

# SAN FRANCISCO WALDORF SCHOOL

## Michaelmas in Grade 2

*With fire and smoke  
 With poisonous cloak,  
 Gliding and sliding  
 Huffing and puffing  
 Ramping and stamping  
 Roaring and snoring  
 Biting and smiting  
 Polluting the air with  
 venomous breath  
 The dragon draws near*

These were the words enthusiastically chanted as the formidable eight-foot dragon wound its way through the audience during the second grade's production of "George and the Dragon" on Friday, October 8.

The play tells the story of George, a Roman soldier who, with the help of the Archangel Michael, slew the dragon that ravaged a village somewhere in Libya many, many years ago. Over time and through various adventures, St. George, as he came to be known, was regarded as a being who represented strength and courage in the face of overwhelming odds.

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*Above: The 2nd Grade after their presentation of "George and the Dragon"*

## 9th Grade Metalwork

Beginning on September 20, high school students participated in "Adventures in Learning Week," which was a dedicated time to concentrate on special projects. The 12th grade focused on their Senior Projects, while the 10th and 11th grades went on field trips to learn Astronomy and Meteorology respectively. In the 9th grade, students focused on arts and gardening. One of the highlights was metalwork taught by guest Waldorf teacher Bodo Langen. Mr. Langen brings over 20 years experience in teaching children of all ages in sculpture and



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## Seasons and Festivals

In our modern city life, amid buildings and pavement, with industrial and technical wonders all around us, it is not easy to sense the life of the Earth herself. Yet the Sun still waxes toward Midsummer and wanes toward Midwinter, in a seasonal round of heat and cold, sunshine and rain (and fog), growing and dying of plants. The child who can experience this great rhythm is fortunate indeed, and will grow up with a deeper connection to and love for our dear planet. Seasonal festivals, adapted from various traditions, are often celebrated in Waldorf schools to help bring this experience to the children.

Michaelmas is the celebration of the Archangel Michael, whom we meet in the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scriptures. This festival brings a special moment of reflection and deepening to the cosmic events of autumn. The shortening days and the darkening of the Sun's light challenge us to awaken warmth and light within ourselves, to ward off the sadness of winter. In many traditions, this autumnal inner awakening is a time of self-reflection. Rosh Hashanah ushers in the High Holy days in Jewish tradition, opening the Book of Life, calling for inner reflection

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culminating in Yom Kippur, the day of atonement. This call to overcome our lower nature and inner demons is powerfully reflected in the image of Michael subduing the dragon, told in story and poem, and enacted in drama. Michael's deeds, and ours, require self-awareness and courage for the truth; the children encounter this thought



in many ways, according to their ages.

Celebrating Michaelmas in classes and assemblies helps us as individuals develop this inner power together with others. The growth of each is part of the growth of all; each personal challenge met strengthens the whole. As a community, we can experience the life cycle of the Earth, and what it calls forth in our inner life and our life together.

*David Weber,  
High School Humanities and Music*

### Editor's Note

Earlier this month, the faculty from both campuses gathered in the grade school Main Hall to reconnect and celebrate together. With two campuses spread across town it can be difficult to gather for all-faculty meetings during the school year. However, coming together for discussions and celebrations is important for our community. We value our ability to be involved with our students from very early childhood through high school graduation and beyond. We recognize that the relationships between teachers dealing with different stages of child development are critical to holding the big picture of how we are teaching and guiding each individual through each stage.

The Michaelmas season provided the over arching theme for this fall's gathering. In addition to singing –of course! – Deborah Krikorian (Grade 6 Class Teacher) led the whole group in folk-dancing. Imagine if you will the range of styles brought to that activity!

Time was also spent in deeper reflection on what it is in the Michaelmas tradition that feeds us, the students and the work we do. Astrid Thiersch (Eurythmy, grades 8-12) presented beautiful, elaborate imagery from Rudolf Steiner to set the mood. In this issue we try to bring a little of this mood to you: David Weber (HS Humanities) offers a brief overview of the Michaelmas; Corinne Fendell (Grade 2 Class Teacher) brings us a picture of the 2nd Grade who just presented the traditional Michaelmas play, "George and the Dragon," and we have a view of forging iron and copper in the 9th grade.

*-Cory Powers, editor*

*Grade 2 Play photos: C. Sabarwahl, J. Hammock, C. Powers  
Image above: Bronze of Michael  
from University of Bonn, artist unknown*

In grade 2, a polarity begins to develop in the class and in the child's soul life, leading the children to experience stronger feelings than before. Rudolf Steiner recommends stories of the saints to meet the varied and impulsive moods which may arise at this age. These stories in the second grade are not just about people who have done good deeds, but about otherworldly people who stand apart from the group, not giving way to lower impulses, attempting to strive for something higher.



performed at home and others told how they gave money to homeless people or shared the toys with children at a playground. This consciousness to be strong and brave against one's own dragons, be they large or small, was brought home through the story. The archetypal image of the soldier battling the fire-breathing dragon as he calls upon the spiritual world to come to his aid, is a powerful, vivid, picture for the season of Michaelmas.

In addition to the story of St. George, the children were told a story about a young boy who wanted to serve Michael and how, through a series of good deeds throughout his life, the boy's toy sword became a real and shining sword of gold. The second grade children received wooden swords which several parents had skillfully cut out for them. At various times throughout these weeks the children took up the work of sanding them smooth. Finally, in the week following our play and the many discussions of how we could bring light to our thinking and our deeds, the children returned to school to find that their swords had turned golden. The sense of awe in the classroom was palpable.



While preparing for our play, the children shared moments when they felt "the light of Michael" enabling them to overcome desires to tease as well as enabling them to find opportunities to give something to another. Some children told of "golden deeds" they



Throughout history the story of the knight overcoming the dragon is depicted in art, sculpture and literature as representing the battle between light and darkness. In the second grade we slay the dragon, but as adults we call on this courage and light in our own consciousness to transform the dragons that we encounter in life and in our own human frailties.

*Corinne Fendell, Class Teacher, Grade Two*

metalworking, so this was a special opportunity for the class to learn from a master of his craft.



The metalworking block designed by Mr. Langen and Patty Townsend introduced two different types of work to the students, forming copper and forging iron. Although the two projects appear to be similar in makeup, they provided the opportunity to introduce the science behind the work in a very hands-on way. Additionally, they provided a framework to show how geography and geology have influenced human history.

Beginning with a history lesson, Mr. Langen told students the story of the progression from the stone to bronze and then iron ages and how the ages differed for different regions of the world, fueled by the needs of society and the subsequent discovery of new processes to extract ores and create metal tools. As human development moved from hunting and gathering to agriculture as a primary means of subsistence, there was a parallel rise in the need for better tools. Also, cultural development put a premium on beauty that could be created with metal objects. Blacksmiths during these later times were the first "engineers," bringing about new creations as they experimented with different types of ores and their

### Current Block Rotation Across the Grades

Kindergarten	Story	Halloween Songs and Stories
Grade 1		Math
Grade 2		Math
Grade 3		Shelters
Grade 4		Norse Mythology
Grade 5		Botany
Grade 6		Roman History
Grade 7		Chemistry
Grade 8		World Geography
Grade 9		Art History / Physiology
Grade 10		Trigonometry / Mechanics
Grade 11		Dante / Chemistry
Grade 12		Economics / Environmental Science

mechanical uses.

As early as 4000 BC, peoples in Mesopotamia were using copper in its pure form to create tools. Over time, basic copper and tin mixtures were developed, thus ushering in the Bronze Age. As early as 2000 BC, there was significant work with meteoric iron, which required no smelting. Due to the advances made during the Bronze Age, blacksmiths began to understand smelting processes in more depth, which allowed the further development of iron and steel.

With this understanding of the history behind metal production, students then were introduced to the different processes of working metals into useful objects. Although many of us view both copper and iron as simply metals, students quickly understand that working with these require very different processes due to their chemical makeup. Students created bowls and ladles for the copper project, working the metal through a process of annealing and then hammering into shape. Hammering causes the copper to become harder, as the crystallized structure of the metal condenses. Annealing, a heating and cooling process, allows the copper to recrystallize so that it does not become too brittle. As a byproduct of cooling during annealing, students observe "sludge" that sinks in the water, which is a copper oxide material. Bringing science into the lesson, students could learn that if you run hydrogen over the copper oxides, the hydrogen reacts with the oxygen to create water and leaves behind pure copper.

The students actively helped build two iron age forges as part of the ironworking project. They used primitive bellows and charcoal to heat iron to a point where it could be worked effectively. Where copper is formed by hammering in a cool state, iron must be heated before it can be shaped. Through an ongoing process of heating and hammering, students created wonderful tools such as letter openers and simple knives.

Through this daily intensive work, the 9th graders tested themselves, honed new skills, and learned firsthand how metal transforms, according to the intention and will of the craftsman. They gained not only a newfound understanding of the properties of iron and copper, but also significant history, geography, geology and science as well. In the end, students came away with a deeper understanding of the way metal plays an integral role in our daily lives, and how it has also shaped human development over thousands of years.

*Mitch Mitchell, Advancement Office*



*Note: to view some of the 9th grade copper and ironwork, as well as their black & white Notan designs, stop by the high school and have a look! The metal work is on display in the lobby, near the front desk. The Notan pieces are hanging in a large display downstairs on the first floor.*

*Photos for this article: M Mitchell*

**Seniors reach semi-finals in National Merit Scholarship competition**

Seniors Charlotte Markle and James St. Germaine-Fuller have been named as Semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Competition. 16,000 semifinalists were named out of 1.5 million students who took the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in their junior year. Semifinalists are the highest scorers in each of the 50 states and represent less than 1% of each state's high school seniors. These two students will enter the competition for the Finalist Level. Two other seniors were named as Commended Students: Alexandra Hart and Isabel Kuhel. In addition, Isabel Kuhel has been selected by the National Hispanic Recognition Program as a 2010-2011 National Hispanic Recognition Scholar. 5000 students were selected from a pool of over 200,000 students nationally who took the PSAT last year. Students were selected based on their scores on the PSAT exam taken in junior year and their GPA's.

Our congratulations to Charlotte, James, Alex, and Isabel!

*Lauren Rudsten, College Counselor*



*(this page, row 1): HS Jazz Band, (row 2) Mr. Weber telling riddles, Grade 4 eager to answer riddles, (row 3) Mrs. Krikorian and 6th Grade, Gr. 1 - 4 try out some games, (row 4) Gr. 3 singing, the big circle before games*



**All School Assembly at Stern Grove**

Grades 1-12 all gathered together on October 1 for an Assembly and field day at Stern Grove. The grade school students rode over and back on four school buses and the high school students walked from their campus that is just one long block from the Grove. The presentations began with the HS Jazz Band. In addition to songs and recitation from grade school and high school classes alike, members of the high school faculty brought riddles which were eagerly answered by students of all ages. After lunch and popsicles, grade school gym teacher Justin Ganz gathered everyone in a large circle for a couple rounds of well known grade school games. It was wonderful to be able to gather all the grades in one space and enjoy this beautiful setting together.

*Cory Powers, GS Administrator*





## Coming Up in November

### Senior Project Presentations - Sunday, November 7, 1pm

On Sunday, November 7, please join us for the first in a three-part series of Senior Project presentations at the San Francisco Waldorf High School. Seniors Tabeetha Sun (Traditional Chinese Cuisine) and James St. Germaine-Fuller (Computer Construction) will present their work to the community at 1:00 PM in Herbst Hall. Senior Projects give students an opportunity to explore a subject of personal interest and to stretch their understanding and experience in the arts, an academic subject, or a social discipline. These independent projects begin with a proposal outlining their objectives at the end of their junior year. This year, a few students were able to tackle the bulk of their self-selected project in time to present early in the year, but most will present their projects in March and May. Presentations are open to the entire school community. All are welcome! Refreshments will be served.

*Mary Anne McGill, HS Librarian*

### 2010-2011 Annual Fund Campaign begins

The 2010-2011 Annual Fund campaign in support of our school will launch in November. Look for news and mail (the old fashioned kind) in the next couple of weeks.

### Fall sports finish regular season and head for play-off season

Play-off season is coming soon. Stay tuned in to our school websites and the sports hotlines for updates. We have several teams in good position to make payoffs including, once again, a very strong girls high school volleyball team.

HS Sports Hotline: 415-213-6197

GS Sports Hotline: 415-213-6196

### Annual Thanksgiving Assembly at the grade school

Our annual Thanksgiving Assembly (Grades 1-8) takes place in the grade school Main Hall each year just before the Thanksgiving break. Once again we will gather gifts of non-perishable food for a homeless shelter for families here in the city. We welcome donations of dry and canned food no sooner than Wednesday, November 17, for the assembly on Friday, November 19. As always, parents are welcome!!

### International Vocal Ensemble SOINNINKAJO to perform at SFWHS

Soinninkajo (literally 'sound echo') directed by Christiaan Boele, has been giving regularly scheduled concerts since 2002. Members of the group come from Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, USA and Canada and all have studied The School of Uncovering the Voice with Christiaan Boele. The goal of this singing school is the pure reflection of the archetypal tone. This is an a capella group that brings a beautiful harmonic vocal sound to life. They sing classical, sacred and secular music as well as fun folk style tunes and sing in multiple languages.

Northern California Concert Tour 2010

Wednesday, November 10, 7:30pm

San Francisco Waldorf High School, 470 West Portal Ave.

Tickets on sale at the door. \$10-\$20 sliding scale donation.



*Photos this page (top to bottom):  
Gr. 9 Pacific Rim Class,  
Gr. 11 Shakespeare,  
HS students watching GS presentations*

*Stern Grove photos: C. Powers*



*Magic Lantern Travelling Marionette Theater presents*



***The Three Oranges***

**Sunday, November 7  
10 & 11:30am**

For children ages 4 and up.  
Main Hall, grade school campus.  
\$5 donation at the door.

*Photos from the El Dia de los Muertos assembly (October 29), the Fairy Walk (October 31) at the grade school and the 11th/12th grade acting elective presentation (October 22 & 23) at the high school will appear in our next monthly.*

## October in the gardens



Oh, the late summer of San Francisco! Just as the students and I had removed all the corn and tomatoes - stunted by the cold summer - and put in our fall crops, now the sun is out and days are in the 80s! Each year about this time I make a note to myself to plant fall crops in April and summer crops in August. However, I haven't had the strength of courage to actually do it yet. Now, as I watch my kales and broccolis wilting, I am reaffirming the need to reverse those seasonal crops in our SF planting rotations. Corn in November anyone?

The flowers have done surprisingly well this year, despite the cool summer. We are now enjoying the process of saving seeds



from our annuals. The edible chrysanthemums are particularly satisfying to harvest, a big seed head full of little rectangular seeds that jump into the children's palms. We also have a wonderful collection of sunflower seed heads. We planted many sizes and colors this year and these flowers provide a perfect example of pollination. Did you know that a sunflower is actually a "face" comprised of 100s of tiny individual flowers? In order for seeds to form, each seed's flower must get pollinated. It is fascinating for the children to see that within one sunflower head, perhaps only 50% of the husks actually contain true seeds. In addition to saving them for next year, we also enjoy cracking the shells open with our teeth and eating the seeds inside!

The first grade continues to enjoy a weekly chapter of our

*Photos this page by A. Belkora: (above) harvesting potatoes; seed-saving; (at right) 9th graders ready to work the compost pile*

Here is our latest recipe from the first grade and K3:

Fresh potatoes (ideally small ones, like fingerlings)

Boil until just tender and the skin is gently cracked open

Add butter and salt

Pop them in your mouth



Adventure story. As a reminder, Adventure is the bee that escaped from our hive at the Kinney's the night Rinat Abastado and I moved it to Laguna Honda. Adventure is alive and well in our garden at St. Anne's, and is a wonderful character with whom I can introduce the children to the myriad of garden creatures that keep our garden vibrant: gnomes, various fairies, moles, worms, butterflies... While at work, the children often spy Adventure visiting our flowers. Such a sighting brings smiles to all our faces.

The third grade is threshing, winnowing and grinding the barley, rye and wheat they planted last fall. The children enjoy these processes and cherish the small drawer of flour that comes from all that manual grinding. Each week's flour goes into the baked goods the third graders are preparing for their harvest dinner. The class brings extra insight into this process thanks to their recent field trip to the Bale Grist Mill in St. Helena.

We have good news from Laguna Honda. The farm animals will move into their home next to the garden the first week of November. And better still, the residents will move into their new buildings on December 7 and 8. Please contact Mitch Mitchell or me if you would like to volunteer to help move the residents on one of these two days. It will be a large and joyous undertaking. As soon as the residents are settled in, they will start taking part in the daily activities of the garden.

At Laguna Honda, Dr. Burket, Mr. Prado, and the ninth graders started three large compost piles. The beans are sky high and our pumpkins are ripening. The ninth graders also planted garlic, radishes, and greens. The bees appear to be very happy in their meadow home.

*Amy Belkora, Gardening Program Director*

