

Trillium Charter School is a democratically-structured environment that fosters students' natural curiosity, creativity, and self-awareness. Students learn to take initiative and assume responsibility for their own learning, which supports constructive interaction with the local, regional, and global community.

# Newsletter

May 2008



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# Trillium Charter School

LEARNING FOR CHANGE

## From the Director By Stephanie Hinkle

Dear Trillium Families,

I can't believe it is May already and we only have a few weeks left of school. In that time we have the auction, the talent show, the all-school service day, outdoor school, campouts, some conferences, a holiday, and graduation for fifth, eighth, and 12th graders. The high school graduation is June 7th at PSU. Further details will follow. We also are hosting students from a charter school in Bend from the 5th to the 8th of May. So much to do, and so little time. It is also spring, and the weather is improving. Students are more active, a little more emotional, a little less focused, and the whole effect is a little more rambunctious. So, take a deep breath and let's enjoy the pace and energy of spring.



I have to say that I sometimes get to watch Oprah. I know it is kind of cliché, but sometimes I feel energized by some of her topics. A few weeks ago she was talking to a man who helped people find their passions. It really reminded me of why we approach education the way we do here at Trillium. Sometimes we may think that getting to explore and spend time on our own interests is self-serving and isn't responsive to the needs of the community or world. I have a different perspective. I think that when we get to be true to ourselves, we are better, stronger members of the community. We put energy and enthusiasm in our daily activities that enrich us, thereby enrich the experience. If our passion is art, we add to the beauty and creative process around us. If we love working with people, we bring hope and joy to others through our care and concern. If we love the world of commerce, we bring humanity to trade of goods and services. Really, it is the pursuit of our passions that lead to a better world. I never hear someone say their passion is something that is harmful or destructive. Often, being unable to pursue one's passion can lead to resentment and anger, and those forces are destructive to the world. So, it was nice to see on Oprah that the wider world is beginning to get some of that perspective.

On the topic of pursuing passions, it is time to let families know about major staff changes that we know are happening at Trillium. Staff changes are always emotional, and feel frightening to people sometimes. Please remember that we strive really hard to find the right match for our community when we have staff changes. We also recognize the sadness these changes can have on children, and sometimes parents. One of our goals is to create a community that filters out to the rest of the world and retains ties to former members. We also want to provide an environment where staff members can play to their interests and strengths.

(Continued on Page 2)

# Walk + Bike Challenge Month is May 5 until May 30!

Trillium is participating in Walk and Bike to School Challenge Month (visit <http://www.walknbike.org/> for more information. If you have questions talk to your advisor or teacher Billy Menz.

Nervous about walking or bicycling to school? Bring your questions to our family commuting workshops.

Walk + Bike to School Challenge Month has over 30 schools signed up to participate; that's over 4,000 students registered. ( Find out who's signed up to compete.) This event will be a friendly competition between Portland State University and Portland metro area elementary schools to have the greatest number of students walk and bike to school.

Walking or biking to school just one day during the month of May will qualify you to win prizes- the more walking and biking you do, the more likely you will be to win! The elementary school with the most number of students walking and biking over the month will win a grand prize.



## From the Director (Continued from Page 1)

So, first, Polly will not be teaching a primary class next year. She will be changing her duties at school. She will spend at least half of her time running the service learning program at our school. She will be teaching students throughout the school and building relationships with the outside community. She will take on some program support duties as well. Polly is such an integral member of our community. She has been with us since before the beginning and has taken on so much work in addition to her teaching. We are really excited to have her work throughout the school, but know that her students will miss her daily attention.

Second, Nick will be dropping his advising duties to spend more of his time with technology support. Technology has become such a big component of our world, both within and outside of school, and we must pay more attention to it. Nick has taken on tech duties for years, on top of his teaching, but it just isn't feasible to continue overworking him.

Third, Tobie will be leaving us to run a small charter school in New Mexico. This has always been a dream for her, and we wish her luck in her new job. We plan to continue our relationship with Tobie and want an exchange program of some kind with her new school.

I know that change can be stressful, but it is a good opportunity to show your children that they can handle it successfully. Please let the teachers know if your child is having a particularly hard time with the changes. We will do everything we can to support them.

Our lottery was conducted last month and parents notified of their position at school. We have a hundred or so students on our waitlist. I think that we had a record number of siblings apply this year. Thanks to those of you who filled out the application on time. It is sad when we get sibling applications after the deadline and have to put them on the waitlist.

By the time you read this, Donna Foxley from the US Department of Education will have toured our school. We also had our site revue from PPS and the charter school manager was here for three days interviewing teachers, students, and parents, as well as visiting classrooms. It was a good experience and she was pleased with what she saw and heard. We also were visited by a class from PSU that is exploring alternative education. They were very interested in our school and enjoyed the time they spent here. Trillium is becoming more widely known all the time. These visits will probably keep increasing and bringing more attention to our school. It is good to have Trillium on the map.

Have a great spring. See you at all the events.

## Art at Trillium By Andrea Rosselle

Students in 3/4/5 classes have been busy this quarter. In art we are focusing on community and how to use our talents to give to others. These past three weeks we have created art to donate to the Patton Residential Facility on Michigan Avenue. Patton provides housing to low-income elderly and/or disabled individuals. The students have donated their work to the residents and it is currently hanging in one of the front hallways in the facility. The work is available for the community to enjoy and keep. For the next six weeks students will create portable, small scale paintings that will be given to homeless individuals, as well as create handmade sketchbooks with themes to scatter around Portland. The sketchbooks will have themes created by the students instructing those who may find them to add words, or drawings and pass the sketchbook on. At the end of each book we will write a note asking for the sketchbook to be returned to Trillium so the students can enjoy the communal and artistic life journey of the sketchbook took. We don't expect them all to be returned, but we are hoping some will find their way back to us.

Last quarter, Middle School students also displayed artwork at a one-day event put on by Our United Villages at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. Also this month, Kindergarten artwork, as well as some 3/4/5 and Middle School artwork, is being displayed at the New Seasons in Happy Valley in the deli. If you have the opportunity to visit this brand new store be sure to stop in and see the student work.

Lastly, we recently received a wonderful parent donation: a pottery wheel! With the help of TFT, we have bought some low-fire clay and glazes and pots are starting to pop up around the art room. We are very grateful to the parents of our students who make opportunities like this possible.



*By Cairo*



*By Wren*



*By Curran*

## Garden Updates By Arianne Newton

Spring is finally here and the kids and I are super busy with lots of gardening. Aside from getting our own garden in shape for the season, we have been starting lots of seeds for this year's BIG project. The students voted to participate in the **"grow a row for the hungry" project**. All produce from the garden will be harvested and donated to the Salvation Army food bank in North Portland. In preparation for this service project, the kids and I will be going on several field trips to local food distribution centers including Sisters of the Road Café, the Oregon Food Bank and the Salvation Army. We will be helping at these centers and then harvesting and donating food all season long.



Speaking of service projects, we just completed phase 1 of our service project with the Raphael House, a domestic violence shelter. We worked with the staff and residence over many months to design two sections of gardens for them. The kids took surveys, measured, did a site analysis, a site plan, and preliminary and final to scale designs that were then presented in a formal presentation to the Raphael House. We will continue to be involved by helping with the installation in fall and then doing seasonal maintenance.

The garden kids will also be hosting a tour of our garden in mid May for the Portland Garden Society. This group has been supportive of our efforts over the years by donating plants for both the medicinal herb garden and the butterfly garden.

Our garden is also becoming more of a community space as we have established a collaboration with Port City next door. The activity director will be leading gardening projects at our garden with adults with developmental disabilities who use the center. We are happy to welcome them!

Work continues on plans for the roof garden. It is an expensive proposition and one that will need to be accomplished in stages, but rest assured we are moving forward. It will be such a great space when completed—a really great example of lots of sustainable techniques and it will bring our garden closer to home.

Thanks to those parents who offered to drive when my transportation fell through.

And finally, an open invitation for all to visit the garden. It is a little bit of paradise built from a vacant lot in the heart of the city. Over the years, we have had to put a lock on the gate, so please feel free to contact me and I can give you the code. We have chickens which give us lots of eggs that we cook with in class and a cob earth oven and tool shed that the kids built, and much more. If you are new and have not visited, check it out.

Thank you to all who are so generous in supporting the garden program in ways big and small. I love working with your kids and sharing with them a little bit of knowledge about our earth.



## Nurses Visit Trillium

Linfield College nursing students are at Trillium again this semester to explore with the staff and students alike the nurse's role in fostering family health within the Trillium community. Through a variety of classes and teaching opportunities, the nurses are using the principles of health promotion, illness prevention and health maintenance to support family and individual health and wellness. Linda Kruse, RN, MSN, their clinical instructor, has experienced the Trillium school community as a welcoming and rich environment for teaching/learning together. The following is a brief description of what each team of nurses is doing:

Amanda and Virginia are currently working with the preschoolers. They will be giving a presentation each Friday on the importance of nutrition and a healthy diet. In addition, students will also be taught how to categorize food according to the food pyramid and the daily serving size for each group.

Gretchen and Courtney are working with the K-2 students. Each week they teach a lesson. The topics covered are physical activity, nutrition, and personal/fire safety. They are also starting a middle school girls group, with high school girls as co-facilitators, to provide a safe, fun environment for the middle school girls to express concerns in their lives.

Christa and Sandra have been working with the middle school students to promote responsible decision making through comprehensive sex and drug education. The students have been very inquisitive and the nurses are excited about seeing them take the initiative with their own health and wellness. After all "that's the goal of community nursing."

**LINFIELD COLLEGE**  
**PORTLAND CAMPUS**

## Spring Track Team Off and Running

Parents Anne Greenwood (Eva) and Dana Smith (Isabella & Clay), have offered to coach a track team this spring. We are starting a bit late, with the first meet held on April 26.

The track team meet on Thursdays after school under the tree out front of the school and walk/jog to Jefferson track. Parents are welcome to join us or pick your children up at the northeast side of the Jefferson High School track off N. Killingsworth Street. We will practice until 4 pm. Please be prompt to pick up your children.

All meets are on Saturdays. Registration is from 9 to 10; running events begin at 9:15. Meet dates are:

- April 26
- May 3 at Wilson High School
- May 10 at Fernhill Park
- May 17 at Madison High School

There is a registration fee of \$1.50 per event at each meet. Parents are responsible for getting children to the meets. Please meet at the registration area.

You will need to sign a release form before your children can travel with us to the track for practice. Please have children wear running shoes and comfortable cloths.

Contact Anne Greenwood, 503-284-9213, or Dana Smith, 503-206-4797, with questions. Or find us at the school.



## **All School Service Day** **Thursday, May 15th, 9 am - noon**

Sit down lunch at 12:15

**Parent volunteers are still needed!**

If you can help, email [billy@trilliumcharterschool.org](mailto:billy@trilliumcharterschool.org) or  
[polly@trilliumcharterschool.org](mailto:polly@trilliumcharterschool.org)

Go to [www.trilliumcharterschool.org](http://www.trilliumcharterschool.org) for more details.

## **Volunteer Thanks**

A huge thanks to the auction class and all those involved in helping make this happen. We know how much work this is and we really value the support. It was a fun evening for all!

## **Grounds Clean-up Volunteer Coordinator Needed**

A new volunteer is needed to coordinate the weekly grounds clean-up, starting in May. Contact Anne Greenwood or attend the next TFT meeting.

## **Scrip Update** by Anne Stark

People have been asking me, "So how much have we made with this Scrip program, anyway?" And when they ask they usually have one hand on their hip, a vicious sneer and a finger poking me in the chest. No, not really, this is Trillium, remember?

For the record, we have made over \$2,000 this year! Thanks to all the regulars and all the once-in-a-whilers who have all been ordering Scrip gift cards at face value. This has added up to lots of free money for Trillium. Obviously, no order is too small (or too big).

If you've never ordered Scrip before, now is a great time to get started. Orders go in Monday mornings and come back in as early as the following Thursday afternoon. As usual, I'll be around this Monday morning to help you with your orders or answer questions. Gift cards are a great way to budget for groceries, home improvement items, sporting goods, etc.



*Trillium's newsletter is produced monthly by parent volunteers Jodie Throckmorton and Susan Millhauser. Submissions to the newsletter are due by the third Monday of the month and can be directed to Jodie. Please contact Jodie at [jodie@trilliumcharterschool.org](mailto:jodie@trilliumcharterschool.org). Photos or other images along with your submissions are also welcome!*

## **Mark These Important Dates On Your Calendar...**

*(All events at Trillium unless otherwise noted)*

### **All School Service Day**

Thursday, May 15,  
9 am to noon, lunch at 12:15

### **Board Meeting**

Thursday, May 15  
6 to 8:30 pm. All are welcome!

### **All School Talent Show**

Friday, May 16, 6:30 to 8:30 pm

### **Upper School Campouts**

Wednesday, May 21 to Friday, May 23

### **Memorial Day-NO SCHOOL**

Monday, May 26

### **3-4-5 Family Cookout/Potluck**

Saturday, May 31, 12 to 4pm  
Kelly Point Park

### **5th Grade Transition Meeting**

Monday, June 2, 3:15 to 4:15 pm

### **TFT Coffee Klatch**

Friday, June 6, 8:00am – 9:30am  
Garden Classroom

### **Graduation**

Saturday, June 7, 2 to 6pm

### **TFT Meeting**

Tuesday, June 10, 3:30 to 4:30 pm  
Childcare provided

### **8th Grade Promotion Ceremony**

Thursday, June 12, 1:15 to 3:00pm

### **Last Day of School, Friday, June 13**

