

October 2023



# Selkirk Montessori School E-Newsletter

## From the Executive Director, Penny Barner

Close to the end of February 1998, Karen Colussi invited me to meet at her house for tea. She had experienced a recurrence of breast cancer, and had been gravely ill for some months. As volunteer chair of the Pacific Montessori Society board, I had been working closely with her to ensure that the Montessori Centre of Victoria would live on after she was gone. Happily for all of us, Karen had been able to attend the groundbreaking for the new school on the Selkirk Waterfront earlier that month.

We had a wonderful visit. At the end of our meeting, she told me that she had made some decisions. She wanted me to take over the administration of the school and Catherine Scorey to take on the

principal role. At the end of the month, Karen passed away, and Catherine and I started what was to be a ten year adventure.



Selkirk Montessori School opened up in September 1998. Our staff, students and families were thrilled to move in! After the first year with only two floors, we were able to complete the third floor over the summer of 1999 and open up six new classrooms that September. After ten years of hard work and incredible successes, Catherine was ready to retire. Through her contacts in education, we met Gil Henry. He was the perfect person for the job!

Gil was a retired public school principal who didn't realize he was actually a Montessori-an! We worked together for six years or so, as we continued to build our school community, improve our practice and take the school to the next level.



Gil was instrumental in mentoring Erin Hayes — one of our former teachers — as she transitioned to administration. Gil had a second 'retirement' and Erin took over the role of Head of School in 2013. It's been ten wonderful years of more growth (we added an extension to the building in 2015), recruiting wonderful staff and training them up, getting our amazing school to top of the academic charts.

Phew! 25 years have flown by! It's been a joy and a privilege to have worked with our teachers, staff and board members over the years. Supporting them so that they have been able to do the incredible work they do for the children has been the most rewarding experience of my work life. Now it's time to step back and let Erin and the team take Selkirk to the next, next level! As you may have noticed, I am working part-time this year as I move toward my retirement. It's hard to imagine not working at the school, but it makes it easier for me knowing that what Karen entrusted to Catherine and me 25 years ago has survived, thrived and will go on.



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*"I'm so glad I live in  
a world where there  
are Octobers."*

*L.M. Montgomery  
Anne of Green Gables*

# Annual General Meeting Information

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**THURSDAY**

**NOVEMBER 16th**

**7:00 PM**

The annual general meeting of the Pacific Montessori Society will be held in-person at the school on **Thursday, November 16th.**

Board treasurer, Francis Rowe, will go over the financial statements for the 2022-23 school year and the approved budget for 2023-2024 will be provided as well. Directors will also have prepared reports for your review.

We have two current members of the board who are running for new three-year terms: Courtney Stewart and Greg Atkins. We also have two directors who were appointed to the board in September: Liz da Mata and Elliot Rowe. They will also be running at the AGM for their first three year terms.

Please email [penny@selkirkmontessori.ca](mailto:penny@selkirkmontessori.ca) if you are planning on attending. I need to know how many chairs and packages I need to prepare.

## Truth & Reconciliation Assembly

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Thank you to the Owl and Orca classes for hosting a moving assembly to honour Truth & Reconciliation Day. A special thank to Maci Seaweed's grandmother, Florence Rose Dick, and uncle, Dakota Charlie, for gracing us with a traditional Lekwungen land acknowledgment and prayer song. We were also honoured to have Metis Elders Bertha and Joe Landrie at Selkirk to speak to the students the week before the assembly.

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## Provincial Government Employees—TAKE NOTE!

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You can donate directly from your payroll!  
Automatic payroll deductions make giving easy.

Choose to donate through PECSF and you will  
make a difference at Selkirk Montessori!

Choices include up to 10 of your favourite  
charities (Donor Choice) or the Fund Supported  
Pool. Each Fund Supported Pool is made up of  
local programs and services unique to your own  
community (PECSF region).

All CRA registered charities are eligible. Your  
donations will appear automatically on your T4  
slip, making tax time a breeze!

For more information and to donate, this link.

[\*Provincial Employees Community Services Fund\*](#)



# Cross Country Club



Cross Country Club got up and running pretty much the first week of school this year! It's a time to get out in the fresh air, bond with your friends and fit some physical exercise into your day. Cheers to all the students taking part this year.

Thanks to all the parents for driving to the meets. Extra special thanks to the staff coordinators and coaches, Lia, Angela, Beth, Becca and Noel for sharing their time with this club. As you can see from the smiling faces above, it is much appreciated!

Thanks also to Adam and Shannon for running an Ultimate Club again this year. The students enjoyed the practices and, of course, playing against other teams. Sadly, I wasn't able to get any photos of the team but I certainly heard many good things from the kids.

# Selkirk Parent Group (SPG) Update

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The air is brisk, leaves are crisp and classes are in full swing. To our new families: welcome! To our returning families: welcome back! The school community is a special one, and we're genuinely excited you're part of it.

## About the SPG

The Selkirk Parent Group (SPG) is an independent committee of the Pacific Montessori Society. As parents and caregivers of children in the school, you, dear readers, are all members.

The group has two main goals:

- Raise funds to support our students, and
- Through caregiver involvement, foster an inclusive, effective school community.

The SPG is run by a volunteer executive, led by the Chair, **Cheryl B.** We'd like to welcome **Sarah B.** as our new Vice-Chair and **Asal T.** as our new Treasurer (with support from **Ying H.**). Welcome, too, to, **Lara C.** as our new Website Coordinator, and **Laura W.** and **Nicole C.**, who are tag-teaming our Fundraising/Volunteer Co-Coordinator role. Thanks to **Melaina H.** for continuing as Secretary and **Amalia C.** for continuing as our Communications Coordinator.

Last but not least, welcome and thank you to those new and familiar faces who have stepped up to act as class representatives, and to run various fundraisers and community-building events throughout the year. We couldn't do it without you!

## New year ... new website!

The best way to keep up-to-date with SPG efforts is to visit our lovely, new website at <https://selkirkparentgroup.wordpress.com/>!

The site is your go-to resource for keeping up with our activities. You can also add yourself to our email list and sign up to volunteer. We'll continue to include updates in this monthly newsletter and of course you can always chat with your class representative.

Remember: You don't have to be part of the executive to get involved and support our kids. Whether you have 2 minutes or 2 hours, there are all kinds of ways you can help out. We regularly put out calls for specific activities and events, but we're always open to your brilliant schemes and suggestions!

## Coming up

- October 27 - Pizza Day: watch for emails detailing how and when to order
- October 27 (also) - Halloween Bash: this event is a fav with kids and adults (not least because it doubles as a highly effective way to tire out the younger attendees). Start planning your costume and watch for opportunities to help out!
- November: we'll be running our annual seasonal fundraisers—Purdys Chocolates, Paradise Island Cheese—*and we've got an exciting new wooden art kit offering from McTavish Academy of Art. Stay tuned!*





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***We can make a difference!***

**[ [www.selkirkmontessori.ca](http://www.selkirkmontessori.ca) ]**



Don't forget to bring in your  
donations for the Community Fridge!

## Dates to Remember

- \* October 17, 2023—Photo Day
- \* October 20, 2023—Non-Instructional Day (no school for children)
- \* October 23-27—Child Hosted Visits
- \* November 8, 2023—Photo Retakes
- \* November 10, 2023—Remembrance Day Assembly
- \* November 13, 2023—Remembrance Day (Statutory Holiday)

**Selkirk Montessori School is located on the traditional territories of the Lək'wəŋən people, today known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on this territory.**