

# SAN FRANCISCO WALDORF SCHOOL

## Senior Honors Biology Elective

- Dr. John Burket, HS Biology Teacher

Students at SFWHS have always felt a strong connection to learning, and not long after the opening of the high school in 1997 they began to request electives as a way to deepen the work they enjoyed in their regular course of study. These requests echoed the high school faculty's desire to teach more advanced classes, and about twelve years ago we began to offer electives in the arts, humanities, math, and sciences to 11th and 12th graders. I was eager to offer an Honors Biology class for our seniors and it has been part of our curriculum ever since.

The typical class size for Honors Biology has been around 10, but this year an unprecedented 18 students signed up! We meet for one 75 minute and two 60 minute sessions per week until mid-May, giving us the opportunity to engage in long-term experiments and have at least one full lab session a week. Requirements for the course are a grade of B or better in previous Biology Main Lessons and a successful completion of at least Algebra II.



Biology Teacher John Burket  
Photo: Scott Chernis

In addition to four main lessons each in physics, chemistry, and earth science, all students take four main lessons of biology during their SF Waldorf high school career. The curriculum begins in 9th grade, where the focus is on the anatomy

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Congressman Lewis with 9th Grader Sankofa Decuire  
Photo: Scott Chernis

## Civil Rights Leader John Lewis Shares Message of Hope and Nonviolence at SF Waldorf High School Lecture Series and HS Assembly

- Mary Anne McGill, HS Librarian

In June 2013, I had the privilege of hearing Congressman Lewis speak at the American Library Association Conference in Chicago. John Lewis and his legislative aide Andrew Aydin had just co-authored *March: Book One*, a graphic novel, to educate and inspire a new generation to work for human rights. Lewis gave a powerful speech on the struggles of the Civil Rights movement and the path that led him to seek social change through nonviolence. I was so moved by his passionate presentation that I left his talk almost in tears. His courage and integrity impressed me so much that hours after his talk, I took the opportunity to invite him to speak for our High School Lecture Series - thinking it would be a long shot.

Sometimes when we take action from the heart, events unfold in unexpected ways. In June 2014, I selected *March: Book One* for our high school's summer reading with the hope that John Lewis would come to our school in the Fall. A week later, Congressman Lewis' office suddenly accepted our invitation. The next month, while reading the *SF Chronicle's* book reviews, I discovered Matt Herron, a local photojournalist who documented the Civil Rights movement for *Life*, *Look*, and *Time* in the 1960s and had just published *Mississippi Eyes: the Story of the Southern Documentary Project* to honor the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Summer. On a whim, I contacted Herron

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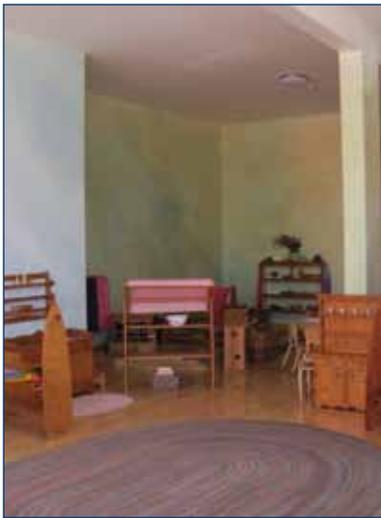
Grade School: 2938 Washington Street, SF, CA 94115; tel. (415) 931-2750; info@sfwaldorf.org  
 High School: 470 West Portal Avenue, SF, CA 94127; tel. (415) 431-2736; highschool@sfwaldorf.org  
 San Francisco Waldorf School: www.sfwaldorf.org. Comments regarding this Newsletter or requests for e-mail pdf copies can be sent to newsletter@sfwaldorf.org.



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## Nursery Expansion is Complete

Last year we finished a long planning, construction and licensing project which allowed us to double the size of our Nursery Program by expanding into the adjacent space at the corner of Sacramento and Baker Street. The two separate spaces have been named *Elves Corner* and *Elves Cottage*, names that reflect the original independent Nursery program that supported our young school in the 1980's and 90's. The program now serves over 50 families and offers extended care options to help better support our families. We are grateful to Architect, Project Manager and alumni parent David Bushnell for his help guiding this process to fruition. Please stay tuned for information on an Open House event to welcome the wider community into our truly beautiful Nursery spaces.



## Kindness Day at SF Waldorf High School

*by Anne Veh, Service Space, Aug 31, 2014. ServiceSpace is an all volunteer-run organization that leverages technology to inspire greater volunteerism. ServiceSpace led a Kindness Workshop for the senior class during the high school orientation week.*

It all started over a year ago when Joan Calderera, high school humanities teacher, asked her students, "Like Thoreau, what would you be willing to go to jail for?" The students could not answer, and Joan's response was to create a three-day orientation for the senior class on Thinking, Feeling, Willing.

### Creating Space for Cultivating Kindness

We did a round of name introductions, and everyone shares something that they are grateful for. Something powerful unfolded in that circle of sharing — an opening up and realization of the many and varied unnoticed acts of kindness that fill our days. A student shared gratitude for her parents' kindness and care in making breakfast and packing lunch for her every day. Another student had been stressed with thoughts of college and her senior year, and was put at ease with her father's accepting words to simply do what she can and not worry.

### Love in Action

From there, we shifted into "doing" acts of kindness! Each senior grabbed a flower, wrote a personal note and went out to find a freshman to gift it to. We then divided ourselves into two groups: "Kindness Canvassers" and "Inner to Outer Sanitation" with an intention of spreading kindness beyond the walls of the school into the streets of West Portal! Within minutes the students were busily making beautiful posters and writing personal "love" notes of appreciation while others were grabbing brooms and trash bags. Once in the streets, men and women of all ages were overwhelmed with hugs, homemade cookies, smiles, flowers, and "love" notes! The joy was palpable!



*Photo: ServiceSpace*

### Circle of Sharing and Reflection

Once back at school, we gathered in another circle. A few reflections: "I'm shy and hesitant, approaching someone to give a hug is hard; being with my friend gave me more courage."

"In Starbucks, I found it difficult to break through the barrier of all the people connected to their computers and phones. I realized I needed more support, more friends to help me break through this energy... it was like these people are in here dying."

### Sharing a Meal

Once back inside, the students all lined up patiently waiting to eat. We asked them, "Why are you waiting. Please go ahead!" They all responded, "We have been waiting for you. We will not eat until you are served." With a full heart, we received their love and were gifted an abundance of tasty Indian food. We enjoyed more conversation, laughs and connection!

This article has been edited. For the complete article, please see Service Space's blog: <http://www.servicespace.org/blog/view.php?id=15496>



*Photo: ServiceSpace*

and physiology of the nervous, cardiovascular, and skeletomuscular systems of the human being with comparisons to other organisms. The phenomena of these topics meet the 9th grader well because we all have direct experiences of these systems every day in a physical way. Embryology and heredity are explored in 10th grade as students observe the development of live zebra fish eggs, learn the details of human gestation, and get an introduction to genetics. The theme of fluid change is an overarching one for this block allowing 10th graders to explore the age-appropriate question of "How?" In 11th grade, students have matured in their thinking to the point where unseen processes can be explored in a more conceptual way, and this new ability is met by the topics of botany and cell biology. Here we learn the life cycles of plants and cells and study the biochemical processes of photosynthesis and respiration. All seniors study zoology and evolution in their biology block and learn about the vast animal kingdom, human evolution, and the history of evolutionary thought. The thinking of 12th graders is now ready for synthesis and paradox, aspects that are abundant in learning about the forces in evolution, such as cooperation through symbiosis, competition, natural selection, and those not yet fully understood.

The topics of the Honors Biology elective build on these main lessons and range from the molecules of life to the functioning of ecosystems. The enjoyable challenge for me as a teacher is to avoid falling prey to the seduction of reductionism. Picking things apart and studying their individual components, such as the DNA molecule, has taught us much over the past 60 years, but DNA operates in and is informed by the larger context of organisms living in an environment. The same can be said of all levels of study in biology: from molecules to biomes, there is always a larger context to consider. That said, students come out of the course knowing (I hope) how cells synthesize proteins and how all living things get their energy from the ATP molecule.

When I was planning this course, I considered making it an AP Biology class, but after attending an AP workshop, I had my suspicions confirmed that the curriculum was geared too much towards remembering facts. The AP designation was not as important to me as the freedom to construct my class anew each year, based on the students in front of me. Nevertheless, many of the lab experiments we do are from the AP curriculum, and include work such as the quantitative analysis of enzyme activity, osmotic water potential of cells, and measurements of cellular respiration under different conditions. Students also perform and present experiments that they have designed together in groups. I have helped several students over the years successfully complete the AP Biology test if they want to take it. The bottom line is that this is a very rewarding class to teach because I am privileged to see these most interested and engaged students bring together all they have learned before. I am glad also to see that many of these students go on to study biology in college.

and to my surprise, he quickly agreed to set-up a photo exhibit of his work at our program.

Since the Bay Area has a long history of social activism, I felt strongly that we should invite a leader with ties to social justice to introduce John Lewis. I recalled a powerful essay, "Summer of Violence," written by Adam Hochschild, about his life-changing experience as a civil rights worker in the Freedom Summer. Hochschild is a National Book Award-nominated historian who has written extensively on human rights and co-founded *Mother Jones* magazine. He is also a former Waldorf school parent. I decided to extend an invitation to him and he immediately wrote back, "Sure. How could I ever say no? I've admired John Lewis for more than 50 years. Besides that summer in Mississippi, I was in the crowd the year before, when he gave his speech at the March on Washington."

On Saturday, September 20, more than fifty years after he spoke at the March on Washington, Congressman John Lewis (GA-5) brought the message of peace, nonviolence, and social justice to a crowd of nearly 400 at Calvary Presbyterian Church for our High School Public Lecture Series. Members of our high school choir and faculty opened with "There is a Balm in Gilead," a traditional African-American spiritual. Later, John Lewis pointed out that it was Martin Luther King's favorite song.

The spirit of the era came alive with Matt Herron's photo exhibit, "The Civil Rights Movement: 1963-1965," the presence of a group of Bay Area veterans of the Civil Rights movement including former San Francisco Supervisor Carol Ruth Silver, and with the HS choir's final song, "We Shall Overcome," the protest song that became a key anthem of the Civil Rights movement.

On Monday, September 22, Congressman Lewis and Andrew Aydin visited our high school. Their remarks inspired thoughtful questions by the student body, including, "The Civil Rights Movement was clearly a collaboration of many different people. Is there anyone you feel has been overlooked even for their leadership?" "Did you have any contact with Malcolm X? What did you think of Malcolm X?" "Did getting arrested more than 40 times hurt you politically?" "Did you ever want to react violently?" The discussion ranged from the practice of nonviolent activism and social media as a tool for change, to the challenges of current student loan debt.

On both days, Lewis described what it was like to grow up in the Deep South in the 1940s and 1950s:

"When we would visit Montgomery, the little town of Troy, Birmingham, Tuskegee, I saw those signs 'White Men,' 'Colored Men,' 'White Women,' 'Colored Women,' 'White Waiting,' 'Colored Waiting,' and I would come home and ask my mother, my father, my grandparents, my great-grandparents, 'Why?'"



High School Choir

Photo: Scott Chernis



Congressman John Lewis

Photo: Scott Chernis

"That's the way it is. Don't get in the way. Don't get in trouble.

"When we would go downtown to the little town of Troy, to the theater on a Saturday afternoon, all of us little black children had to go upstairs to the balcony, all of the little white children went down to the first floor. I kept on saying, 'Why?'"

"Fifteen years old in the 10th grade, I heard of Rosa Parks. I

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## Alumni Corner

### Alumni Interview: Paige Whiteside, Class of 2003

#### SFWS High School Mentor



**SFWS:** Can you talk about your experience since graduating from high school?

**Paige Whiteside:** Upon completing SFWHS in the third graduating class, I was fortunate to attend Willamette University in beautiful Oregon. I immersed myself in my interests - psychology and creative arts - and fell in love with school on many levels. After four years, a thesis, and a lot of pizza deliveries I was more than ready to return to the beloved Bay Area and get my hands dirty. I experimented with several jobs and lived in Austin, Texas for a while but always found myself drawn once again to psychology and counseling.

I attended California Institute of Integral Studies where I received a Masters in Counseling Psychology and became enamored with School Counseling in particular. For five years I worked as a School Counselor and Mental Health Therapist at several East Bay schools.

**SFWS:** Please describe your new role as the High School Mentor.

**PW:** I have wanted the chance to work with Waldorf students and faculty since the time I was a high school student myself and co-founded the peer counseling group with Karen Apana's help and guidance. As the High School Mentor I will be supporting students and parents on both an individual and community basis. I am available as a resource to students when they are struggling, particularly with social/emotional issues and will work with grades 9, 10, and 11 at different points throughout the year during their Health elective. I am returning to Peer Counseling as a facilitator pairing freshmen with seniors and working with the peer counselors throughout the year on building their skills to help the student body as a whole. I plan to reach out to parents by offering consultation and guest speakers on topics relevant to teens and parents in our current cultural setting.

**SFWS:** How did your experience at SFWS enrich your post-high school experiences and career choices?

**PW:** I am so grateful to have attended a school that celebrates student's individual gifts while also fostering a sense of community. I have always been interested in people, behavior, and relationships and was able to explore this interest at Waldorf with the support of faculty who steered me toward things I was obviously interested in. I entered college empowered with the mindset that doing what I love is valuable and can lead to success in life.

**SFWS:** Would you please share some good memories from your time here?

**PW:** Too many! Camping! Traveling! Having dynamic conversations with teachers, Ms. Apana's laugh, playing soccer, acting. I felt like an active participant in my learning and growing. I have to mention that to this day my best friends are eight girls I went to high school with, so these memories are in a perpetual state of being made.



*Ms. Whiteside with students Photo: Lisa Anderson*

## Alumni Updates

**Zoe Brezny (Class of 2009)** wrote: "In May 2014, I graduated from California College of the Arts in Oakland with a B.A. in Writing and Literature. I am beginning the MFA program in Poetry at Columbia University in New York this fall. I have been working as a journalist for the *East Bay Express* in Oakland. For the week of July 30, 2014, I wrote the cover story for the paper. The piece is entitled "Books Are Dead. Long Live Books." It's about the artist cooperatives, innovative bookstores, poetry reading series, presses, and gritty, grassroots communities behind the East Bay's literary renaissance. Find it here: <http://bit.ly/1tvY3eZ>"



**Claire Furlotte (Class of 2005)** is an NBCOT certified Occupational Therapist working in a sub-acute rehabilitation center in Albany, Oregon where she is also the Director of Rehab. Claire graduated with honors in 2010 from San Francisco State University with a B.S. in Kinesiology. She completed a Master of Occupational Therapy with honors from Pacific University in 2013. She is currently pursuing a clinical doctorate. Claire teaches, choreographs, and performs with Zephyr, her Improv Tribal Style bellydance company. They produce an annual bellydance retreat that hosts some of the world's foremost bellydance artists and musicians. Claire has happily settled into her first home with her boyfriend, three cats, and a dog.

## Alumni News

### Save the Date!

- GS Class of 2014 Reunion: Saturday, November 15
- Winter Alumni and Family Reunion: Saturday, December 20
- GS Class of 2010 Reunion: March 2015, TBA
- GS Class of 1990 25th Reunion: May 2015, TBA
- Summer Alumni Reunion: Saturday, June 20, 2015

### Announcements:

We are looking for alumni liaisons from each class. If you are interested, please email Seraph White at [swhite@sfwaldorf.org](mailto:swhite@sfwaldorf.org).

SAN FRANCISCO  
**WALDORF**



### 3rd Annual SF Waldorf Golf Benefit

Sunday, November 2, 2014

TPC Harding Park Golf Course  
99 Harding Road  
San Francisco, CA 94132

### Register Today!

Cost: Sliding scale, \$150 - 300  
[www.sfwaldorf.org/golf](http://www.sfwaldorf.org/golf)

### Sponsored by



Bob Kroupa Painting  
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Ruby Sailing

## Advancement Liaisons

Many thanks to our Advancement Liaisons who every year help our community successfully complete our Annual Fund campaign. Please do not hesitate to contact your class representative as you consider a gift.

### 2014-2015 Liaisons

**Annual Fund Chair:** Charlie Spiegel (Gr. 12); **Nursery:** Joseph Freund (Nursery); **Kindergarten:** Scott Peter (K1), Michael Danzansky (K2), Bob Lehto (K2, Gr. 5), Erica Saltiel Levin (K3); **Grade 1:** Grace Kim (Gr. 1); **Grade 2:** Ben Chambers (Gr. 2), Mari DiNardo (K1, Gr. 2), JoAnn Rollins (K1, Gr. 2); **Grade 3:** Kyle Macdonald (Gr. 3 & 6), Seraph White (K3, Gr. 3); **Grade 4:** Gabrielle Chernis (Gr. 2 & 4); **Grade 5:** Hugh Molesworth (Gr. 5, 7, 11); **Grade 6:** Mitch Mitchell (Gr. 6); **Grade 7:** Abe Williams (Gr. 7); **Grade 8:** Tad Kinney (Gr. 8); **Grade 9:** Zoran Basich (Gr. 9), Kris Wolcott (Gr. 4 & 9); **Grade 10:** Doug Fong (Gr. 10), Gigi Taylor (Gr. 10), Josh Taylor (Gr. 8 & 10); **Grade 11:** John Froy (Gr. 9 & 11), Tammy McMillan (Gr. 11); **Grade 12:** Daniel Silverman (Gr. 12), Silvia Castellanos (Gr. 12); **International:** Caihong Zhou, Cathi Conley

## SFWS 100% Participation Annual Fund Campaign Launch

Gifts of financial support, time and talent are essential to maintaining the high quality of educational programs at SFWS. As with all independent schools, tuition at SFWS is less than the actual annual costs of educating each student. On average, the “gap” between the cost per student and tuition is \$2,600. The school supplements tuition and other revenues each year through the generosity of our current and extended community.

Annual Fund is the cornerstone of San Francisco Waldorf School’s growing philanthropic efforts, comprising approximately 5-6% of the operating budget. High donor participation from current parents, staff and faculty, grandparents, and alumni is a testament to the strength of our community and it inspires others to give. All school families are asked to support the Annual Fund each year and in 2013-2014 we had 99.9% parent participation. Gifts of all sizes are welcome and appreciated!

By giving back through the Annual Fund, you help support activities such as:

- Field Trips and Class Excursions
- Athletic Team Uniforms and Equipment
- Salaries and benefits for Waldorf teachers!

We are off to a great start this year thanks to those families who have already made their Annual Fund gifts since July. Please help us continue this momentum toward 100% participation by making a gift or pledge today! All gifts are tax-deductible, and can be made by cash, check, credit card or stock. If you have questions, please contact Mitch Mitchell at [mmitchell@sfwaldorf.org](mailto:mmitchell@sfwaldorf.org).

Online Gifts: <http://sfwaldorf.org/onlinegiving>

Pledges: <http://www.sfwaldorf.org/advancement/annual-fund-pledge>



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heard the words of Martin Luther King on the radio. The words of MLK Jr. inspired me to find a way to get in the way. I was so inspired by Dr. King, that in 1956, at the age of 16, with some of my brothers and sisters and cousins, we went down to the public library trying to get library cards, trying to check out some books. We were told by the librarian that the library was for whites only and not for coloreds.”

Lewis encouraged students to speak up and take action against injustices:

“If you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have a moral obligation, a mission and a mandate to stand up, to speak up and speak out and do something about it. We have an obligation to leave this little piece of real estate, this little space ship that we call America a little greener, a little cleaner...and a little more peaceful for the generations not yet born.

“It doesn’t matter if we are black or white or Latino, Asian-American or Native Americans. We are one people, one family. We all live in the same house. Not just an American house but the world house.

“You are smart and gifted students. You will be the leaders of the 21st century. You must not just do well, but you must go out and do good. Not for just this little part of the planet, but for all around the world, and one day, one of you will be a great filmmaker, a lawyer, a teacher, a doctor, a scientist, a successful business person, maybe you will be a mayor of a city, governor of a state, a member of Congress, maybe President of the U.S. Maybe you will teach people the way of peace, the way of love, and find a way to get in the way. Find a way to get in good trouble, necessary trouble, to create what Dr. King called the ‘Beloved Community.’ Be not afraid. Walk with the wind and follow the teachings of *March*.”

Congressman Lewis ended his talk saying, “Understand that the way of peace, the way of love, the way of nonviolence is a better way, and it is an

immutable principle that you cannot deviate from.”

He then invited all of the students to come visit his Congressional office in Washington, D.C.

Congressman John Lewis and Andrew Aydin’s visit deepened our understanding of our history, and inspired us all to follow his lead, to be leaders, agents for social change, and to serve our communities with compassion and integrity.

Since their visit to the HS, two seniors Aldyn Markle and Charlotte Halifax have decided to make a hand-bound book of thank you notes from the students and the teachers, and enclose photos from the two events, to express their deep appreciation to Congressman John Lewis and Andrew Aydin.

Both the community talk and the high school visit were planned, organized, and presented through a mighty team effort. A special thanks to **Mitch Mitchell**, Advancement Director and the entire Advancement team for their hard work, enthusiasm and support: **Seraph White**, Advancement Associate, **Grace Kim**, Special Gift Coordinator and **Kim Hopper**. Thanks to **Lori Grey**, GS Enrollment Director, for her support and also to **Scott Chernis**, GS parent, for photographing the event. Thank you **David Weber**, Choir and Humanities Teacher, for opening the program and bringing a beautiful musical element to the program. Thank you HS choir and faculty members for your uplifting voices. An additional thanks to **Lisa Barry**, HS Enrollment Director; **Lisa Anderson**, HS Administrative Coordinator; **Charlene Davis**, HS Enrollment Associate, and to the many high school student volunteers who assisted at the event.

Finally, a round of applause to our co-sponsors Books Inc. and Glide Memorial Church, and to Calvary Presbyterian Church.

### Upcoming Public Events

Sunday, October 5, 9:30 and 10:30am	<b>Rumpelstiltskin Marionette Show</b> grade school campus
Saturday, October 18, 11am-4pm	<b>35th Anniversary Party</b> golden gate park bandshell
Wednesday, October 22, 7pm	<b>Bonnie Gale Lecture</b> high school campus
Friday, October 24, 7pm	<b>Linda Thomas Lecture</b> high school campus
Saturday, October 25	<b>Fairy Walk</b> grade school campus
Tuesday, October 28, 7pm	<b>Douglas Gerwin</b> high school campus
Sunday, November 2	<b>3rd Annual SF Waldorf Golf Benefit</b> tpc harding park
Friday, November 14	<b>Dad's Night</b> elks club, 450 post street
Saturday, November 15	<b>GS Class of 2014 Reunion</b> grade school campus
Sunday, December 7, 10am-3pm	<b>Winter Fair</b> grade school campus
Thursday, December 11	<b>HS Winter Concert</b> scottish rite masonic center
Friday, December 19	<b>Shepherd's Play</b> grade school campus
Saturday, December 20	<b>Alumni and Family Winter Reunion</b> high school campus

Visit our online calendars and news pages at [www.sfwaldorf.org](http://www.sfwaldorf.org).

## Happy 35th Anniversary to SFWS and a proper good bye to Monique!



**Saturday, October 18  
11am-4pm**

**The Bandshell, Golden Gate Park**

**11am-1pm - Entertainment and Lunch**

**1-2pm - Happy Anniversary and Retirement Celebration**

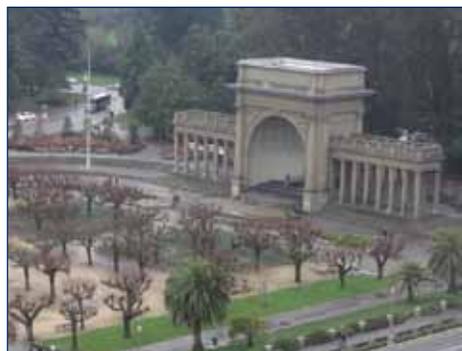
**2-4pm - More Music and Entertainment**



Please make plans now to attend our 35th Anniversary celebration and retirement party for Monique! The event will take place on Saturday, October 18, 11am-4pm at the Bandshell in Golden Gate Park - area between the Academy of Science and de Young Museum. The event will be free, with an affordable lunch.

#### **An entertainment extravaganza:**

- Culann's Hounds
- Indianna Hale
- the Crooked Jades



#### **A feast offered by Chef Tony Castelluci:**

- Never Ever Grilled Chicken Breast with Lemon Caper Demi Glaze
- Organic Garnett Yams & Kale Gratin with Crispy Quinoa Cream

Finally, there will be a special program in celebration of the school's anniversary and the retirement of our founding teacher Monique!

[www.sfwaldorf.org/35th](http://www.sfwaldorf.org/35th)