He answered *It is unwise to cram the child's mind with too much outward form of religion; it is far better to teach the child to love the daisies, and to tell little stories*

about the flowers, how that flower was given to them by a very wonderful Father /

Mother God. It is good to encourage the child to think of the unseen Father /

Mother of Love, but I do not think that vain repetition is good for a child, any more than for anyone. Substitute for set prayers a gentle instilling of love for all things.



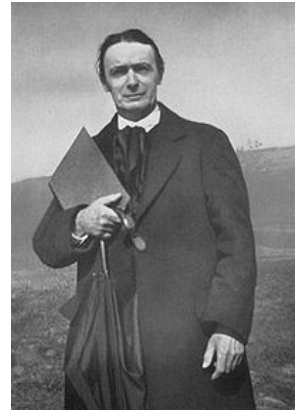


Training weekend for Family work helpers

At the end of January our team of Family work helpers had a weekend together, hatching plans for our activities for the year ahead, looking at child protection issues and reviewing our Child Protection policy .We were privileged to have talks in the afternoon from two of our helpers who are trained Montessori and Steiner teachers. A brief summary of their talks are included here but if you would like further information, do get in touch.

A brief overview of Steiner Education

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) was a seer, whose insights and vision have brought inspiration into many areas of human life, including education, agriculture, communities providing therapeutic education for children and engaging people with learning disabilities...etc. What has developed into the Steiner/Waldorf education movement is based on Steiner's spiritual insights into the human being from birth upwards.



Steiner was aware of the 7 year phases in a child's development, and that these indicated that a change of approach is needed to meet the physiological, emotional and mental changes occurring within the child. Thus what is taught and how it is brought to the child at different ages can be understood and rendered appropriate.

During the early years, up until the change of teeth, when a child's organs are still developing, and the child bears the gift of imitation, education centres around a healthy daily rhythm, incorporating basic life skills, (acquired through imitation); creative play; the care and nourishment of the senses; simple songs, poems and stories to foster the imagination, literacy skills and positive human qualities. Many social skills are kindled through the family group atmosphere.

During the second 7 year phase of development writing and reading are introduced, and a full range of subjects are studied for 3 week periods, integrating artistic and scientific approaches, alongside movement, (including eurhythmy), crafts, gardening etc

Breadth of curriculum continues throughout the third phase of development, following the onset of puberty, when a more analytical and independent thinking approach is now encouraged. Drama, music and a wide range of practical subjects still permeate the curriculum to nurture the whole human being.



Goodness, Beauty and Truth lie at the heart of this seed of education. Indeed White Eagle says, "God is all that is good, beautiful and true."



The spiritual legacy of Montessori

Recently I was asked to give a talk about Montessori education and its connections to our spiritual work and so, I decided to begin, by answering a question I have been asked many times during my days as a Montessori teacher - *What is Montessori?* Mostly, Montessori is known as a method of education. Some may also know Montessori was a person - Maria Montessori, the founder of the education method. She was a physician, an educator and a humanitarian who dedicated her life service - that of 'the child'. She was a server of spirit.



Universally she is well known for becoming the first female physician in Italy. In January 1907, Montessori opened her first school in Rome, called the 'children's house'. She removed the rigid benches from the classroom, and replaced them with small tables and chairs. Everything in the classroom was made to size, for the children. Here the children, who came from the poorest and underprivileged families, learnt not only to read and write, but everyday life skills such as cleaning, cooking, ironing, washing and setting the table for lunch.

The Montessori method for education not only teaches life skills but also allows children the freedom to choose their own work (activities) according to their own individual interests. The teacher, is no longer seen as the one with all the knowledge and discipline, but now is a gentle guide who prepares the environment and intensely observes the children in her care, encouraging them and demonstrating the materials and activities. It is truly a 'children's house', in which they learn respect and responsibility for the day-to-day care of their classroom.

The Montessori method of education is also known as a 'Peace Education' which guides children to find inner peace and love.

This is how the world knows Montessori. Her greatest work, I believe, was her service to humanity. Montessori said, "... we will witness the unfolding of the human soul, the rising of a New Man, who will have clarity of vision to direct and shape the future of human society." She spent her life studying 'the child', so that we can truly understand the true nature of the child and their 'secret' - the 'light' that shines in the heart of every soul.



"There is in the soul of a child, an impenetrable secret that is gradually revealed as it develops ... We must take into consideration that from birth the child has a power in him. We must not just see the child, but God in him. We must respect the laws of creation in him ... We must help the child to act for himself, will for himself, think for himself; this is the art of those who aspire to serve the spirit" *Montessori, Education for a New World.*

Cristina Pecetta



Wake Up! Wake Up !



The long dark winter was coming to an end. The days were gradually getting longer and the snow and ice were beginning to melt. The drip, drip, dripping sound of melting icicles filled the air and the first hint of green was peeping through the snow.

All winter long the majestic white eagle had flown over the wintry landscape. Camouflaged by his beautiful white plumage, he had found enough food to survive the long dark days.

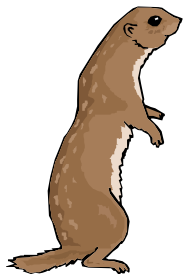
Although the conditions were harsh, the magnificent bird loved the great peace and stillness of winter - the icy beauty and purity of the snowy landscape. Day after day he would soar and glide, quite alone, in the brightness of the clear blue sky.

But now, as spring approached, he looked forward once again to the company of all the other creatures. His role had long been to awaken the animals from their deep winter sleep, and now the awakening time had finally come.

From high up in the vast blueness of the heavens, came his distant call: *"Wake up, dear ones, wake up!"*

Down below, tucked away in holes in the ground, in mossy banks and dark caves, the animals slept, safe and secure. But the very first stirrings of life had already begun, as the days grew longer and the light grew stronger.

As the distant call of the great bird filtered down through the many layers above and around them, one or two of the animals began to open their eyes, stretch their stiff little bodies and twitch their cold little noses. Yes- they sensed it was time, and they responded to the call of the great white eagle.



A new and exciting life was awaiting them, full of adventure and sunshine. Once they had eased out the stiffness of their limbs they could hardly wait to get out into the light again.

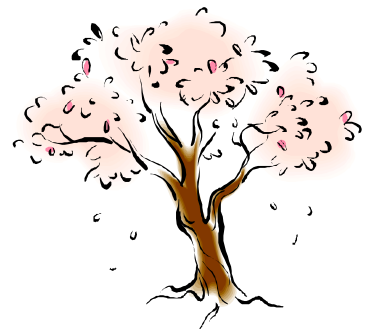
Then they too took up the cry: *"Wake up! Wake up! Spring is here!"*

Soon the rabbits were hopping busily, nibbling the grass and scraping out new holes. The frogs and toads were leaping to their ponds, the foxes grooming their russet coloured fur and the otters chasing their tails.

It felt SO good to be alive in the spring sunshine. As all the snow gradually disappeared, the spring flowers lifted their beautiful faces to the sun and the birds began making their nests, showing off their bright new feathers!

But not everyone had heard the call of the spring. After a little while, the rabbits, foxes, otters and all the creatures noticed that the dreamy old dormice were, as usual still fast asleep, deep in their hidey hole in the ground.

"Come on," they said, "Time for us all to work together!" And, guided by the white eagle to the entrance of the dormice's nest, a large group of animals gathered.





On the count of three, they all shouted in their loudest voice
"Wake up! Little dormice, Wake up! Spring is here!"

And then they waited and waited and waited - till all of a sudden, they noticed a little stirring of the soil, a little rustle of a leaf and finally a little twitching of a whisker!

Yes, here were the sleepest of all the animals finally awake. A great cheer went up, for now spring could officially be said to have started!

And to make up for lost time, the little mice then ran and jumped and climbed and swung faster than all the other little creatures for the whole of the long spring and summer ahead....., while the wise old eagle, high above, smiled as he soared in the clear blue sky.



Children - our greatest teachers!

" If you have been privileged to be a parent, remember that no matter what happens that gift remains in your heart forever." White Eagle

What gifts do they bring?

They awaken us to LOVE, true selfless, unconditional love

They awaken us to JOY

They test us in every way possible!

They offer lessons in patience, equanimity, and hope

They reconnect us to the power of our imagination

They hold a mirror to our lives

They allow us to change and grow

They reconnect us to the love of the universe

They help us face our fears and overcome them

They help us live in the moment

They connect us to the infinite cycle of life

They are a gift They are there to be loved, cherished, guided, protected, nurtured and released.



That's it for now everyone, so much love and light to you all.

Do you have you a story, picture news item or opinion to share? We would love to hear from you. Please send any contributions for the next Newsletter to Kathryn Bingham c/o White Eagle Lodge or via shiningstars@whiteagle.org by 31st May 2011

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