

LAKOTA



Waldorf School

Three miles creek • Pine Ridge • Indian Reservation • Kyle • 57752 South-Dakota • USA

NEWSLETTER No. 2

December 2009

From the heart of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation



Wa Onsila Winyan

I am Verola Spider, my Lakota name is Wa Onsila Winyan which means gracious and merciful woman. I was born and raised in Porcupine, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. I am a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe and I am also a full blood Lakota. My first language is Lakota. I did not speak English till I was 6 years old. I speak Lakota and that is what I teach and I still do the traditional foods, drying meat and I also do the squash.

I dry it the traditional way and this way it can be kept for a longer time. And also we pick our berries, plums, chokecherries, buffalo berries. Last part of August-beginning of September when the wild berries are ripe, we went with the kindergarten children to pick the wild berries and plums, I cook them and make wojapi with it (this is a fruit pudding). I do a lot of beadwork, quillwork, I make traditional dance outfits. I can put up tipis and teach others how to put up a tipi if they want to. I also do a lot of sewing, I do star quilts and patchwork quilts. I have taught in many schools here on our Pine Ridge Indian Reservation this is my first year in teaching at Lakota Waldorf School. I also taught Lakota language, Traditional Arts and Crafts at the Oglala Lakota College.

I am a storyteller, the fifth generation of storytellers in my family.

I am enrolled in the Lifeways Training and look forward to the Waldorf training to become a Waldorf teacher. From what I have learned about Waldorf I see similar teaching about nurturing the child. Because we also believe strongly in the spirituality of the child. We were always taught by our grandmothers and grandfathers that a child is a gift from our creator. We have ceremonies to honor our children which we practice even today, like the name giving ceremony and making a relative, Welcoming (newborn) Ceremony.

I am teaching the children about the four traditional values; respect, generosity, courage, wisdom. I started with the first one, respect, and teach them to respect themselves and others. Every morning we go on the hill behind the kindergarten and pray and we thank the creator for the day and I was telling them about the sun, the moon, the stars, we thank the creator for everything.

We started with 22 children enrolled, we had children on the waiting list. We would like to keep our enrollment at 15 because we are here to offer quality education and be able to give each child the nurturing it needs. The children feel happy and safe here. Zaniyan Win is our bus driver and she is my assistant, when she does not drive the bus she stays and helps.

I have been a teacher all my life, because I have nine children and now I have grand children. I look forward to a great school year and thank all the people who helped in making our Lakota Waldorf school a success.

Many Blessings! Verola Spider

Every donation is highly appreciated!

We wish to thank all the people who support our dream of having a Lakota Waldorf school on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. We thank you all for helping us in the past and we hope you will help us in the future.

Pilamayayapi ! Thank you!

www.lakotawaldorfschool.org

From the heart of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation



From the Board of Directors

My name is Vernona Kills Right Under Baggage. I am from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and I reside in the community of Porcupine, South Dakota. I have been on the Wolakota Waldorf Board since last spring, prior to my becoming a board member I attended the board meetings because I have always been a supporter of this school. My husband Norman Under Baggage was one of the founders of the Wolakota Waldorf school and was in Switzerland with Robert Stadnick and spiritual leader Richard moves Camp. Since my husband's passing I have become involved in the school to carry on the vision of Norman. The vision that the children at a young age will become educated in their Lakota language, cultural and spiritual heritage, supported and incorporated in the spirit and principles of the anthroposophical science of Rudolf Steiner. I am looking forward to working with the other board members to ensure that our Lakota children receive a good foundation in their education in the most important years of their life. Norman entered the Spirit World on June 16, 2007

Highlight of the year 2009

Thanks to a generous grant from the Midstates Shared Gifting Group, we are building partnership with the mentoring group from AWSNA (Association of Waldorf schools of North America). In October and again December 2009 we received visit from Patrice Maynard, AWSNA, Laurie and Tom Clark from the Denver Waldorf school. They form a mentoring group who will be working with us on different projects like; teacher training, school development, fundraising and more. We are very happy about our new friendship with AWSNA and are grateful about their support and mentoring work! Pilamaya !

We need your help. The school bus has to run many miles every day, we provide the children with warm, healthy meals, and a peaceful, save environment. Crafting, play time, painting are part of the daily activities. The school/Kindergarten is located near Kyle, a community in the middle of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, in the Medicine Root (Pejuta Haka) District.

Since this school does not receive any funding from the government, it depends entirely on donations and gifts.

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Pilamaya ! Thank you !

Wakan tanka unya wastepi !

May the great spirit bless us all !