

WALDORF CLEARING HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Waldorf School
Cambridge Avenue
Garden City, NY., 11530

SPRING, 1975

GENERAL NEWS

Toronto Waldorf School (abridged from their newsletter)

We are pleased to confirm the inception of our high school program on Wednesday, September 3, 1975. Initially proceeding with a modest Grade 9 group, we plan to add a grade a year up to Grade 12.

At this moment we look back with gratitude upon the healthy growth of our school through the past years and we would like to thank all our friends for the support and good will they have shown. May this support, this good will and all your good thoughts also accompany this new step into the future life of our school.

- Gerhard Rudolph

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Green Meadow School

This fall the new high school, with its first senior class, will occupy the new High School Center which is quickly rising on the north side of the Green Meadow campus. In contrast to the organic forms of the lower school and the Arts Center, with which it shares a broad commons, the high school building is more abstract. Its rectilinear shapes were designed by school architect Walter Leicht to symbolize the new intellectual rigor appropriate to the high school. The building will house classrooms for each of the four high school classes, a library, seminar rooms, and science laboratories.

The facilities for science are particularly noteworthy. There are well-equipped teaching laboratories for chemistry, physics, and biology, the latter including a brick fireplace and two large bay window greenhouses. In addition, there is a small research laboratory which will house burgeoning chromatographic and spectroscopic investigations that comprise faculty research in conjunction with several advanced students.

- Stephen Edelglass

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Washington Waldorf School

On February 27, Rudolf Steiner's birthday, the Washington Waldorf School launched its first Educational Workshop. The workshop was designed to acquaint participants with some of the basic concepts of Waldorf education as well as to allow them to experience some of these concepts in action in various workshop activities.

Anyone who wished to take part was invited, and nearly 100 did - many more than we originally expected. Included were our own Waldorf School parents and prospective parents, teachers in public and private schools, college and university students, and others.

The weekend began with the annual Rudolf Steiner Memorial lecture entitled "East-Center-West", by faculty chairman Carl Hoffman. On Friday evening our guest speaker, Dr. John F. Gardner of the Waldorf Institute, Garden City, N.Y., spoke on "Freedom and Discipline."

On Saturday, after a few brief remarks by Mr. Hoffman, workshop sessions were offered by the School faculty. These sessions, which included water color, form drawing, history and storytelling, among many others, closed with an informal program of music and eurythmy.

While we originally conceived the workshop as a way of meeting many requests for information and as an attempt to give the participants a bit of the children's experience, it also proved to be a fund-raiser. With a charge of \$10 for the weekend (\$5 for students), we grossed a tidy sum.

We all agreed that the project was an exhilarating experience, well worth the effort. We hope to make it an annual event.

- Adele Matthewson

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Sacramento Waldorf School

This has been one of our best years at the school. The classes are strong and enthusiastic, and the teaching is solid right through the grades. The high school has gotten off to a fine start, and we consider this a year of blessing. Almost the entire 24 ninth graders are returning to their sophomore year. The high school committee, composed of about 12 teachers who teach the grade, meet monthly in the evening, study the

Supplementary Course, review the students and classes, discuss scheduling, social activities, and so on. There are many aspects we'd like to improve, but the general approach is satisfactory. We know that we will be constantly evaluating what is done, and we are very grateful for help and advice.

We have found, as most new high schools do, that it is invaluable to speak to teachers of long experience. We are indebted to Christy Barnes for spending a week with our teachers, specifically in regard to high school English; Henry Barnes inspired our ninth grade when he spoke to them; Tell Farrar, of the Garden City Waldorf School, shared her experience in English teaching with us; John Root was very helpful as a resource in our history research, and Hans Gebert in the sciences. We are still profiting from the year's visit of Francis Woolls two years ago. All of this expertise, along with the day-to-day working with the students, begins to build a picture.

We do feel that interchange between Waldorf Schools, both teachers and students, is very beneficial, and we would like to cooperate in such mutual exchanges whenever possible. We have also hosted other private schools that have come to Sacramento, and we have been invited to visit out-of-town schools.

I would be interested in hearing high school teachers' experiences with independent projects, involvement in the community, etc.

Faculty announcement: Taking first grade next year will be Robert Sonner, an ex-teacher from Highland Hall, who led the outstanding music program there. He and his wife, Beverly, have since taken the training course at Highland Hall, and we look forward to their joining us. Beverly will teach crafts.

The "Dome" was dedicated in October with a beautiful program of music, speeches, humor, and food. The "bunkhouse" is the next project; it will furnish space for two classrooms and two small rooms. Work will continue on it the rest of the year until it is completed. Next on our list is a building for the nursery and kindergarten, but this is still in the future.

- Betty Kane

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Pine Hill Waldorf School

Pine Hill came into being in September, 1972 in the wake of a visit earlier that year by Francis Edmunds. His widely-publicized talk created such interest that a non-profit corporation was formed with the intent of creating a kindergarten-elementary school.

We had three teachers and 19 children our first year: 16 in the kindergarten and 3 in the first grade which was begun mainly for the sake of 2 children whose parents taught at nearby High Mowing. During this year 5 more children joined the school.

Enrollment jumped by leaps and bounds, and we soon found our quarters too small. Now, with a more permanent home on 27 acres of beautiful New Hampshire countryside, we can accommodate the 10 faculty members and 97 children in kindergarten through sixth grade. The school itself is contained in a splendid 15 room house. The nearby barn offers the possibility of future expansion. With ample room for playing and gardening, the children continue to thrive. With a capable and experienced staff and a continually increasing enrollment (some from as far away as 40 miles in neighboring Massachusetts), plus enthusiastic support and help from the parent body, we feel confident that we are soundly based.

Since High Mowing classes begin with seventh grade, there now exists in this community Waldorf education from kindergarten through twelfth grade. We can only hope that the economic strain the country is feeling will not influence this work.

- (Mrs.) Ginia Pati

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Waldorf School, Garden City

A Crafts Center which involves both parents and faculty is a new and successful addition to the life of the Waldorf School. Continually evolving in scope and function, it is the focus for the production and sale of a wide variety of handcrafted items.

Instruction in quilting, quilling, doll-making, knitted and crocheted items, and dressmaking among other skills supplied by gifted faculty members and parents in classes open to everyone in the school community.

Those who enroll in classes to learn the craft supply their own materials. Those who enroll in the workshops to produce items for sale in the Crafts Center are supplied materials by the school. All proceeds are for the benefit of the Camp Glen Brook campus of the school in New Hampshire. Six faculty members and parents divide the responsibility for maintaining quality control, setting up workshops, pricing items, and record keeping.

At present, the shop is open one day a week on a regular basis; on festival occasions it is open longer. The project has generated both enthusiasm and a growing esprit de corps within the school; those actively involved feel it is only a beginning!

- (Mrs.) Mary Jane Niemann

NOTES FROM THE CLASSROOM

Sixth Grade Acoustics

Emphasis was placed on:

- a) investigation through intensive quiet listening.
- b) accurate observation and concise description of phenomena we experienced via experiments.
- c) calling forth of amazement and wonder in the face of beautiful and sometimes entirely unexpected experiences.
- d) active student involvement with many experiments which they could carry out on their own. A wealth of these can be dug out of generally available resource books.

No emphasis was given to any theoretical explanations which would only lead the children into speculations of a more abstract nature. This is, of course, the danger that lurks in all popular books on acoustics and must be properly recognized.

As a guide in working with these 11 and 12 year olds, one might apply such a criterion as this: let the head understand that which is experienced through the senses and felt in the soul.

Now to a few experiments which proved of particular value:

- 1) A set of tubular bells which a handyman on the faculty can construct out of galvanized steel or duraluminium pipes which

are tuned with a hacksaw and properly suspended.

- a) how long can a tone ring?
- b) can you hear the fundamental and the overtones?
- c) feel the strong and sustained vibrations!
- d) discover areas of greatest and least vibration.
- e) how to strike the pipes to get the most beautiful tones?

- 2) A large set of bowls of glass, china and hard metal to be played with a felt mallet. Then slip in, unnoticed, a bowl of pewter or of similar, deceptively hard-looking material. The resulting "thud" is most amazing and leads into further investigation of what shapes and materials give rise to ringing sounds, grating sounds, and dull sounds.
- 3) A set of tuning forks, including one or two low ones. Excellent for listening; for seeing and feeling the vibrations; for making the vibrations visible when the vibrating ends are dipped into water; for experiencing resonance when placed against resonance bodies; for tuning other instruments with.
- 4) Only after we had thoroughly experienced the free vibration of ringing, vibrating bodies did we go over to discover that when one blows the recorder the instrument doesn't vibrate. With a tenor recorder one can, however, feel a vibration at the closed fingerholes. Thus the idea of vibration of the air (here a column of air) is experientially established. These vibrations are maintained by blowing.
- 5) Sound and vibrations always appear together, except when I sing a tune in my mind. Any further explanations are strictly up to the teacher's conscience and may not be necessary at all. Maybe we are surrounded by a world of sounds which make themselves audible whenever something vibrates.
- 6) A "gunshot". (2 hardwood boards hinged together) or a hammer and plate of iron are excellent in order to experience time lapse over a long distance. This leads to a most entertaining gadget: the garden hose telephone. Just speak a humorous directive into one end of the hose inside the classroom and watch the receiving party 100 feet out in the playground carry out the action. Amazing! With a shorter hose and a funnel you can whisper secrets to your friend in the classroom which no one else can hear.

- 7) A monochord, or 2-stringed sonometer, preferably a long one. If the string is 180 units long then the subdivisions for the series of overtones and the tones within the first octave fall on whole numbers. Our string was 180 cm. long. We began our study by searching for the nodes: set the string vibrating and touch it over and over again in different places until we suddenly heard a distinct, ringing overtone while touching the string. The focusing demanded careful listening. (The seventh was hard to find). Each node was marked on the resonance box. Finally we were able to play all 8 tones of the octave and to experience the intervals. Then after several musical experiences, we measured the distances and established the proportions:

	Tonic	Second	Minor Third	Major Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Octave
180cm.		160	150	144	135	120	108	96	90
expressed as proportion		$\frac{160}{180}$	$\frac{150}{180}$	$\frac{144}{180}$	etc.				
reduced to lowest terms	1	$\frac{8}{9}$	$\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{4}{5}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{3}{5}$	$\frac{8}{15}$	$\frac{1}{2}$

One can ponder the qualitative aspect of these proportions and their corresponding intervals. For example: listen to the fifth and think of the proportion $\frac{2}{3}$ then listen by way of contrast to the seventh. In all of this

the children can experience a cosmic harmony manifesting itself in the natural division of the single string: a harmony which lives on in our music, but which we can also degrade.

- 8) For our Chladni tone forms we couldn't get a brass plate but a homemade square plate of galvanized sheet metal (heavy gauge) sprinkled with salt worked well.
- 9) Children were encouraged to make their own instruments; bottle and wineglass organs, washtub or gallon-can string bass, shoe-box guitar, etc. Neat and artistic workbooks were expected.

One word of caution: as teacher leave yourself plenty of time to experiment, play, experience the phenomena well in advance. Immerse yourself in the manifoldness of the phenomena.

- Helmut Krause
Toronto Waldorf School

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