



Pīwakawaka Community News

Winter 2010



Matariki and the Winter Solstice

*Ka Puta Matariki
Ka rere Whanui
Ko te tohu o te tau*

*Matariki (Pleiades) reappears
Whanui (Vega) starts its flight
This being the sign of the time of the year*

The Maori New Year began on the first new moon after the sighting of Matariki in the dawn sky. This year that was June 14th. It is a time when nature stands still. The sap has withdrawn, deciduous trees are bare, while the Puriri, Kohekohe and Whauwhaupaku (Five Finger) provide welcome nourishment for birds and colour for us with their winter flowering.

Matariki, or Pleiades, is a cluster of 7 large stars which wanders the sky throughout the year. One night in Autumn, Matariki sets. Through Autumn, the rising sun travels along the eastern horizon, appearing further and further north until the shortest day when it reaches the point where Matariki rises again. From that point the sun turns and begins travelling on its southward journey. Maori have a story of Ra, the sun god who had two wives, Hine-takuru the winter woman who lived on the sea in the south, and Hine-raumati the summer woman who dwelt on land. At Matariki and the winter solstice, Ra would begin his return to Hine-raumati.

Matariki was an important constellation for Maori as an indication of the abundance of food. After the sighting of Matariki, it was time to catch eel and other river going fish, and snare birds. Trees and medicinal plants were also planted at Matariki.

Matariki was a time for feasting and celebrating, but also a time for remembering the dead, who were believed to have returned to the stars, the homes of the gods.

In the European traditions, the winter solstice was also a time of feasting and celebrating, as well as announcing the birth of a baby boy, in the Christian tradition of course, this is Jesus, and Christmas is celebrated. For those among us not brought up with a summer Christmas, now may feel like the right time to be celebrating Christmas. This year, we are celebrating with our lantern walk, and many also will join in with Oromahoe School's Light Festival. As we light candles and celebrate the returning of the sun, we can turn inwardly to ask, what is birthing in us and our community? Within our community, we are at a real turning point of bringing all our hopes and dreams to the very practical task of building a kindergarten. It is appropriate for us to acknowledge this at the time of Matariki and the Winter Solstice. Just as Maori remember their ancestors, it is also good to acknowledge those who have gone before us and led us to the place that we are now.

Inspired by Celebrating the Southern Seasons by Juliet Batten and Matariki by Libby Hakaraia

Lantern Festival



Sunday June 27th, 5pm

Join us for a magical evening of twinkling lanterns and song to celebrate the winter solstice and Matariki.

Meet outside Jane's house (down the drive from Pukewhau) for a magical lantern walk. Bring a lantern, matches/lighter and warm clothes.

BOIWET news

The Bay of Islands Waldorf Education Trust held their AGM on Saturday 22nd May. It was a productive meeting with two new trustees elected, Jasmine Beagle and Vicki Penfold. Vicki will also take on the role of secretary, which is gratefully welcomed.

Michael Drayton will continue as chair and Tony Achtzehner as Treasurer. The other trustees continuing are Barbara Tan and Marty Robinson. Fabienne Ussher resigned, as her family will be leaving the area at the end of the year, as did Richard Frohlich, who has work commitments.

The next BOIWET meeting will be on Tuesday 20th June, at 7.30 at Pukewhau Hall. All trust members are welcome. If you haven't renewed your trust membership or become a trust member, you are warmly encouraged to! It is \$25 per family per year. Please see a trustee for a membership form, or pick one up from Pukewhau Hall.

Kindergarten Update

At the BOIWET AGM, a kindergarten committee was also set up to start working on all that needs to be done to get a kindergarten up and running. Vicki Penfold, Olivia Symons, Jane Roche, Jasmine Beagle and Christiane Riegger are the inaugural members. At the moment, we are looking at the possibility of having a temporary kindergarten at Oromahoe School. We will be meeting with the school's Board of Trustees in late July to present to them the Ministry regulations and our ideas for a kindergarten on their school site. This would mean either building or bringing on an existing building.

We will be spending the next month getting ourselves familiar with all the Ministry documents and process we need to go through. If anyone would like to help us with this, it would be great to have your

Playgroup News

We have some new families to welcome in recent weeks, after a quiet start to the term. Welcome to Jenny and baby Ben, Meredith and baby Kayla and Melissa and Isabella.

We recently became a certified Playgroup with the Ministry of Education, which means we are now able to open for four hours a day rather than 3.

Craft Group

The next craft group will be at Jane's on the 2nd July at 9.30. We have changed to the 1st Friday of the month so as not to clash with other groups. The next Tuesday evening will be 13th July, 7pm at Pukewhau. The craft group is thinking of having a stall at the Waimate North Show, which would be a great fundraiser and be a chance to publicise the kindergarten plans. So get knitting or sewing to help with this fundraiser! Contact Alice on 405 9382 for further information.

Vaccination: know your choices

Most of us face a real dilemma when deciding whether or not to vaccinate our children, and it's not made easier by the large amount of conflicting and/or inconclusive information. Due to the wealth of pro-vaccination information available, I will focus here on the alternative thinking, and opinions of independent researchers.

The bulk of the evidence gathered from numerous countries points out that not only is vaccination ineffective at preventing the spread of infectious disease, but vaccinated children are actually at a higher risk of contracting these illnesses.

In addition, the adverse reactions to vaccination are much higher than presently documented in the medico-pharmaceutical literature and the long-term damaging effect of suppressing the immune system is rarely addressed.

The list of possible short-term adverse effects includes seizure disorders, prolonged crying/screaming, and autism to name a few.

Although these short term risks are alarming, the long term adverse effects are potentially more of a worry. When you contract a disease naturally, the virus or bacteria normally enters via the body's natural filtration system; by being inhaled or swallowed, passing through the liver. With measles, for example, the airborne virus is carried first to the tonsils, then the lymph nodes and then into the spleen, blood and other organs. This succession produces a variety of reactions; sneezing, coughing or the secretion of a local antibody within the respiratory tract, all designed to expel or weaken the virus at its point of entry. With vaccines, foreign antigens are usually injected directly into the body's tissues and carried throughout the circulatory system, giving them direct access to all of the body's vital organs and systems. To bypass the body's natural defence system, and at such a young age, is simply asking for trouble. The other worrying aspect of live viral vaccines is they introduce foreign genetic material into the human body.

The other aspect is that these childhood illnesses may actually have a positive impact on your child's health. Many people report that after their child has had a serious illness, they make a developmental leap or their demeanour changes slightly. The illness could be seen as an incubation time that speeds up some internal task your child is working on. It also strengthens the immune system, rather than suppressing it, which has long term health benefits.

If you do vaccinate, many advise that you assist your child/baby's immune system before, during and after vaccination to reduce the risk of adverse effects with 1000 mg. Vitamin C, 500 mg. Calcium, 50 mg. Vitamin B6 the day before, the day of, and the day after vaccination. Homeopathic remedies such as arnica may also assist. Homeopathy also offers their versions of most vaccines, to offer an alternative to parents who do not wish to vaccinate.

As with all matters of health, each of us has to go with what our gut tells us is right, or the best possible option for us at that time. I vaccinated my first child, (missing out meningococcal, as it seemed like one big experiment to me though arguably the other

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Home nursing Workshop

BOIWET is very excited to be able to offer this home nursing workshop. Kristina Friedlander and Michelle Vette, two anthroposophical nurses from the Hawkes Bay, will be running a workshop over the weekend of August 20th -22nd. You will learn how to care for fever and learn about fever as a developmental process, how to make and give a number of compresses, immune support, and the self care of carers.

Time: Friday 20th August, 7-9pm

Saturday 21st August, 9-4

Sunday 22nd August, 9-11am

Cost: TBA



Application forms will be available soon, please contact admin@steinerbayofislands.co.nz or Olivia 4019915. Be in quick, this will be a wonderful workshop you won't want to miss!

Introducing....

Vicki Penfold has recently become involved in our community, jumping in with both feet to become the new secretary for BOIWET, be part of the kindergarten working group and also take Homebased Care Groups!

Vicki has led playgroups in Melbourne, where she lived for many years, also gaining Diplomas in Anthroposophy and Steiner Education while there.

She recently filled in for Jeanine at the HBC playgroup at Pukewhau, and from this has come the idea for Vicki to run a group for 4 and 5 year olds meeting one day a week.

Vicki is also studying to become a SPELD tutor, so she is pretty busy! Welcome Vicki!

George has been asked to take some **family portraits** at Pukewhau Hall. Each family would be provided with a CD of the photos at a later date. The idea is to make it accessible and community based, but a koha of what people can afford would be appreciated. If anyone is interested or has suggestions please contact George on 09 407 8066.

Food Corner

I'm really enjoying Kay Baxter's book, "Change of heart". And it seems that there are a lot of other people in KeriKeri that feel the same way. Richard is really enthusiastic at trying out the simple nutritious recipes and with Kay's book in one hand and holding Karl's hand in the other he headed off to the supermarket to buy a whole fish. The 20 something male at the counter said they didn't have any and that there had been a lot of demand lately. Richard explained he wanted the whole fish so he could also use the head for a 'fish head broth', to which the young man replied, "You've been reading Kay Baxter's book, haven't you?"!

"Change of heart" has many suggestions for using all that raw milk that we now have each week. I now make nearly all our butter and yogurt and we also have fresh ice cream, delicious.

Matthew loves helping me make butter and it is so easy, so if you want to give it a go all you need to do is whip cream until it 'turns' to butter. The cream will separate into butter and buttermilk. Then collect all the butter together in one hand and run under **cold water** and squeeze and knead until you can't see any more buttermilk coming out. I like to then fold in a few pinches of organic salt to taste. Then put in fridge and you will have fresh raw butter.

If you leave the cream out of the fridge it will be much easier to churn. I made the mistake of trying to churn a litre of cold cream and it took about 40mins. Next time I left it on the bench for about 5 hours and it turned quite quickly.

After you have taken the butter out you will be left with the buttermilk. This is very nutritious and good for making bread, but I find that most of it goes quickly as my boys love it as a cool drink from the fridge. I've also found it is amazing in a marinade for meat. Mix with some crushed garlic and Tamari and leave for 4-24hrs and you will have the tenderest meat.

To make sour cream add 1 Tbsp of buttermilk to 2 cups of fresh cream. Leave for 24hrs then refrigerate.

Yogurt is something I always used to buy, but now I know how easy it is to make it seems like a much better option as with using raw milk it is truly alive and so nutritious (and much cheaper too). You can buy a starter, but I just use some good quality organic yogurt to start with, after that you can just use some of your made yogurt for your next batch.

Heat milk till blood temp (around 35C). Put in a 1Ltr glass jar and add about 1Tbsp of yogurt. Keep warm for 12hrs, I use an insulated container filled with hot water, but Kay suggests a polystyrene box or even a cardboard box filled with hay, whatever you can think of to keep it warm. After this you may have to check every few hours until you have a consistency you like. I'm not very scientific about heating the milk and I have made it too hot and the yogurt curdled slightly, which is easily fixed by mixing.

"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it, begin it now." Goethe

Calendar of Events

Every Monday	Piwakawaka Playgroup at Pukewhau from 9.30—12
Every Monday	Study group at Jane's from 12- 1.
Every Tues and Wed	Emma and Jeanine's Homebased Care playgroups at Pukewhau
First Friday of the month	Craft group
Friday 25th June	Oromahoe School Light Festival from 4pm
Sunday 27th June	Playgroup Lantern Walk 5pm
Monday 28th June	Last playgroup for Term 2
Tuesday 29th June	Ministry of Education 'Fun with Junk' Workshop, 10-1pm
Friday 2nd July	Craft Group at Jane's 9.30 - 12
Tuesday 13th July	Craft Group at Pukewhau, 7pm
Monday 19th July	Term 3 begins
Friday 20th - Sunday 22nd August	Home nursing workshop

Storytelling

Would you like to learn how to tell a puppet story, and gain a deeper understanding of this art? Ingrid Wubben is now available to share her knowledge, experience and resources with small groups for a series of 2 hour workshops. Call Ingrid on 021 1495924 or email mibiznizz@gmail.com

Light Festival at Oromahoe School

Oromahoe School is again organising it's midwinter light festival. This year it will happen on Friday 25 June, 4.00pm onwards, with the lantern walk about 6pm. (If raining, it will be on Saturday 26 June.)

Despite the rain last year, it was a very successful event, a great opportunity to come together as a community, to raise some funds and to promote the school in the wider community. The school community prides itself on its friendly, caring, family atmosphere where all children are treated with respect and honoured for their individual strengths and contribution to school life. It's a small school with a big focus in the area of 'Education for Sustainability'.

There will be delicious food, beautiful music, a table with plants and produces, a cheese and wine stall, a lantern walk, fire surprises and more...

Come on the day and enjoy the atmosphere.

If you want to support more, you could also come to help as a volunteer. And any donations for produce, preserves, seedlings, plants other ideas... are welcome.

For any enquiries contact the school office: 09-4077834

Poipoi Home Child Care

Alison Thom began Poipoi Home Child Care network late last year. Alison is interested in offering a warm and welcoming environment for children, that is healthy and natural and allows them the best possible chance to explore, play and learn. Emma and Jeanine are both Homebased carers for Poipoi and now Vicki Penfold has also joined Poipoi. If you are interested in Home based Care for your child, call Alison on 0800 764543.

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vaccinations could also be seen as experiment, just one lasting decades!) as, amongst other things, we believed that children with maori/pacific island blood may have less tolerance as they have had only a small time being exposed to the diseases that Europeans have been exposed to for centuries. If our lifestyle was relatively localised or isolated and we ate only 100% wonderful, mineral-rich organic food, we would have chosen different, but we cannot lay claim to that kind of lifestyle all the time. Right or wrong, we made sure we were informed on both sides first. Having assumed I would go ahead with the same rules for my second child, I find myself with a very different gut feeling, despite knowing the same information. Every child is different; some are more sensitive or have more natural tolerance than others, and perhaps we as parents need to tune in to the individual. Having said that, for some families it is an ethical choice (particularly when choosing not to vaccinate) which is much more of an 'all-or-nothing' decision. Society believes that we should all follow one doctrine, but as individuals and families, we are still free and still have a choice. Good luck!

Would you like to contribute to the next newsletter? All comments and contributions are welcome! Email Olivia on nedandliv@gmail.com

This newsletter was made by Olivia, Jasmine and George.

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