

The Alternative Education Resource Organization Magazine
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See Special Changing Schools Section for new Articles and info on
International Alternative Education Conference

AERO Seminar for Ministry of Education in Czech Republic

In early November Albert Lamb and I traveled to the Czech Republic to do a seminar for the Ministry of Education, sponsored by the Soros Foundation's Open Society Fund. This was the first time that the Ministry had expressed interest in learning about educational alternatives and democratic education.

I first made an unscheduled stop in England to go to Ena Neill's funeral, at Summerhill (see Albert's description in the Changing Schools section).

When we arrived in Prague we were taken straight to the conference center. At the seminar I described the different kinds of educational alternatives. They were particularly interested in the charter school model. Albert introduced the Ministry to the democratic decision-making process by actually having them participate in a democratic meeting in Summerhill style. Albert was a Summerhill student, and later a staff member there, and his children have gone there.

After the seminar we had a great tour of the beautiful city of Prague. On the last day we visited a school which is part of the Soros-sponsored Step-by-Step program, through which they are trying to encourage educational reform in the Czech Republic and other countries.

I stopped in England again on my way back and spent a couple of great days at Summerhill again. Among other things I gave about 25 students table tennis lessons, and visited with Stephen Sanford, the student who visited Summerhill with us after last Summer's International Democratic Education Conference, and is now one of the first American students at Summerhill in a long time (see the letter from his mother in the Mail section).

Traveling north to Birmingham, I was hosted by Mike and Jan F-W, who are homeschooling their four children. We had a meeting with a group of homeschoolers who are exploring the possibility of "flexi-schooling," with students taking some classes at St. Paul's, a local alternative school. Roland Meighan from Education Now also participated in the meeting. In his publication he later said that our "contribution stimulated valuable

discussion on ways of developing such partnerships in this country."

New AERO Staff Member!

We received the following post on our web site a few weeks before Christmas: John Sauer is now a full-time staff member at AERO! When you call, don't be surprised if John answers the phone. He's working hard to help AERO get its act together and move to a higher level of service in promoting educational alternatives. Part of his salary is paid by a generous grant from Shaker Mountain School. This change has also been encouraged by grants from the Paul Foundation and Miller Foundation.

John Sauer, kkeeley734@aol.com

Date: Saturday December 6, 1997 - 21:47 PST

Dear Mr. Mintz,

I have been interested in alternative education since 1992. At that time I read about Outward Bound winning some Bush initiated competition concerning alternative education. Furthermore, I participated in a summer planning course at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn and we discussed alternative education. Since then I have been working abroad: Uganda, Rwanda, and more recently Russia as a project manager for relief and development projects connected with unaccompanied children and street children, (for lack of a better word). Now I want to get caught up with the current trends in alternative education and eventually find a career in this work.

I would be grateful if you can provide me with any further information about where I can start this process. I live on Long Island so perhaps we might find a time to meet.

Yours sincerely,

John Sauer

LONGER SCHOOL YEAR NOT THE ANSWER

By Jerry Mintz

This letter to the editor was in response to Sheryl McCarthy's article, "We Need to Make Better Use of the School Day," in Newsday:

Dear Sheryl:

I'm sure your heart is in the right place, but your article on year-round school and the use of the school day is rife with assumptions which are not borne out by fact.

Assumption #1: That the Japanese have a good school system. The reality is that the Japanese system is so brutal to kids that there are over 180,000 "school refusers," children who have been so traumatized by school that

there is no way they can get them there, they are so school phobic. In the face of this, dozens of alternative schools are beginning to pop up, and people are even beginning to talk about homeschooling. A recent feature story in the Japan Times highlighted this new phenomenon.

Assumption #2: That going to school longer will make students learn more. The reality is that the basic approach being used by public schools today is as antiquated as the summer break to harvest the crops. More of that would likely make things worse rather than better. The current system extinguishes the child's innate need to learn, making them passive non-learners.

Homeschoolers have learned that two hours a day of good learning experiences is enough to have their kids leapfrog over students slogging in unresponsive schools: Witness the Colfax family in California, who raised their children on a goat farm, with only that much schooling a day. Their three oldest all went to Harvard, and the oldest went on to Harvard Medical School and is a practicing doctor now. The AVERAGE homeschooler in the country now is in the 85th ile academically. Over a million children are now homeschooling.

Charter schools have grown from only five a few years ago to over 750 now. At least 29 states have passed charter legislation. New York State still sits on legislation to create charters here.

Why are these alternatives growing so rapidly? Because the current system is unfunctional for most children! If your kids hate school, listen to them! Kids are natural learners, as brain research has shown. So something must be wrong with their school.

And please do not think that this is a political issue. Not only are religious right-wingers talking about alternatives, but black inner city Democrats and others along the whole spectrum are also pushing for alternatives such as vouchers and other educational choices.

I know of one democratic alternative school where the students regularly abolish the vacations and have a rule which says they can't stay after school unless they are good! Yes, that's how to lengthen the school year and the school day. Not by dishing out more of the same failed system!

Mail and Communications
Edited by Carol Morley

A new program offering scholarships to San Fransico-based high school students has begun operating, called San Francisco Independent Scholars. There are two types of scholarships available: Step Scholarships for public school students in eighth grade who would like to attend private school, and Star Scholarships for high school students who wish to enroll in or design their own independent study program. To find out more, contact Alison Weeks at SFIS, 755 Sansome St., Suite 450, San Francisco, CA 94111.

Tel: 415-982-3435. Fax: 415-989-2411.

Last spring a conference was held by The Four Worlds International Institute for Human and Community Development. The conference, "The Spirit of the Rainbow Youth Development Program" focused on educating youths on finding ways of making a difference in their lives. Put together by young Native Americans, community workshops to train model youth leaders were formed. The conference was reported on in Daystar News Report, Volume 28 Spring 1997 by Cherriese Veazey, 2404 E. Nutwood #H-36, Fullerton, CA 92831.

A prospective video documentary project on the history of the New Orleans Free School is looking for information. The School is a medium sized public alternative school that was started in 1971 by Robert Ferris and several others. Any one who has had any contact at any time with Bob Ferris or any other member of The New Orleans Free School, please contact Mika Buser-Ferris. The address is 4865 Laurel St., Apt. B, New Orleans, LA 70115. Tel: 504-895-3645 (collect calls accepted).

A class taught by Daria Brezinski, Ph.D., takes an in-depth look at the direction society must take in order to create an environment that is conducive to developing the whole child. The course is called Holographic Education for the 21st Century and looks at the institutions of education, media, science, medicine, law and communities and their effect on raising children who know their life's purpose. Daria Brezinski is President of Eartheart Foundation and To Protect Our Children, Inc. She can be reached at PO Box 6201, Charlottesville, VA 22906. Tel: 804-973-2777.

I received Aero-Gramme #22 a few days ago and was very impressed. The article that haunts me in particular, though, is the brief description by you on page two about your question to Secretary Riley about national standards. Like you, I fear that Big Brother's educational variant is lurking on the horizon, ready to mold every young person in America to suit its needs.

The thing is, I'm not at all surprised by this development, despite the enormous potential of alternative education. I agree with the analyses which claim that the chief function of state-run public education is to create a docile, obedient workforce. Centralization and homogenization are crucial for this process. Even though compulsory education proves its obsolescence with each passing day, we should expect the politicians and their corporate masters to solidify their grip on America's youth.

For this reason, I'm wondering if the alternative education movement should also become a real social protest movement. It is no secret that the ideals of freedom upon which this nation was founded are being neutralized by an economic system which subordinates human dignity to the quest for profits. I fear we have precious little time to resist before it is too

late. On the other hand, that is all the more reason to fight hard!

Those are a few reflections inspired by Aero-Gramme #22. Please keep up your outstanding efforts. Regan Haulotte, Menominee, Michigan (see below)

Regan Haulotte of Menominee, Michigan, would like to network with people who may be interested in starting a World Citizens School somewhere in the United States. Regan envisions it as an independent "school without walls" for young people interested in the betterment of society and planet Earth. The theme of the school would encompass such areas as philosophy, ecology, peace, and social justice. The school would operate on the principles of self-directed learning, the world as classroom, and direct democracy. Regan can be reached at 818 11th Street, Menominee, Michigan, 49858, or via e-mail at rhaulotte@hotmail.com.

The Summer 1997 issue of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement contained information on the voluntary national tests, charter schools progress, transforming ideas for the arts, and the results of recent research studies. The publication is put out by the US Department of Education, Washington, DC 20208-5570.

A new promotional video series created for Montessori schools has been produced as a means of introducing Montessori education to new families. It consists of two volumes: Planting the Seeds of Learning; and Why Montessori for the Kindergarten Year? They are available from the Montessori Foundation, 901 N. Pitt St., Suite 310, Alexandria, VA 22314. Fax: 703-299-0360.

An interview with Rita Kramer was published in the Fall 1997 issue of the Public School Montessorian. Rita Kramer produced a biography of Maria Montessori (in 1976) as well as a number of other books. The two things she stresses concerning Montessori education today are that "there is no child or adult who cannot be taught to read by using her method" and that "children find enormous satisfaction in accomplishment. They develop self-esteem not because someone is telling them they are good." Excerpts from the biography are also in this issue. Jola Publications, 2933 N. 2nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55411.

Beginning January 1998, Vermont College of Norwich University and The Institute for Educational Studies is offering independent courses for graduate credit. They are accepting applications for their 1998-1999 Internet-based Master's program which is completed over three semesters. The program is designed for the teaching practitioner, teacher aspirant, or education advocate. For more information, contact TIES, PO Box 411, Brookfield, VT 05036. Tel: 1-800-386-7725. [Http://www.tmn.com/ties/](http://www.tmn.com/ties/)

The Landberg Foundation has facilitated a program called Education for Moral Courage at an inner-city elementary school in Denver for the past three years. They will continue to support the creation of innovative educational programs, but now will also try to provide a bridge between such programs and the conventional school system. They would like to continue to support the creation and expansion of such programs while trying to find a way for the conventional system to learn from their experiences. For more information, contact Arnie Landberg at 5376 South High Rd., Evergreen, CO 80439.

Ron Miller (founder of Holistic Education Review) is working on a book about the history of the free school movement in the 1960s and 70s. There has been no serious historical study of the origins of modern alternative education, which this book will provide. Ron is looking for collections of newsletters (such as Edcentric, New Schools Exchange, etc.) and any press clips or articles from that period, and would like to interview people who were involved in the movement, especially in the regional and national conferences that took place during those years. Contact Ron at PO Box 1069, Williston, VT 05495. Tel: 802-865-9752.

Children in the U.S. between 7 and 14, working in teams of two, are being invited to design a project they can do to help their community "grow up" to be the best it can be in the 1998 U.S. Children's Summit Competition. Five teams will represent the U.S. at the 5th Annual Children Summit at Disneyland Paris, May 4 to 8, 1998. The theme is "Growing Up" with sub-themes of Education, Nutrition, Sports, Relationships, and Children's Rights. Sixty countries will be represented. The event was established by Disney's magazine publishing group and the Just Think Foundation of Northern California, in cooperation with UNESCO. For more information, contact Children's Summit Competition, PO Box 6127, Burbank, CA 91510-6127. Tel: 800-728-0430. E-mail: www.justthink.org.

A special task force has recently been formed to make a comprehensive review of education in Maryland. It is particularly concerned with services for "at risk" children and how partnerships between public and private organizations could improve their education. Montessori educator Lee Havis presented testimony before three task force subcommittees and offered proposals to improve conditions for Montessori education in the state. This information appeared in the November 1997 issue of The Montessori Observer, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Woodbury Reports is a networking newsletter for educators and parents, particularly of children with behavior or emotional problems. It includes a section called New Perspectives, which outlines new and/or innovative schools. Issue #89's New Perspectives summarized Crater Lake School in Oregon, Dancing Moon Ranch in Montana, Desert Mt. Youth Care, also in

Montana, Alaska Wilderness Academy, and Stonesoup School in Florida. The publication is available at PO Box 1107, 7119 2nd St., Bonners Ferry, ID 83805. Tel/Fax: 208-267-5550. Online: [http:// www.woodbury.com](http://www.woodbury.com)

On April 23, 1998, Youth CaN '98 will be at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. This is a youth directed and presented project and conference on environmental issues and environmental telecommunications project. It is for elementary through high school students and teachers. They will be connected to another conference in Texas as well as other sites around the world. For more information, contact I*EARN, 475 Riverside Dr. #540, New York, NY 10115. Tel: 1-212-870-2696. Fax: 1--212-870-2672.

Readers Speak Out! is a free zine for teens who write because they love to. The magazine is looking for submissions of 50 to 150 words about controversial and pertinent issues. Internships by mail are also offered. For a free copy, contact Ronald A. Richardson, 4003 50th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98116.

Tranet announced in August that they are about to stop publication of their 21-year old newsletter. They have started Yes!, a journal of positive futures, to promote fundamental social transition to a sustainable, humane, and ecological future. Their address is PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110.

The Alliance for Parental Involvement in Education, Inc. (AllPIE) is looking for assistance in order to be able to continue to offering conferences, retreats, and workshops. New editors are needed for their newsletter, Options in Learning. They would also appreciate the submission of stories and thoughts through articles, letters and resource reviews for the newsletter. Please contact Seth Rockmuller or Katharine Houk at PO Box 59, East Chatham, NY 12060-0059.

CyberSearch is an information management tool that helps find, organize, and retrieve information from the Internet. Recent benchmark tests showed that CyberSearch performed a complex search and organizing function, including finding, compiling and organizing relevant Internet sites, over 5 times faster than other methods. The program also works with files on personal computer hard drives and includes an indexing feature that provides for custom searches across the content of Internet sites, local networks and hard drives. There are three editions of this program: the Personal Edition; the Information Retrieval Server; and the Enterprise Edition. All are designed for Windows95, NT 3.51, and 4.0 platforms and include Internet Explorer 3.02. Contact Jerry Mintz at 417 Roslyn Rd., Roslyn Heights, NY 11577 for more information. Tel: 516-621-2195. Fax: 516-625-3257. E-mail: jmintz@igc.apc.org.

The Merrow Report began airing its series on education on National Public Radio in September 1997. Programs included topics such as Will Boys be Boys?, Getting By, Gifted Children, The Schools We Need, Inside the Infant Brain, and WWW.Computers.Kids. Cassettes are available for purchase. Video tapes are also available on several topics. For more information, contact Learning Matters, Inc., 588 Broadway, Suite 510, New York, NY 10012. Tel: 212-941-8060.

The Holistic Education Review makes available a decade of issues of their newsletter, many of which are out of print. For a list of these publications and topics covered, contact PO Box 328, Brandon, VT 05733-0328. Tel: 1-800-639-4122.

Public/Private Ventures' 1995 study of Big Brothers, Big Sisters showed that mentoring can have tangible and significant effects on youth. Involvement with a mentor reduced first-time drug and alcohol use, cut school absenteeism, improved parental and peer relationships, and enhanced confidence in doing school work, with grades even improving somewhat. More results, articles, and programs about mentoring were published in the National Dropout Prevention Newsletter, Summer 1997, College of Health, Education & Human Development, Clemson University, 205 Martin St., Clemson, SC 29634-0726. Tel: 864-656-2599. E-mail: ndpc@clemson.edu.

Mary Leue of Albany's Free School writes: Congratulations to Jerry, on behalf of us all, for his radio appearance on NPR and his own show! Our new website is at [HTTP://www.lowmedia.com/AltEdFreeSchool](http://www.lowmedia.com/AltEdFreeSchool)
Send us word by e-mail if you've been able to access it: MarySKOLE@aol.com

Congratulations on the best issue yet. I especially liked the shot of Alfred Levitt with his goal of starting the school in New York City. Phenomenal! What an ad for the life giving forces involved in the right educational stuff. John Potter, New School of Northern Virginia, jpotter@nsnva.pvt.k12.va.usJohn

Ed. note: Alfred Levitt, a 103 years old artist, spoke at the opening of a special exhibit through February at Ellis Island honoring his work. The exhibit covers five rooms and includes 20 of his paintings on loan from the Metropolitan Museum. will be there through February. He is considered to be one of the most important people to have come through Ellis Island. Alfred is still interested in seeing a democratic school start in the NYC area, similar to the Modern School, which he attended as a young man.

Public Alternatives

The Center for Education Reform reported in September that there are now

over 750 charter schools open in 23 states serving over 150,000. Also, this year over 18,000 children from poor families have been given the choice to attend private schools because of more than 30 privately-funded scholarship programs now in existence. 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 204, Washington, DC 20036.

Bob Fizzell has put together the most recent edition of Patterns is a directory of public alternative education resources, including state alternative education contacts, information about alternative education associations, publications of interest, resources for charter schools, educational organizations, institutes and national offices, etc. The cost is \$6 plus \$3 shipping and handling. Send to EduServe, 1202 NW 109th St, Vancouver, WA 98685.

The U.S. Department of Education Community Update #51 announced that seven states, fifteen school districts, and Department of Defense schools have agreed to participate in voluntary national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math. The tests will be overseen by the National Assessment Governing Board and will begin in the spring of 1999. They will be modeled on the National Assessment of Educational Progress; the math tests would also be linked to the Third International Mathematics and Science Study. For more information, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or <http://www.ed.gov/nationaltests/>.

Growing opposition to the above-described national testing program was reported on in FairTest Examiner, Summer 1997. The testing project is proceeding "without congressional approval or even debate" and reactions among educators is mixed. The Council of Chief State School Officers and the American Federation of Teachers have approved the plan. However, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development has several serious concerns, as does the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the International Reading Association.

The Fall issue of FairTest Examiner reported further that Congress has put Clinton's national tests on hold until 2000. The issue will be back before Congress in 1998. In the meantime, the National Academy of Sciences will conduct three studies: to determine if an equivalency scale can be created that would enable comparisons between state exams; to evaluate test items already developed by the Department of Ed.; and to recommend safeguards against discrimination. FairTest, 342 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139-1802. Tel: 617-864-4810. Fax: 617-697-2224. <http://www.FairTest.org>.

In September, FairTest released the findings of a state-by-state study which concluded that most assessment systems need major changes and that states have been just "tinkering at the edges of reform." The report evaluated the assessment practices in all 50 states against standards derived from Principles and Indicators for Student Assessment Systems

published by the National Forum on Assessment. Only Vermont reached the top level on a five-point scale. Three states "did not have enough of a state system to allow scoring"; these were Delaware, Iowa and Wyoming. The five standards used were: assessment supports student learning; assessments are fair; educators receive adequate professional development in assessment; systems are in place for pupil information, reporting and ensuring parents' rights; and assessment systems are regularly reviewed and improved. For more information, contact The National Center for Fair and Open Testing at 342 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139. Tel: 617-864-4810. Fax: 617-497-2224.

The cap on the number of charter schools was raised from 25 to 37 in Massachusetts last July. They also added up 13 "Horace Mann" charter schools, which are in-district but not as autonomous as regular charters. Geographic limits were removed the enrollment cap was raised as well. This information was published in the Charter School Newsletter, Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research, 85 Devonshire St., 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109.

The commencement address given to the high school graduation class of the Alternative Community School by Principal Dr. Dave Lehman last spring was entitled "On Hope." He quoted from Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic who has said that hope in hopeless situations is "a state of mind, not a state of the world. Either we have hope within us or we don't. Hope is not a prognostication - it's an orientation of the spirit life is too precious a thing to permit its devaluation by living pointlessly, emptily, without meaning, without love, and finally, without hope." ACS is located on Chestnut St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

Lois Holzman's new book, Schools for Growth, presents three alternative schools which differ from conventional schools and most other alternatives in that they are based on the psychology of Lev Vygotsky and the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein. The first one is Project Golden Key in Russia which consists of 30 centers. Each of these centers serves between 60 and 150 children, ages 3 to 10, organized into multi-age groups. Curriculum is activity-based. The second school examined is Sudbury Valley School in Massachusetts with 200 students, ages 4 to 19. There are no compulsory classes or grades there and all decisions are made democratically. Finally, The Barbara Taylor School in Harlem is a performance school which brings together the traditions of the African American community schools and the free school movement. According to the author, each of these schools succeed because they favor environment building activity-based learning over the "knowing paradigm." The book is available from the East Side Institute, 500 Greenwich St., New York, NY 10013.

The philosophies of Rudolf Steiner, Aurobindo Ghose, and Inayat Khan are

examined in *The Common Vision: Parenting and Educating for Wholeness* by David Marshak. Marshak explores the similarity of vision of these three men. Each life story is outlined, then the philosophies are presented and compared in detail. The author concludes the book with suggestions for applying the underlying common vision, major lessons to be learned from this vision for parents and teachers, and transforming schools and our culture. The book is published by Peter Lang Pub., Inc., 275 7th Ave., New York, NY 10001. Tel: 212-647-7700. Online: <http://www.peterlang.com>.

Lynn Stoddard has written an essay, "Start Education Revolution with Diversity, Integrity", which is a preview of his next book. Lynn says that the call to "higher standards is not a call to redesign education. It is merely a summons to repair the old system and require teachers to do what they have been expected to do all along: Mold students into a common form, but put the form at a higher level." His 5 Pivotal Principles for Better Education, 3 Dimensions of Human Greatness, and 6 Amazing Attitudes have been implemented in some public schools. To learn more about them, contact him at 793 S. 200 E., Farmington, UT 84025-2239.

Tom Baker writes: Thanks for your mailing, which I received today. I am sending my check. I go back a long way with *Changing Schools*. I was Bob Barr's graduate assistant. at Indiana University, 1973-75. I supervised interns in his, Dan Burke, and Vern Smith's alternative schools master's program, helped edit *Changing Schools'* first directory of alternative schools, and participated in ICOPE's first international conference on alternative education in Minneapolis, October, 1973. My old pal and former IU classmate Roy Weaver edited *Changing Schools* for several years, and I even published a couple of articles in it in the late '70s and early '80s. I am interested in seeing the article on the Democratic Schools Conference in England. I spent part of my sabbatical in England last spring, investigating the effects of ERA. The National Curriculum and its mandated tests, with every school's scores published nationally, is certainly an example of heavy-handed, centrally imposed "reform"!

I see that Bob and my old friend Bill Parrett have a new book out on how to successfully create public alternative schools, but I haven't gotten my hands on a copy yet. Years ago, I helped Bill collect data in Houston for his dissertation on alternative school instruction. He built on my dissertation, but he did a far, far better job than I! Bob Barr supervised both of us. I did get an AERA conference presentation out of my dissertation a long, long time ago, and a S(outhwest)ERA paper from Bill's and my collaboration a little bit later. For the last 22 years, I have been primarily involved with teacher education in our five-year program, and have only been tangentially involved with alternative schools, primarily through occasional student field experiences in Dallas magnet and charter schools (about 65 miles away.) Still, the alternative school movement was an important part of my early career, and I want to stay in touch with it.

I had taught in a school-within-a-school in an inner city Louisville high school before I went to IU for my doctorate; that may have given me an edge in being selected as graduate assistant to the alternative schools program. I'll be presenting at ATE in Dallas and AACTE in New Orleans next month. Might I see you at one of those?

I may be reached at Austin College, Education Department, 900 N. Grand Ave., Sherman, TX, 75090-4440, phone (903)813-2455, fax (903)813-2326, e-mail tbaker@austinc.edu

Ann Evans writes from Sonoma, CA: I work at the Clean and Sober High School which is the second program of its kind that we know of in the country - the first was Sobriety High in Marin. There is also one in Minnesota. We fall under the blanket of "Alternative Ed" in the public school district - Sonoma County is quite venturesome with many charter schools already existing and we are full and wait listed and could fill over again in ten minutes.

The school is as alternative as I can make it and still comply with grades and hours required in "alt ed" under the public school jurisdiction. We are voluntary but students must make a commitment to sobriety, to attend 12 step meetings, to random urinalysis at school and to daily school attendance. We have two classrooms, each of 22 students and a counseling staff of four (paid out of Medicare funds) full time on site counselors.

Students attend an hour of group counseling daily and additionally have individual sessions with their primary counselors during school time. We hold some spaces for teen drug court kids mandated to attend by the judge but even they attend voluntarily - they have other options. If students are using, they are out the door, relapses we work with but behavior that endangers other students in recovery is not o.k.

We hold them to high standards of honesty about their recovery and they have to actively pursue recovery. Other than all those recovery things which I have little to do with - that is the precinct of their primary counselors, I see amazing changes in the students over very short periods of time as they clean up from drugs. Many become speakers in public and private high schools after a small amount of time and are constantly in demand to talk about their experiences and the experience of getting sober and maintaining it.

There are some amazing stories. I have one student who will go to a four year college and one whom I just graduated who is also four year college bound. Other than that, for some, just graduating high school is achievement enough though some go on to the J.C. with the intention of transferring. These students are the forgotten ones, the invisible ones who have been expelled from every other school in the county, been homeless, been abused in most cases and for many it is the norm, these students have many of them been addicts since birth or at least since 4th grade. They come from three generations sometimes, of substance abusers. They have pretty much all been in trouble with the law and many are on probation.

The school really does represent stability to them. And it is a truly warm and caring environment in which they do fully get supported in recovering from substance abuse. It is a really big step for some of the students to get clean and stay that way as they have to say goodbye to their old abusing friends and make new friends who are clean and sober.

But they are making it. We have a high success rate. I adore the kids, admire what they are doing and can reach these troubled and difficult ones in a deeper and more immediate way than other populations. They are needy though and it is a constant barrage of attention demanders. Some just have to disrupt things to have it be normal for them but I manage to take them on field trips, out hiking and manage too to do carpentry and other fun classroom projects of a hands-on nature.

Home Education News

In AERO-GRAMME 22 we mentioned that a new national group of homeschooled students had grown out of a workshop which we did on democratic decision-making process. The students named the new organization LOYO, for Learn On Your Own. Since the meeting there has been a lot of e mail discussion about what to do next. One of the students, Michael Delaney (FoolsRun@mindless.com) has created a web site, <http://loyo.home.ml.org>, which is now linked to the AERO web site, www.speakeasy.org/~aero Anyone interested in getting involved with loyo is welcome to e mail us, or send e mail from the new web site.

Readers may remember Shiloh Moates, a homeschooler who went to teach in Africa when he was 15, and entered Radford University upon his return at age 16. He is now 18, going into his senior year after studying anthropology in a bi-lingual program in Bogota, Colombia.-- Only a few days left in Colombia and back to the University for the spring semester in Radford. The experience here has been incredible although a bit harder than I would have liked, having to live in this huge, crazy city with frequent problems in the stomach, etc. But it has really been unbelievable. The experience of learning Spanish alone was worth it, not to mention living with three different families and being that in touch with the culture. I did well for the semester as well and passed the anthropology class I took at the best university in the country, which makes me quite happy. Thanks a lot as always, speaking for myself and all the kids that in one way or another you have helped to free from the constraints of themselves and public education.

The Home Educator's Family Times says in an article by Dr. Raymond Moore ("Research Shows Benefits of Homeschooling") that despite calls for more research by educator groups and others, "homeschooling is, today, the most widely researched educational field." However, most of the research is ignored, such as the fact that more homeschoolers do better in math, reading, and socialization than traditionally educated students. The

newsletter is available from the Homeschool Support Network, PO Box 708, Gray, ME 04039. Tel: 207-657-2800.

"College Admission News," by Ken Danford, (excerpted in Growing Without Schooling #119) reports on the limited existing data comparing college acceptance rates for homeschoolers and public school students. The results of a survey indicate that most colleges don't have data which clearly identifies homeschoolers or how many were accepted into the schools. They did find, however, that "no school categorically rejects or denies admission to those who homeschool, and it appears that homeschoolers who make strong cases for admission through test scores, portfolios, and other presentations can gain admission to any college or university in the United States, and that the decision to homeschool in itself neither helps nor hinders this process." GWS, 2269 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02410.

An interesting article by William Upski Wimsatt called "Who's afraid of self-education?" was published in the Premier Issue of XXL. Billy states: "There's a long tradition of Black people teaching themselves by alternative means or questioning conventional wisdom." Yet, homeschooling "is a taboo subject for many black parents and educators. 'Historically, we fought to get into the schools, so the idea of fighting to get out of schools doesn't make sense to a lot of people,' says Donna Nichols-White, publisher of The Drinking Gourd Home-Education Magazine." Billy goes on to describe the ways that many Black families are homeschooling their children today in America. 1115 Broadway, New York, NY 10010. Tel: 212-807-7100.

Leslie Barson from England wrote about The Otherwise Club for Growing Without Schooling #120. The article tells about the history of the club from its creation in 1990. TOC is a group of homeschoolers that meets once a week and makes decisions consensually. The organizational structure is very relaxed; meetings are held only occasionally, but gives workshops regularly. Although the club does not "educate" the children, "it has become a part of the members' home education, for both the children and the adults." GWS, 2269 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02410.

The third edition of Genius Tribe is a catalog full of "tools for unschoolers & other free people." The catalog offers materials about homeschooling, learning strategies, curriculum help, work/volunteer options, community building, health and much more. PO Box 1014, Eugene, Oregon 97440-1014.

The National Homeschool Association responded to a federal lawsuit involving homeschoolers in October, 1997. The federal suit was introduced by a national homeschooling organization in an attempt to guarantee that recent federal legislation aimed at keeping guns out of school does not prevent homeschoolers from owning guns. The NHA fears that the suit

invites regulations to define homeschooling in ways which will prohibit homeschoolers' freedoms. For more information, contact NHA at PO Box 290, Hartland, MI 48353-0290.

Four years ago we created "scholarships for kids" as a fund with the New York Community Trust to be a permanent source of scholarships for low income families with pre- and primary school kids. We add to it each month and distribute the accumulated dividends and interest. We would like to locate-or create if necessary-a fund which awards scholarship funds to homeschoolers. can anyone refer us to such a fund or to anyone who might like to work on creating one? JR Miller, emscuba@mail.idt.net

Homeschooling is new to me, but I'm active to learn more about it. It is because I have a 4.5 years old kid and would like to find an alternative way of education. The following are a few of my questions for now :1. If both parents work full time, is it possible for their child to do homeschooling ?2. I live in Washington state, where can I get a list of homeschool sites in my state ? Chau Nguyen, chaun@lsid.hp.com

We found out about you through Margaret Hiatt from the Mead School in Stamford Connecticut. Our Daughter is a student at the Mead School, and we are now home-schooling our 15-year old son. We are looking for contacts, ideas, support and to benefit from the experience of others who have traveled this path, especially as it relates to home-schooling an adolescent. Sameh A. Fakhouri, sameh@us.ibm.com

Oak Heritage Press is pleased to announce the publication of The Homeschool Yellow Pages, a comprehensive directory of home education suppliers. Find hundreds of postal and e-mail addresses, telephone, fax and toll-free numbers, websites, catalog offers, and product information. Online homeschoolers may get their own copy for only \$5.50 from Oak Heritage Press, P.O. Box 1378, Boerne, TX 78006. Questions? E-mail: info@oakheritagepress.com.

The Pagan Homeschool List is an email list for pagan homeschool parents. By pagan we mean those who practice earth based religions, including but not solely limited to Witches and Druids. Our activities mainly focus on email support for one another. We put out a newsletter, "Acorns", have some web pages, and some of us have had real life camp-outs together. Several of us who live close to each other have actually gotten together for homeschool support! This is an open topic list and the discussions at times can be inappropriate for children. There is a digest option. Email Barbooch@aol.com for subscription information.

International News and Communications
AUSTRALIA

I am a teacher of 5-8yr olds in Australia where alternative methods are now mostly mainstream: no textbooks in primary schools, constructivist

approaches, authentic assessments and multi-age classes. I am surprised that more is not on the Net. We have a good system here even though funding is being strangled by shortsighted Governments. I am researching learning centres, anyone using them. I am collecting all descriptions and forms. Love to hear from you. Julie Bradby, bradbyqonline.com.au

AUSTRIA

We are fifteen to twenty people from the Schlerschule in Vienna, Austria. Maybe you remember us from the third or the fourth Hadera conference. We are planning an American trip for our new Inter-College which is an internationally networked high school for age fourteen to twenty. We would like to come in May 98 to visit New York, some democratic schools and then fly to the West Coast. We would also like some contacts from democratic schools there. Our aim would be to stay with families from a school in order to improve our English and get to know America. Naima , Domenic , Ben , Krisi , Katharina , Rene , Louis , Paul , Sophie , Janina, Sarah , Susi , Jerry , etc. Ben Wunsch- Grafton : 004414899346, School (Tel + Fax) 004414082039, LOUIS_GERHARD_EXE@compuserve.com

BRAZIL

A new book by Helena Singer has just been published called Republica de Crianças: sobre experiências escolares de resistência (Republic of Children: on schooling experiences of resistance). Its theme is the free schools which Helena describes, including Summerhill and Sudbury Valley School. It's available from her at Av. Angelica, 546 ap. 95 01228-000 Sau Paulo (SP) Brazil.

CHINA

Dear Jerry, I just wanted to drop you a quick email to thank you for referring my 'call for help' to Ms. Pat Montgomery at the Clonlara School Home Based Education Program. I'm sure you must be very busy and I really appreciate your taking the time out to lend me some assistance. Although we have already celebrated the New Year, here in China, they are preparing for their celebrations for Jan. 28, 29 & 30th. With this in mind, please, may I extend to you a "Xin Nian Kwai Le!" (shin nien kwae luh) - Happy New Year!!! With kind regards, Laura Busche-Ong, wuhch@public.wh.hb.cn

ENGLAND

Emiko Shinozawa has been accepted at a school in London and will be taking a one-year course in sound recording and production. Congratulations and good luck, Emiko!

Education Otherwise is a membership organization in England which provides support and information for families of homeschoolers and others interested in alternative education. Their newsletter #117 includes articles on home education, chess for young beginners, contacts, international links, child

jails, and more. The publication is looking for volunteer editors. Contact EO at PO box 7420, London, N9 9SG.

Since 1978, Diana Grace has been implementing "whole child" approaches in education and child care. She conducts workshops for adults and for children in schools. These workshops provide opportunities to develop children's creativity, social awareness and higher values, self-worth, and concentration and listening skills. For more information, contact her at 'Alianca,' 3, Glendale Drive, Chippenham, Wiltshire. SN15 3BQ England.

Another book, this one by Roland Meighan, is called Flexi-schooling. It describes the way that some families today are educating their children using whatever works best for the students at the particular time in their lives. Flexi-schooling is a "part-time arrangement whereby school and family share responsibility in an agreed contract and partnership." It is available from Education Now Books, PO Box 186, Ticknall, Derbyshire DE7 1WF.

The following is a message sent to Zoe Readhead of Summerhill, by Liz Rantz, whose son visited Summerhill on an AERO trip last summer and is now a Summerhill student:

Appreciated your letter to parents today about the persecution of the school by the authorities. I am very pleased by all the changes I have seen in Stephen in his one term there, and he is excited about being there and planning on staying a long time. It is hard for me to relate to why they care about a handful of students so much, especially when so many of them are not British kids. Certainly parents know their kids and their needs and should be able to judge what is in their best interest. But we have some horror stories in the states about home schooling families being harassed and even arrested, so I guess government abuse shouldn't surprise me. I'd be glad to write the powers that be, though I doubt my little American voice would matter. You are doing a great work there keeping the place going, and I don't want you to let the bastards get you down!
Fondly, Liz Rantz

FRANCE

On October 25-6, in Vichy, France, the Annual Meeting of Les Enfants d'abord, the French homeschool organization, will be held. Brigitte Guimbal, 474 Chemin de Font Cuberte, 06560 Valborne, France, E mail: bguimbal@aol.com, Ph: 04 93 12 93.49

Theleme, a boarding alternative school in Vernet, France, in the Pyrenees, had to vacate its main building because of financial problems, but continues with a small number of students and staff under the leadership of Michel Ferre. Contact AERO for more information.

INDIA

Excited! yet to explore more, just thought will sign the guest book for now! Kudlu Chithprabha, chith@manashi.cc.iitb.ernet.in

HUNGARY

The Rogers School educates elementary school children using a person-centered approach based on Carl Rogers' observations. Each class creates its own standards and guidelines. The school is operated by the Carl Rogers Foundation with a great deal of parental participation. Contact them at H-1121 Budapest, Fulemile U. 5 - 7. Hungary. Tel: 361-156-6894.

JAPAN

Note from JM: Mike Corliss, a reporter from the Japan Times e mailed me that he wanted to do a story on homeschooling in Japan. I gave him Kyoko Aizawa's e mail, and he did a major story on the problem of school refusers and truancy in Japan, interviewing Kyoko and others. "The law says he have the right to education, but we don't have the right to choose the form of education" she said in the story. Corliss said that 180,000 Japanese students are refusers and miss significant amounts of school. Tokyo Shure was also mentioned in the story. Kyoko subsequently e mailed: "Hello Jerry, The article of The Japan Times appeared 4th January. The reporter wrote to me that he wants to write more! And he said he will contact me again. I hope to make the problem clear and make them re-think the system and forms of education in Japan. Thank you for your help as always! With love, Kyoko." Otherwise Japan <owj@tkb.att.ne.jp

The day I left for the Czech Republic, Japan Television came to my house in New York to interview me for a feature they were doing about public and private alternatives and homeschooling in the US. They sent me the tape, which, of course, was translated into Japanese and left me straining to hear the words underneath. But it does seem that the winds of educational change have been reaching Japan

NETHERLANDS

I was looking for the adress and more usefull information about Summerhill and incidently found out that there's also the Sands school in Devon. Nice surprise! I myself work as a history-teacher at "Eigenwijs" (means hardheaded) in Nijmegen, the only free-school left in the Netherlands. We teach 14 to 20 year olds at our school Our anarchistic approach sort of developed itself out of the left scene in this town. It started out 15 years ago as an "extension" in squatting. Many of our pupils are people that live in squats or are part of the left scene. I enjoy it a lot and love to learn more about how things are over there today! We don't have a home-page (not on-line yet),but we are happy to answer questions about our school. Jon, wilberts@antenna.nl

ROMANIA

The SocRaTeE Foundation, socrate@infotin.sfos.ro, is a non-profit organization dedicated to Audio Visual and Information Technology Alternative Education. Our goal is to propagate through audio visual and computer networks means new ideas about education. We encourage projects for new forms of school and schooling. We collect and share new educational ideas and experiences from all over the world. We produce radio and TV programs on alternative education and offer them freely to local Romanian Radio and TV broadcasters. We would be very happy if you could send us some videos (documentary, artistic, essay, interviews etc.) reporting on any items related to alternative education. Depending on dimensions, we intend to use such material "as-it-is" (titled/dubbed translation) or mixed with other similar issues. Technically, the BetaCam professional standard would be best suited to our goals - but any other video standard (Pal, Secam, NTSC) could be used, at the expense of a certain loss of image quality. Paul Silvestru,, journalist, The SocRaTeE Foundation Tel/fax: +40-(0)1-311.09.60, +40-(0)1-312.44.15, Intr. Victor Eftimiu 2-4, cam. 603/605, Bucuresti 1, Romania, e-mail: socrate@infotin.sfos.ro, <http://infotin.sfos.ro/socrate>

SCOTLAND

Paul Godden, The Galloway Small School, gss@godd.demon.co.uk. We now have 11 pupils (up from 9 at the start on 29.9.97). We are moving to school site on a 3 year lease next month and seeking to produce our first literature which is causing much debate amongst us as we try and reach consensus over curriculum policy and other matters. There is much happening. We have 4 full time 'boarders' 3 of whom are from Japan and one from London. The rest are local day kids. Boarding has been a complicated issue for us (and our Local Authority) because we did not find a suitable property to house the residential school. So we arranged for 'home hospitality' with families for those four kids that needed it. The Social Services have got themselves in great confusions trying to find a legal precedent for this hospitality scheme. They can't decide whether it is 'private fostering' or whether we are running children's homes. In any case they want us to go through a ridiculous process for new kids' applications for hospitality. Between these people at Social Services, Building Control and Planning departments, School Inspectors + various other statutory authorities it makes one wonder how any new community project can get off the ground without relying on help (with strings attached) from Government or capitalist investors. Recruitment is our priority now. The Galloway Small School, Foley Field, Barnbarroch, Kippford DG5 4QS, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, Tel / Fax: ++44 1556 620696, Email: gss@godd.demon.co.uk

SPAINDear Jerry: I am Alberto Alegre. I talked to you in the phone a couple of months ago. I am Spanish (I live in Barcelona), and I told you that I

want to open a Free School in my city. A school inspired in the ideas of Summerhill, and people like Neill, or John Holt. I am a Pedagogue and an economist. When I worked as a teacher I often tried to use the techniques of Freinet. I have been working in an insurance company and a car dealer company, for the last 13 years or more. I have been thinking and I realize that I have been apart from education too many years. So I decided that before opening a school, it could be good to work in a progressive school for 1 or 2 years. Since there are not schools like Summerhill in Spain, I would like to find a place in an American school that works with this kind of idea.

I found more or less 70 in your Almanac of Education Choices that follow the ideas of freedom for children and non-compulsory class attendance, and I wrote to them asking for a job, or just a place to live with my wife and my two children, that allow me to participate in the school life. I am waiting for their answer.

I have been convinced of the idea of freedom in the school since I was 17, (now I am 39 years old). But I have always been the only one among the people and the pedagogues and teachers that I know. That's why after three years of working in a school, I lost my hope in the possibility of opening a free school in Barcelona. I left education and started working in an insurance company.

Now is the time to come back. Since you are an expert and know so many free schools in USA, maybe you can help me to find one. I could teach Spanish, or economy, or math. When I was a teacher, I worked with little children, 4 and 5 years old. After so many years working with adults, I think I can work with children of any age. It could be one of the nicest things in my life if I could work in a free school and later open my own school in Barcelona.

Thank you for everything. If you want to answer me, my address is: Alberto Alegre, August Font 33, 1, Barcelona 08035 Phone: 2124215 fax: 2023563 e-mail: mersal@abaforum.es

Editor's note: After making some suggestions and contacts for Alberto, he recently sent us the following e mail--JM:

These last two weeks have been incredible! I have at this moment four different schools that have offered me a place, and many lovely answers from people all around the USA (even Hawaii) that can't offer me a job but invited me to visit their school. I wish I could accept all the offers, but it is not possible.....I will visit these schools next March, and I will see in which one can I be more useful and learn more. In any case, thank you very much for your help. Without your web page, and your book, I would be still alone in my idea to start a free school in Barcelona.--Alberto

TAIWAN

There are about four alternative schools in Taiwan. The most famous one is Forest school. Some students whom you met in Summerhill graduated from it. Our school is called Seedling School, established in 1994 by some parents

who feel disappointed about the education in Taiwan. It's a very young school.

Some of our ideas indeed come from Summerhill, but we believe parents should and need to participate children's education. One of our former deans even visited Sudbury Valley School and she translated "Sudbury Valley School" into Chinese. In fact, we all hope one day our school can be the same as Sudbury Valley School.

There are 52 students from age 7-12 and 7 teachers in our school. Our school is located in a Tayal village, one of the aborigines in Taiwan, surrounded by beautiful mountains and streams. We have a schedule but students can choose freely their favorite courses except Chinese and Math. They can do whatever they like during their free time.

Since the school was established, arguments, compromise always happen every semester, because everyone has their own idea about education. Some thought that students should be treated reasonably but they still hope students learn under the good structure and well constructed. Now our goals and ideas are more and more clear. We want a free-learning school. Some things I cannot explain become the tradition. But we all know that arguments still will happen because we emphasize the cooperation between parents and school.

We plan to extend our school to high school. It is more difficult because the government in Taiwan has more restrictions. We need to know the experience of other alternative schools. That's why I'm interested about this organization. I'm really surprised to see your mail. Kathleen,

snipe@top2.ficnet.net.tw

From the AERO Web Site

E mail addresses are:

jmintz@acl.nyit.edu

jmintz@igc.apc.org

JerryAERO@AOL.com

Web site is <http://www.speakeasy.org/~aero>

John A. Thompson, jthompson@nhc.noaa.gov

This site is a pleasant surprise! To think, I stumbled across the address in a thread on a boating mail list....My wife and I have been musing with the idea of creating an alternative education at sea program when she finishes her masters in oceanography. The idea would be to offer courses in oceanography, marine biology, Caribbean history, literature of the sea, etc., aboard a large sailing ship homeported either out of South Florida or the US Virgin Islands. We would conduct charity work during our port visits to the different islands, and could use the ship to convey medical supplies, clothing, and building materials to those in need. Students would not only study, they would be engaged in charity and in the sailing of the ship. Besides her study of physics and oceanography, our qualifications include my degrees in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (MIT) and soon a degree in Applied Marine Physics. We are both

sailors, living aboard our sailing ketch Tethys, and I was previously an officer of the US Navy. We help run our church's youth program, working with both middle and high school children. I have done some substitute teaching, and am currently looking for teaching opportunities in Florida to expand my experience in the field .We've been looking for resources and organizations which might help us to realize our goal. Anyone out there share our interest?

Carl Beekman, Ph.D., Wolfcarl@aol.com

I am very impressed! I have had quite a bit of experience in the "Alternative" schooling. If you ever need any help in your endeavors, please let me know. We have just finished a 3-phased workshop on Creative Teaching & Learning styles for an Alternative School on the Navajo Reservation. I would love for those children to have a chance to participate in some of your programs. Beekman-Fraser Consulting, Inc. Carl Beekman, Ph.D. Vice President 2239 "B" Simpson Ridge Circle, Kissimmee, FL 34744 Phone: (407) 518-9552 FAX: (407) 518-9652 E-mail:

Elizabeth Reid, Lizreid103@aol.com

I am interested in hearing from any old students from Playmountain Place in Los Angeles or from Kirkdale School in London. If anyone knows about any old freeschoolers living in Orange County, CA, I would be very keen to get in touch with them.

H. Clouse, clouse@fnet.friendlynets.com

Am in OH. Working on funding Alt. Schl. that is horse-based. Looking for any help & guidance on the funding maze.... Thanks.

Martha Catherine Alter, marthaaltr@aol.com

I would be extremely interested in any information about alternative education that you could send me. I am especially interested in free schools. I am in my third year of undergraduate studies and want to eventually open my own school. I want ideas!!!!

Dave Douglas, Londonderry, NH, mail@self-ed.com

SELF-ED is a concept of alternative K-12 education that goes beyond education reform. Those interested are welcome to check us out at www.self-ed.com.

Chieko Yamazaki-Heineman, thomas@hatelecom.or.jp

Any guests who have surfed on this site from Japan and are interested in alternative education, please contact me.

Padmini Angel Jones

I love Neil. I wish I could have met him, I only discovered that Summerhill existed some time ago when a dear friend Mark gave me "The Problem Family", and "Summerhill." I want to visit Summerhill. Is this possible? I have been driven to understand my childhood and others for so long. My instincts have never fit with the practices of others and many

times I regret to say I have resisted even my own instincts due to my own selfishness. But I get better every day and the more freedom I give myself the more it appears when I am with the children. I love them, they are my teachers and I wish to somehow protect them from hate as Neil and his wife spent years doing. Please help me know everything I can about Summerhill. 325 Lincoln Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey, 08904.

John Coakley, JimCoakley@prodigy.net

Wonderful site, I am sure it will be an immense help.

For anyone out there: I am a senior at a public high school in NH. I am doing a senior project looking at the evolution of free schools, and look to design a small program at my school based on my research. Please, if you have any information whatsoever on free schools, their development, their philosophy, and where they are now, by all means contact me. Anyone else who has thoughts/ideas/resources on educational philosophy in general, feel free to write as well.

S. Kegley, mordrum@aol.com

I am a former Spanish (high school/alternative) teacher working to put together homeschooling help in foreign languages. Currently, I meet individually with students approx. 1 hour/wk. Any suggestions or existing info would be appreciated. Thanks for the great resource!

Meaghan Nelson, mnelson02@gw.hamline.edu

I am a recent graduate of an alternative high school (adult based education) in Lakeville, MN and have gone on to a selective university. I am very happy to see your page with the many different types of alternative learning. I want people to see the value of an alternative education and the success that can come of it. I am also doing a research on alternative schools and your page has been a big help. thanks!

Francis D. Whitaker, fdw@mail.coos.or.us

I am the what they call "Site Coordinator" of a private, non-profit alternative school in Coos Bay, OR. I constantly look for better ways to serve our students and will return to your site to look for information. I'm glad I found you. Don't know why it has taken so long.

Russell Ericson, Fritz812@AOL.com

I am currently enrolled as a junior at Skyview Public High School in Billings, MT. I am strongly interested in trying to find some way of opening doors that would carve a path to my school to practice alternative means of education within the school itself. I agree very much so that grades, along with the unavailability of a way each student could study materials that they are interested in. I know that public schools are required to meet a base core of essential materials that they must teach, but I think it is possible to fit these educating styles somewhere into our curriculum. I know as a student myself, that I perform much better when I study something that interests me. I would like to hear any thoughts or suggestions someone might have in helping to accomplish this. Thank you very much

Ramonde Plumb, rmplumb@pacbell.net

I am a homeschooling mom of a 4 year old and a 6 year old. We have schooled both kids since they where 1 1/2 years old. We have tried public schools and that was a choice. As my oldest now hates public schools and teachers. I hope my family can hook up with others that homeschool. Looking forward to getting some e-mail

Laura Corkern, laura-corkern@fwsd.wednet.edu

I am interested in small, in-home schools. Beyond homeschooling to include others' children. Anyone doing this?

El Ivens, bsnevi@jdv.net.com

I am looking for information on alternative schools and programs for Middle School students that are at-risk

Energeia Publishing, Inc., Energ123@aol.com

Now online at: WWW.ENERGEIA.COM is Energeia Publishing's new catalog of career, education and self-help booklets. Energeia booklets help people reach their full potential.

Thank you for visiting Energeia online.

Troy Judd, Website: Manual High School

Art Teacher, Emmerich Manual high School, 4701 Crestview Ave., Indianapolis, IN, 46205 (317-255-8265)-Interested in any future correspondence

Anne Richert Hotz, avmallrat@aol.com

I am interested in starting my own school in southern California. I have attended "free schools", homeschooled my own boys, and am now working at a small private school catering to the iep needs of "hurt" children. The synapses started snapping at your web sight. thank you.

Jim Woods, jimwoods@edutechnet.com

You may find our website to be very beneficial; www.edutechnet.com is the product of career technologists and educators collaborating together to enhance education through technology. Our site includes best practices, editorial opinions, software reviews, recommendations, and a good collection of links to lessons plans, standards, and other resources.

Hal L. Studholme, studhol2@TCNJ.EDU

I am creating a web page that will have educational links as a resource for teachers and students. I will only have about 3 links and would like "AERO" to be one of them. Is this OK with you ?

PS I have written to you in the past when I was a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia. Thanks.-Hal. HStudholme@aol.com

Mahendren Chinniah, kaniv@tm.net.my

I like to homeschool my kid age 4 and 5. Can you help me
Mahendren Chinniah Hse No:183,Lorong Seroja 3, Taman Fortuna, Bt 2.5 Jalan Penampang, 88200 Kota Kinabalu.Sabah

Charlotte Miller, charlie@gisco.net

I am and English major at St. Lawrence University. I am writing a representative piece on alternative education for a feature writing class. Any info would be appreciated. Please send it to the above E-Mail. I am a

non-traditional student who has a strong interest in alternative ed. I volunteer as a mentor for Thousand Islands Community School.

Susan Langdon, Suezq73507@aol.com

I would just like to thank you for this site. It has given me great info on how to help my son. Keep up the good work and good luck to you all.

Dan Fuchs, Dan_Fuchs@cce.org

I'm currently working at Satellite Academy High School, one of the oldest alternative public schools in New York City, and am particularly interested in Advisory Group (sometimes called Family Group). If anyone out there has any good readings on the topic, or on facilitation of groups in high schools, please e-mail them to me.

Mindy Faber, mfaber@artic.edu

Just exploring options because even though I totally believe in public education and I am doing everything in my power to make it better, I am still overwhelmingly frustrated with its mediocrity. My six year old is bright and creative and they don't have anything for him. but I think all children deserve something better.

Beth btepper1@erols.com

I was doing a lot of research on homeschooling options and came across DK publishings books, videos & cd-rom. I was so impressed with the educational value once I started a home learning center that I became a distributor. We have materials for children of all ages and ability levels. Drop me a line for more info!

T Brown, tbrown@dhs.nesc.ar.us

Hello Mr. Mintz, I am a High School resource teacher working on my masters in special education. I am writing a position paper on the appropriateness of ALEs for students with disabilities. Any information would be helpful.

Michael Hartner, kcs11@mhv.net

Website: J. Watson Bailey Middle School

Hi Jerry, I thought I'd check out your web page. I'm looking forward to hearing from you. There is a great deal of potential for alternative education programs in this (The Kingston City Schools) district. We'd appreciate any help you could give us.

Emilie, gardnfev@nwi.net

Heard of this site from a fellow homeschooler who is now looking into other alternative educational options. I finally surfed through this site and am very impressed with the information. Since I edit both a local hsing newsletter as well as a state hsters email newsletter, I will certainly forward this web site location.

I am looking for a post secondary school with the Summerhill philosophy. I love to learn but not be forced to. Also I find the pressure of having to get good grades and competition within Universities takes away from the learning. I want to have fun and like learning. Peter Hargis

Janin Paine, vanzetta@only.com

Website: Play Mountain Place ASD#128709

Just looking for alternative school information on the www. I guess I found it! I am parent at Play Mountain Place, one of the oldest alternative preschool-elementary schools in the country. Play Mountain was founded in 1949 by Phyllis Fleishman and based partially on England's famed Summerhill School and on the work of psychologist Carl Rogers. We have a home/school partnership program where some elementary children attend three days a week. We also have a teacher training/intern program. If you are in Los Angeles come visit us. Call first 310-870-4381. Or write at 6063 Hargis St., L.A. CA 90034.

Evelyn DeJesus, eavie@ix.netcom.com

I am interested in hearing from individuals who are currently working on safe schools programs. In Illinois, the state board has approved funding for the creation of alternative education programs which serve students who have been either "excluded" or expelled for "gross misconduct". It is the belief of the state, that as a community we are responsible for educating those individuals who are out in the streets because our current system is not able to meet their needs. These students are individuals who have committed a "crime" in their school and are seen to be a danger to the school community at large. Hope to hear from all you avante garde educators out there!

Debbie Yerby, pyerby@erols.com

Dear Mr. Mintz, I am interested in a brochure about your organization. I was a special education teacher for over 15 yrs. for ED children .It was my response to public education. I chose a field that I knew I could be relatively autonomous in the classroom. I tried many alternative methods to reach my students. I became increasingly disgruntled with public schools; especially since my own children now are attending them. I have chosen to homeschool my 12 yr. old daughter. She really hated middle school ! I am interested in locating people that are homeschooling their middle schoolers specifically girls. A friend and I are considering opening an alternative school in our community and need some valid suggestions on what we need to do. I was a director of a preschool for the last 6 yrs. I began with 12 kids and one staff member and went to 7 staff members and 41 children from 2 - 5 yrs old. Hope this gives you some idea of that sorts of things I need from AERO.

Pauline Hixson, PFHKAHNAH@worldnet.att.net

Actively searching for acceptable education for my children who are advanced in school. Seeking magnet/alternative/proceed at your own pace education. Located near Charlotte, NC. Anyone else out there in the same boat?

Mary Ann Buck, janitor@interaccess.com

I am a mother of a 17 year old son. He is currently in the 11 grade. He has

learning disabilities and is diagnosed ADD. He has had a very difficult time in school. He hates every day of it, but is determined to get a high school diploma. If there is any information you can send to me from this web page I would appreciate it. I need your help!!!!

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TRANSITIONING SCHOOLING TO LEARNING
-Beyond 1998-
by Don Glines

Potential societal futures vividly indicate that communities must transition from "schooling" -- the existing conventional structures -- to "learning" -- totally new systems for the emerging century. The issue is clear. If the United States has the intelligence and technology to send a manned capsule to Mars in the next two decades, educators have little defense for maintaining the M-W-F college courses, and more importantly, the worst invention ever -- the "7th grade." The research at this level validates how out of sync K-12 schools and universities have been and are for most learners. Current charter school efforts are of no major

consequence.

Sadly, educational "reform" has been clarioned throughout the 20th century. The work-study-play concept begun in Gary, Indiana in 1907; the famous Eight-Year Study of the 1930s; the Lloyd Trump model schools of the 60s/70s; the three great university laboratory programs of the past 100 years -- Chicago, Ohio State, Mankato State; and the non-school design for the Minnesota Experimental City illustrates many multiple beginnings. Though there have been some cosmetic alterations, and even short-range successful histories, the conventional blueprints for schooling -- except in selected alternative programs -- have generally continued. There has been no truly significant, lasting, positive innovation nationwide in ten decades.

Traditional K-12 change leaders today preach that more rigorous requirements, a longer school year, tougher discipline and uniforms, national standards and assessment, algebra and geometry for everyone, Latin again for the gifted, inclusion education for all, mandatory parent involvement, and, of course, installation of and instruction in computer technology will resolve the great dilemmas facing individuals and the global society. Most educational futurists, however, state that such reincarnations will not reflect a significant difference; in the long term they only foreshadow negative influences. Creating a golden age of optimism requires replacing the already obsolescent patterns of schooling. "Tougher courses" will not eliminate the D and F student syndrome.

Recent "old innovations" such as the misunderstood and erroneously implemented 90 minute block schedule only compound the priority dilemma of the existing structure: group-paced, required of all, self-contained, graded classrooms. Politics still control learning. There are too many books listing the academic approach to planning for change, which though helpful, seldom lead to more than discussion, not actual implementation. There are continuing claims that changing a school takes more money and staff, despite many experiences to the contrary, The Gary, IN district and Mankato, MN Wilson Campus School had traditional budgets and high achievement in "radical" programs enrolling a cross-section of youth by reallocating resources and overhauling the philosophy, mechanics, and factors of student responsibility.

Needed now are voluntary programs that go beyond any that currently exist. Improving the educational 747 is still important for those who choose to fly, but for those educators who accept the challenge, the Atlantis should be in orbit now, while the X-22 assembles for the next generation. Communities forced to immediately jump from the 747 to the spaceship will revolt, but when given the choice, a critical mass will volunteer to explore. A five to ten year period for planning to eliminate the 7th grade is not necessary. The American forces at Midway had a quick makeshift strategy with minimal support. The Japanese had a ten year plan with overwhelming superiority. Midway proved that good planning is often a matter of "dumb luck," for there are always possible discontinuities.

Boldness is an essential requirement for the 1999 AD plus leaders.

The Minnesota Experimental City (MXC) was designed in the early seventies with a geodesic dome, waterless toilets, no automobiles, people movers, and all the latest electronic capabilities. The exciting phase for education was that learning would occur without schools, universities, and Bluebird buses. Everyone was a teacher; everyone was a learner. The city was the living learning laboratory. When desired, individuals of ALL ages could participate in the Stimulus Centers, Beginning Life Centers, Learner Banks, Project Centers, Gaming Centers, Family Life Centers, and existing facilities (businesses, laboratories, parks). Much learning was to occur at home. The computer driven LORIN system (Learning Objectives Resources Information Network) was organized to immediately access contacts for one-to-one and small group interaction, assistance, material, and evaluation.

The transfer model toward these plans for existing programs was being developed at the Wilson Campus School of Mankato State University, where pre-birth through senior citizen offerings were functioning under one roof. All ages were mixed in a non-graded manner. There were no ABC report cards, course requirements, homework assignments, mandated texts, final exams, textbooks, master schedules, or attendance regulations. The facilities were open year-round with no semesters or quarters. Learners selected their own facilitators and advisors. Pre-schoolers and high schoolers functioned with university level students who could earn B.S. and M.S. degrees in experiential education. All students could take "college classes;" change occurred utilizing the existing budget and staff. This design began in 1968, not 1998, and was borrowed from the 20s and 30s.

The Wilsonites were in the communities much of the time, assisting and studying at the state mental health hospital; helping in the old folks home; mountain climbing in Colorado; learning Spanish in Puebla, Mexico; and dozens of similar opportunities. Volunteering and responsibility were keys; antiquated "algebra syndromes" were eliminated. The affective and psychomotor domains were more important than the cognitive. Person Center approaches assisted youth on court-granted probation. Gifted and special education set asides were not needed, as learning for all was personalized, individualized, and self-paced. Curriculum was interdependent; faculty worked as teams. Participants knew that another language could not be learned fifty minutes a day, five days a week, for nine months, for two years; $50 \times 5 \times 9 \times 2$ is the university admissions invoked formula for illiteracy. Staff realized that such designs and requirements made no sense and could not be defended. Therefore, they launched this Mankato Wilson Campus School, like the three-day decisions at Midway, with only two months preparation.

New directions are essential for all levels. Buckminster Fuller stated the need clearly in Critical Path: "We must change our values, lifestyles, priorities ... and our institutions ..." Ironically, the majority of the dilemmas facing society have been perpetrated by the best traditional college graduates: environmental pollution; political ethics;

have/have-not gap; underemployment -- the sixty-four microproblems which equal one macroproblem! It really is the affective domain, not more algebra, that will determine the future.

Large industries spend ten percent on research and development; new and better products are created, yet relatively unsafe automobiles are still sold to families as evidenced by the crash test results. However, education spends only one-fourth of one percent on R and D. It is no wonder that change is difficult. Even what is known is seldom used (ungraded teams). Courses in common sense may need to be required. Engineers pass their college math tests, but they avoid those labeled "Common Sense." An analysis of the freeway patterns and on/off ramps in most cities would support this reflection. Why has society been able to dock the Mir, but unable to improve the educational conditions related to poverty, parent neglect, low achievement, and quitting school?

At many colleges of education, the name of the Department of Educational Administration has been "reformed" to Educational Leadership or Human Resources, but the former course, "Administration of Secondary Schools," continues as old wine in a new wineskin. Proof abounds, for regardless of cosmetics, the same foundation remains. Most high schools have period 1-2-3 schedules; ABC report cards; required English, history, math, and science at specific "grade levels;" hall passes and bells; homework; suspensions; honor rolls; and cheerleaders. In some, Computer Club has replaced Chess Club. Nothing really significant has occurred toward creating new images. Thirty percent of the students still receive ABs; forty percent earn Cs; and thirty percent are awarded DFs. Seventy percent are at best satisfactory, mediocre, unsatisfactory, failure. Of the thirty percent doing well (AB), half are bored. This is not the way to command a ship; as usual, the Titanic comes to mind.

In the early 60s, it was realized that the junior high (grades 7-8-9), and the intermediate (7-8), were far out of sync with this age group. Those called "7th graders" ranged on traditional "standardized assessments" academically from grade 3 to grade 13; physiologically, they ranged six years -- some were 5th, some were 9th "graders." Therefore, in the mid-60s inventors created the middle school, designed for youth chronologically from generally 10-14 (grades 5-8), but individually much broader. The programs were to be individualized and non-graded; flexibly scheduled with integrated curriculum; no report cards; and facilities in pods. It was a time to dream. Instead, the enrollment drop in the high schools led to moving the 9th to a 9-12 configuration based on space. Then the 5-8 or 6-8 was argued, with the latter usually winning; the name over the door was changed from junior to middle. Little of significance related to learning happened; the structure remained the old junior high in practice -- or often worse, for electives were eliminated. There were few exceptions.

The elementary years were to have nongraded, team oriented, individualized, self-paced interdependent curriculum patterns. There were

to be no self-contained classrooms, but instead, space to wander, multiple selections of teacher personalities, special facilities as in science laboratories and industrial technology, and a read at the teachable moment philosophy. Again, no change, as the self-contained boxes of 20-35 remained in 95% of the buildings. It is good that schools did not teach walking and talking, along with reading; the increase in remedial classes would have been overwhelming.

Year-round continuous learning opportunities were to be available. It made no sense for all schools to close for June, July, August -- even from a traditional space, cost, test score perspective. More importantly, students would have the choice of attending school and vacationing throughout the twelve months to accommodate individual and family learning and lifestyle preferences. Once more, 95% of the schools clung to the outmoded notion of three summer months off -- even though experiences beginning in 1904 documented that this was not the best pattern for ALL. Fortunately, a few districts have "proven" YRE by continuing it for the past 25 years.

Universities and teacher education schools have refused to change too. Though there are a few small innovative colleges, some programs in Europe, and scattered experimental options, over 90% remain with MWF one hour lectures, weekly three hour "Tuesday night" classes, administration courses reinforcing uniformity and tradition, and graduation "credits" based on the clock.

Further, typical educators and physicians have refused to recognize the relationship of environmental illness with learning. How schools often contribute to poor health is well documented in *Is This Your Child's World?* by Doris Rapp. Many low achieving children are affected by the environment. Even if not, they need assistance which begins with their strengths and successes, not their weaknesses and failures. Better approaches are required in programs for these youth, and for school maintenance practices and facilities.

It is a shame that more explorers have not joined that spacewalk potential in education -- the real breakthroughs possible via brain-mind research, technology, and a humane philosophy. New programs are so easy to start through college and school-within-a-school plans, magnets, and alternatives for everyone. Multiple choices and community learning concepts are feasible most everywhere. Such efforts are supported by research, cost no more, improve learning potential, and are essential for the present.

Educators/communities will not change the century old traditions until they are dissatisfied enough to realize that the existing is not the answer. People should ask: "Is this the best instructional structure that can be invented." Innovators must challenge convention; they need to ask what research (not opinion or comfort) is there to support the current school organizational patterns. There is none -- other than decades of repetition. The successes do not validate a system that could be better

for most learners.

It is time for IMAGINEERING -- to imagine, invent, implement. Figments of imagination are essential. Educational astronauts in school districts and universities throughout American are needed to volunteer to begin perhaps small but critical mass exciting spacewalk examples in education. Brush fires at the majority of institutions could truly lead to a national bonfire, and the destruction of the barriers to change, as Midway eventually led to the defeat of Japan.

Though many will argue that conventional American education has achieved much with self-contained first grades, required 7th grade math, high school advanced placement, and college degrees, it has lost the maximum potential for the majority of youth. When (if) Americans land on Mars in two decades, history should record that during the coming years, the education versions of the Kittyhawk, Spirit of St. Louis, P-38 -- and the early jets -- became museum pieces. 2020 visions must begin the transition in 2000 toward entirely new systems for the future. It is time to witness the benefits of Transitioning Schooling to Learning.

FROM A TALK IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN MAINE

By Emanuel Pariser
Co-Director, Community School

(Member, Committee on Dropout, Truant, and Alternative Education
Chair, Maine Substance Abuse Services Commission
Steering Committee, Maine Alternative Education Association)
emanuel@cschool.acadia.net

The Community School is sponsoring a day long workshop on May 5 a Tuesday, in Augusta, on Charter Schools - how to start one, what good charter school legislation looks like, etc. presented by Joe Nathan. Joe is a national expert and leader in this area. He works out of the Hubert Humphrey Institute for Policy Studies in Minnesota, and has been one of the prime movers behind the Charter Schools Movement. We hope it will be in Jewett Hall again, 8 - 2:30. For more info. on this contact me at emanuel@cschool.acadia.net. Last year we sponsored Arnold Langberg to talk about the Walkabout model of education. I invite any of you who are interested to come.

Here are the elements which Joe Nathan suggests are critical to creating effective legislation for a strong and effective Charter School Bill:

Essential Elements of Effective Charter School Legislation

1. The school is public. It is nonsectarian. It may not charge tuition. It may not have admissions tests of any kind. It must follow health and

safety regulations.

2. The state authorizes more than one organization to start and operate a public school in the community. The local board is eligible to be a sponsor (and to convert some or all of its existing schools to charter status, if a majority of teachers in the school vote to do this). But the sponsor of a charter school may also be a college or university, state board of education, state chartering agency or other nonprofit, nonsectarian group.

3. Accountability is based on a performance contract. The authorizing agency and educators who work in the school agree on student outcomes to be achieved. The continued existence of the school depends on whether these outcomes are achieved.

4. There is an up-front waiver from rules about curriculum, management and teaching. States may specify student outcomes. But determining how the school operates should be up to the people who establish and operate it. The charter school concept trades bureaucracy for accountability, regulation for results.

5. The charter school is a school of choice. It is actively chosen by faculty, students and families. No one is assigned to be there.

6. The school becomes a discrete entity: The law may let the founders choose any organization available under general state law or may specify an organization, such as nonprofit. As a legal entity, the school will have its board. There is real site management. Teachers, if employees, have full rights to organize and bargain collectively. However, their bargaining unit is separate from any district bargaining unit.

7. The full per-pupil allocation moves with the student. This amount should be roughly the average state allocation per pupil, or the average in the district from which the student comes. If the state provides extra funds for students from low income families or with disabilities, these funds also should follow the students.

8. Participating teachers should be protected and given new opportunities. Teachers may take a leave from public school systems, and while on leave will retain their seniority. They may continue to participate in the local or state retirement programs. New teachers may join state retirement programs. They may choose to be employees, or to organize a professional group under which they collectively own and operate the school.*

A Few Facts on Charter Schools in the United States:

1. Since 1991, 29 states have adopted some version of the charter idea.

2. About 780 charters have been created

- a. 1992 - 1 school
- b. 1993 - 35 schools
- c. 1994 - 59 schools
- d. 1995 171 schools
- e. 1996 480 schools
- f. 1997 780 schools

3. About 300 new charters are scheduled to open as of fall, 1997. A 1995 study by the Education Commission of the States found that in the six states with the "strongest" laws, there were 226 charters. In the six states with the weakest laws, there were 16 charter schools.

*This list was developed by Minnesota State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge, Ted Kolderie and Joe Nathan. For further information, contact Center for School Change, Humphrey Institute, Univ. of Minnesota, 301 19th Av. S., Minneapolis, Mn. 55455, (612) 626-1834. For more info, see Charter Schools, by Joe Nathan, published by Jossey Bass (800) 956-7739.

The central differences between "strong" and weak laws are that

* strong laws permit local school boards AND some other public organization(s) such as state board of education, public universities, city governments, etc. to sponsor-authorize charter public schools.

* strong laws permit creation of schools which receive money directly from the state.

* strong laws permit conversion of existing public schools, as well as creation of new ones,

* strong laws permit charter schools to create their own working conditions, rather than be forced to ask a local school board or union for waivers,

* strong laws permit unlimited, or large numbers of charter schools.

4. Charters have been renewed in California, Colorado and Minnesota, based on improved achievement.

5. Six charters have been closed because of financial mismanagement or lack of progress in student achievement.

6. A variety of positive "ripple effects" have been noted, especially in states which have permit local and statewide sponsorship of charters.

These ripple effects are helping improve the existing in public education system.

7. Bipartisan support has developed, including many people who do not support vouchers

8. Several studies found that students attending charter schools in many states tend to be more racially diverse, low income, and likely to speak a language other than English in their home than other public school students in the state.

9. In states which permit only school boards to sponsor schools, both fewer and a much narrower range of schools is developing. Local boards appear to be most willing to sponsor schools for students with whom they have been unsuccessful.

10. In mid October, 1997, President Clinton recommended that every U.S. public school be either a charter school, or have charter-like responsibilities to improve achieve or be closed.

One of the biggest questions raised by opponents to Charter Legislation is that local school districts will lose money as it follows students to the Charter School. Several points are important to remember here. In the case of students who have dropped out, are habitually truant, have transferred to private schools, or started home-schooling, the district has already lost the state allocation. Finding a way for them to return deprives no particular district of money. Money raised both locally and statewide for education is designated for educating students, not for any one particular system to do so. As another form of public school, Charter schools are an appropriate venue for investing tax dollars. What school districts can do in response to these competitive pressures is become innovative themselves as has happened in Boston and in Colorado, where the number of public alternatives has increased dramatically in response to charter legislation!

I have been working with teenagers who didn't fit the conventional system all my life. I have seen firsthand the suffering and self loathing they experience when they fail to succeed. From my work with Substance Abuse Prevention, and with other alternative educators, and with guidance counselors and superintendents across the state I know that my students and their families are not the only ones who have suffered this fate.

Through my work at the Community School I have also seen how a school that fits these students' needs can create a renaissance in their sense of self, make them feel that a future is possible and worthwhile, put them back into the drivers' seat of their lives. Simply put, students and families in

Maine need more learning options. They need to find a niche where they fit and are valued for their capabilities. A system of Charter Schools in Maine will help to create some of these niches, both through the Charters themselves, and through the innovation in the conventional system which they will stimulate. Competition in this framework on a level playing field, between conventional schools and Charters can only be helpful to families and students throughout Maine.

As it must be obvious by now, I am a strong supporter of this concept if it is well done - and knowing the serious thought and consideration which your committee is putting towards this legislation, I have confidence you will come up with an equitable and encouraging proposal. Thank you again for your invitation to speak and thank you for your work on this crucial issue.

Wilderness Education for Alternative Schools
By Chris Balch

(Ed. note: I've known Chris Balch for over 25 years. For ten years he was a staff member at Shaker Mountain School and developed an outdoor education program for us. Since then he has done the same at several public and private schools, and where he now teaches at Souhegan High School, in NH. His independent wilderness program, Wild Quest!, is growing explosively. He sent me the following note, "Just received the Fall 97 Aero-Gramme. I was amazed at just how far it has come! I spent over an hour reading it. Jerry, you've done an amazing job bringing that along. It was slick, polished and professional looking- not to mention the fact that it was very interesting. I'm impressed." I asked him to write an article about his work, and he sent this story.)

Kim:

Her Mom and Dad had divorced, and Mom had subsequently remarried. Kim did not readily accept her stepfather in the household. During younger years she had been a stellar student in the public school system, but around her 15th year she decided that was over. She became sullen, withdrawn, let her physical appearance deteriorate. She began to dabble with drugs. She "dropped out" of her family, spending all of her time out with friends or sleeping. She was the perfect picture of a kid with low self-esteem, motivation, and self confidence... who also had no sense of self-direction.

Brian:

Brian was always a good student at school. He was from a solid, loving family. He had no significant drug or alcohol involvement. He was a happy, smiling individual who participated enthusiastically in life. Altogether, another kind of perfect picture.

These kids represent a small cross section of our youth. My name is

Chris Balch. Over the last 25 years as a teacher in alternative, private, and public schools. I have seen thousands of such “troubled” and “normal” kids.

During the summer of 1996 both Kim and Brian joined Wild Quest!, an outdoor education program, for 19 days on a Rocky Mountain Wilderness expedition in the Absaroka Range of Wyoming. And there, the magic happened for both of them.

During their 19 days they faced the sweaty drudgery of climbing many a mountain encumbered with a heavy pack to finally attain the summit; discovering there a spectacular view, and a deeply personal sense of self-accomplishment. They experienced the simple awe of sharing a sunset with fellow group members. They stood frozen as a moose ambled past, only a few feet away. Kim and Brian experienced the freedom of rising with the sun to live each day with a zeal not to be found in their civilized schedules dictated by clocks and school.

The heart of their experience, and perhaps, of all outdoor education, was the Fear-Courage-Triumph cycle that is central to wilderness life: Fear at the recognition of a new challenge that seems overwhelming, Courage as, with leader guidance and mutual group support, the challenge is engaged, and Triumph when the challenge is accomplished by drawing on resources that were previously unknown. These simple victories fill all who experience them with a wonderful sense of self-satisfaction, pride, and achievement.

Kim and Brian are success stories. They clearly attribute their experiences in the outdoors to an increase in motivation, and to the developing of a sense of direction. Kim is now a ski instructor in Vermont, and on completion of high school (graduating in the spring of 1998) is attending Lyndon State College in Vermont where she will major in Outdoor Education. Her relationship with her family has improved as, much to her surprise, they have supported her plans for the future.

Brian became deeply interested in human impact on the wilderness environment on his outdoor course. In 1997, he designed and conducted an impact study to redesign Minimum Impact Wilderness Use Criteria for which he sought and received college credit. His cutting edge work will shortly be published on the Internet by Colorado College. He is now enrolled there, studying biology and wildlife ecology. Brian has pursued his interest in the outdoors as well, becoming an Emergency Medical Technician and attaining certification as a Wilderness Leader.

These results, while impressive, are not unusual. Research published by the Association of Experiential Education reveals some important facts about experiential education and in particular, outdoor education:

“Experiential Programs, programs designed to actively engage the student in the educational process, do have a significant, positive impact on the psychological, social, and intellectual development of the student.”

“The most significant pretest, post-test gains in self-esteem were registered by students in outdoor programs, both in comparison to other experiential programs and to their gains in the social and intellectual

dimensions of growth examined in this study. This suggests that intensive outdoor experience may have a particularly strong effect on self-esteem.”

“Students in experiential programs tend to show large, consistent changes toward more positive attitudes toward adults, while students in comparison groups showed an overall decline.”

Of all of the schools I have worked for, alternative schools are most able to create and implement these types of opportunities for their young people. Alternative schools are not bound by stifling schedules. They offer creativity and personalization unheard of in the “corporate school structure”.

Personally, I’ve experienced several examples of successful outdoor programs in schools. However, my favorite remains the first alternative school I initiated an outdoor program with: Shaker Mountain School, with facilities in Burlington and Starksboro, Vermont.

The program had a simple beginning: I took a group of kids on an autumn overnight camping trip in Starksboro during the 1976-77 school year. Gathered around the fire for a medley of jokes and ghost stories, the kids eventually became interested in and questioned me about my past outdoor training and experiences. As I described the Rocky Mountains of Wyoming, they became positively wistful; wanting to have the opportunity to experience them firsthand.

We explored the ideas of forming a group which would undergo some intensive training over the course of the year, and culminate their training in an expedition to the Rockies. Interestingly, almost all of these kids came from homes that were not terribly prosperous, and had never considered that such an opportunity might be within their reach. Over the next week, we worked out a plan for the course that involved some classroom instruction, some time outdoors, several shorter expeditions in the Green Mountains, and our Final Expedition in the Rockies. Together, and with the advice of other Staff members, we formulated a fund-raising plan that included raising cash through a raffle, and getting equipment donated from major suppliers.

May of 1977 saw our group, now christened the “Shaker Mountain Mountaineers”, driving west to Wyoming. We had a wonderful experience.

Why did this work so well? What were the gains? These were the greatest contributing factors:

- We had the support of the school’s administration. Though not familiar with outdoor education to any great extent, these administrators trusted the Staff and supported them in every educational endeavor.
- The entire program was driven by the interest and enthusiasm of students. Many had never even been outside of Vermont, so an expedition to a mountain range that was almost a fable to them was hugely exciting.

- On return, every single kid who'd been part of the training and expedition felt a huge sense of accomplishment and success. They had all successfully accomplished the actual training. They'd accomplished the challenge of pulling the culminating expedition together. And they'd successfully accomplished a myriad of outdoor challenges while on the expedition. This gave them a sense of empowerment they carried with them as a lasting effect of the program.

Outdoor Education programs can be designed and implemented in Alternative Schools with an approach that reaches deeply, and does it year after year.

If you already have a strong outdoor component to your school's program, none of the above is news to you. If you would like help in learning how to incorporate this experience into your school, contact me at WildQuest! Call 1-888-217-8226, or email me: wildquest@earthlink.net, or visit our website at: <http://home.earthlink.net/~wildquest/>

The challenges, beauty and authentic learning opportunities offered by our natural environment remain among the educator's most effective tools to excite and engage our young people today.

Albert's Archive

Editor's note: Albert Lamb will be doing a regular section in AERO-GRAMME. He is the Editor of Summerhill, a New View of Childhood. He was a student, staff member and parent of children at Summerhill and still lives in England. When Ena Neill, wife of Summerhill founder A.S. Neill died recently, he was asked to officiate at her funeral.

The day of the funeral turned out to be a beautiful one, the rain held off until the late afternoon. Well over a hundred people gathered, mostly old-Summerhillians, with representatives from every generation of the last fifty years, but also many Leiston friends, to give Ena a send off in the big barn of the Leiston Abbey. Then, after the trip to the cemetery, we had something to eat in an adjacent building. The whole set up around the abbey is used as a sort of conference centre. The service was entirely non-religious if you don't count the singing of one of Ena's favourite psalms at the start, The Lord is my Shepherd.

The local Suffolk funeral director ran the show in a very down-home manner. Zoe (Readhead, Ena's daughter and current Summerhill director) spoke a bit about death, mostly with quotes including a good one from Bertrand Russell. Ena's granddaughter Amy, who was married in the same barn a year ago, read a poem. I gave the tribute. A few hymns were sung, including Jerusalem and Morning Has Broken and the service ended with a CD of Louis Armstrong singing "What a Wonderful World."

The most touching moment of the whole event for me came later when Ena's

casket was lowered into the ground in the churchyard where Neill and Peter Wood (Ena's son from a previous marriage) are buried. Most of the people at the Abbey had driven over to pay last respects and as everyone stood around watching the casket being lowered a cat wandered amongst us and walked up and peered down into the hole where Ena's body had just been deposited. Ena loved cats and had a cat like spirit and it was spooky and wonderful to see her getting a feline send off.

Albert Lamb's Eulogy of Ena Neill

We are gathered here together to honor and to remember Ena Neill. For all of us from Summerhill School she is part of the glue that holds us together. Anyone who has attended Summerhill as staff or pupil during the last fifty years will have undoubtedly forgotten many people. But no one is likely to have forgotten Ena. She was an exceptional, extraordinary human being who brought great physical power and strength and enormous moral force to her complete focus on Summerhill and its children. Our Ena was one in a million.

Tenacity was one of Ena's strongest characteristics, so much so that I can now hardly believe she has finally let go her tenacious hold on life. More than that, it is hard to believe she has let go her hold on us. For we are her children and she was our mother hen. Surely even people her own age have felt her motherly quality and for us relative youngsters, whether she was seen as a good mother or a bad mother, she was the mother we could not avoid.

I should confess right at the start that I personally didn't have the easiest relationship with Ena, at least not recently. For several years I have stayed with her over in the Cottage when I have come to stay at the school. She very kindly let me have my own bedroom. I was a frequent visitor and I always looked forward to my time with her but there were some occasions when I hadn't even poked my head around her kitchen door before she started yelling at me about something or other.

It sometimes seemed to me that the price of real intimacy with Ena was a certain amount of this emotional wear and tear. I only know of one man who always seemed to stay on her good side and he had to do a lot of fancy footwork to manage the trick. However she did have a few old friends to whom she was uniformly kind. And my relationship with her was actually a very loving one.

If Ena was quick to express annoyance her deep heart was always strong and steady. In this she was very much a Summerhillian. Relationships here are played out against a background of complete acceptance. At the end of the day Ena accepted us all and really wished the best for us. She just didn't pretend to be liking us when she wasn't in the mood.

Having breakfast with Ena was like negotiating a minefield. If I was five minutes late or five minutes early I could get in trouble. She kept an eagle eye on how much water went into the teapot. The bread had to

be cut just so. There were always cats all over the table eating bits of rabbit and leaving their tails in the butter dish. On one terrifying occasion Ena surprised me with outraged indignation and her icy glare when she caught me sniffing some old milk in her fridge to see if it had gone off.

Even as a boy I thought Ena's eyes were extraordinarily expressive. When you came to get your food from the hatch you never knew if they were going to pierce or twinkle. Sometimes they even seemed half-lidded, like an owls. Then you didn't know what she was thinking. One time as a kid I snuck out in the middle of the night in complete secrecy but when I came to the breakfast hatch in the morning she shot a glance at me which told me that she knew all about it. How did she always know all those things?

When I was first a pupil at Summerhill, in 1961, I thought Ena was one of the hardest working women I had ever seen. Neill was the Headmaster but Ena ran the school and she did it mostly by working hard herself. Not that she seemed flustered or rushed. She was just a very capable and willing worker who made sure that the whole place stayed shipshape. It was an example of sacrifice and control that meant a lot to me years later when I had my own small children.

Her beloved son Peter would explain to kids what a difficult time Ena had had before she came to Summerhill. He would tell the story about how one time Ena came back to her rooms in London and found that her house was on fire. Rather than lose her wages which were hidden away up in her bedroom she climbed up through a smoke filled window to retrieve them.

Ena's first husband, Bill Wood, had grown up near her in Kent. They were childhood sweethearts. While Bill studied at art school to be an illustrator Ena studied nursing. Bill became quite successful as an illustrator and he married Ena in 1933. The next year they had their son Peter. When Peter was three Bill and Ena, who had read *That Dreadful School*, decided to put him on the waiting list at Summerhill and send him there the next year. Within a few more months Bill Wood had left Ena for his sister's best friend. Ena was left to fend for herself and for Peter. Bill Wood never took any further interest in Peter.

Ena went to work in a photographic reproduction studio in London and the next year she sent Peter to Summerhill. When the war started her reproduction studio was bombed out and her company kept moving around until the owner gave up on it. Ena was offered a job taking a friends children to America to live out the war and she wrote Neill to tell him that she was taking Peter out of the school. He wrote back that the school was moving to Wales and he said, "We need a cook. Can you cook?" The rest, as they say, is history.

Cooking, as it happens, and everything to do with food, was one of the great loves in Ena's life. Other great loves were her family, her school, and her animals. Ena not only had good taste in food but in many other things as well. She drew well and her paintings had a strong sense of colour. She loved fine furniture and all her rooms were well decorated.

other things as well. She drew well and her paintings had a strong sense of colour. She loved fine furniture and all her rooms were well decorated. She knew how to make a garden attractive and she loved flowers. If she had ever had the time for it she could have been a very good writer as she was the master of the pithy phrase.

Ena also showed her nurturing spirit with her pets. In later years Ena's cats had the run of the house. Previously she had had dogs. But she had a sure touch with all animals. One time Ena and Peter raised a jackdaw from a very young bird until it was a tame part of the household. Ena would come over in the morning to make breakfast for the school with Jackie perched on her shoulder.

In recent years I always landed at Summerhill with bags laden down with one thing or another. Ena thought the luggage that I brought with me was more than was necessary for the length of my stay. In fact she seemed to think there was something self-aggrandizing about carrying that much stuff around with me. When I arrived at the Cottage even if she didn't say anything she would stare in horror as I crossed her kitchen weighed down by all my luggage.

With Ena gone we have all lost a link to our past. Right to the end Ena had vivid memories of hundreds of her former pupils and staff. She kept her faith with us by never forgetting us. Without her will and her energy Summerhill would not be here today. She literally kept it alive. I, for one, will remember the tremendous moral force she had in her prime and her fine, strong voice shouting: "For crying out loud," at a room full of kids. And I will miss the Ena of her old age. There will be no one in my life now to care how heavy the bags are that I always seem to end up carrying around with me.

Interview with Mary Leue on the "Education Revolution" Radio Show

Jerry: Mary is the founder of the Free School in Albany and is also involved in several other projects. Mary, how long ago did you start the Free School?

Mary: 27 years ago; we're going into our 28th year.

Jerry: You're also involved with the publication called "The Journal of Family Life"; what do you do with them?

MARY: We hope to help families to empower themselves to take back some of the control over the lives of their children and the effects of various agencies - including medical, educational and financial - have over their lives. Even though life was tougher in the past, people did have more to say about their children and about their own lives.

JERRY: It must be kind of related to homeschooling, too.

MARY: Absolutely.

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Caller: (talks about homeschooling her own kids and about difficulties in

Sweden in regard to homeschooling and the government's control over education).

JERRY: Why don't you tell us what the "Journal of Family Life" is about?

MARY: Okay, the "Journal of Family Life" is a quarterly that we've been putting out in connection with the Free School Community for the purpose of empowering families to take back the kind of power that government wants to take away from you. We also do another quarterly which is focused entirely on children and their education called "SKOLE - The Journal of Alternative Education."

Caller:: OK. Is there any way I can get in touch with them for my friend in Sweden who helped us on the court case?

MARY: Certainly. It's Down to Earth Books, at 72 Phillips St., Albany, NY 12202.

Caller:: Great, this man that helped us with our case is a physicist there and he is the head or the president of the Free School Association of Sweden.

MARY: Oh that's wonderful. Do you know about the Danish Folk School? It's a long-standing tradition that goes way back historically and much more alive in Denmark, but there are also some in Sweden. It's also coming into this country.

JERRY: Yes, there is a folk school organization.

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JERRY: Mary, what is your title with the "Journal of Family Life?"

MARY: I'm the publisher of Down to Earth books and I'm one of the editors of "The Journal of Family Life."

JERRY: And I guess you've got other people from the Free School who are involved in putting it together.

MARY: Eight of us altogether. We get together three mornings a week and none of us is paid. We all have our own regular jobs in addition to that.

JERRY: Right. I want to talk about the Free School. Why did you start this school 27 years ago?

MARY: We'd been in England for a year; my husband was on sabbatical. We had a wonderful year and when we came back to Albany, my son Mark was going into fifth grade in public school. All five of my children had been in public school but he had some extraordinarily bad experiences.

Kindergarten, first grade, terribly harassed, over-aged teachers ready to retire and fundamentally disgusted with children, I think. Anyway, so he had a hard time. He got a teacher who should have retired some time ago. She was really up against it; she had over thirty kids. She was determined she was going to teach them long division, which Mark hated. He had this long division every night and had to do it all over again the next morning because none of the kids ever did it. This was nuts, so I homeschooled for a year. Another family with 3 kids who were in the same school Mark had been in in kindergarten and first grade came and joined mine and so we had this little school.

JERRY: Now, all those many years ago, what gave you the idea that you

could do this?

MARY: I had been teaching in a little private school down in Texas and I'd done my education courses but I don't think that's the core of being able to teach. I think the homeschooling movement makes that pretty clear. People who care deeply about their children, the quality of their lives, and want them to understand about the world are all going to do well, I think.

JERRY: Well, when you first started, did you know you were going to start a school? I guess it just sort of happened.

MARY: Well, yes and no. When I was a little kid, one of the things that happened to me was that I read Little Women and then Little Men and then Jo's Boys by Louisa May Alcott. At that time I said to myself, "I'm going to start a school!" But then it didn't happen until the sixties somebody gave me a copy of Summerhill and I went, "Oh, wow!" I talked with Neill a couple of times. He would always give me a little one line postcard in return.

JERRY: Neill, being A. S. Neill, the founder of Summerhill?

MARY: Right. I just got to thinking about schools and then with Mark, it just kind of came together naturally.

JERRY: Now, this school has a different philosophy than a lot of other schools. Among other things as I understand it, the kids are not required to go to classes and you make all your decisions democratically, is that right?

MARY: Right, that's right. I think people are sometimes afraid that what would happen if you did that is that kids would never want to learn again. But that's an artificial concept; children are naturally curious. If there's interesting stuff going on with interesting adults, and the children are drawn to it, then the new ones just fit themselves into it naturally and sort themselves out. We have a booming, buzzing school. There's so much going on all the time.

JERRY: Another unusual thing about your school is the way you finance it because it is a private school, and yet somehow you almost have no minimum tuition. How did you work that out?

MARY: Well, it's probably not a way of doing it that would be available to a great many people interested in starting a school, but a variant on it I think might be. What we decided to do instead of fund raising dinners and bake sales, raffles, and rummage sales - which we do anyway because the kids go on a lot of trips so they raise their own money and we have different projects that we raise money for - but that is in addition to the rockbottom income level that pays most of the salaries of our teachers. To be able to keep our tuition quite low is that we're in the inner city in Albany and when we moved there in '72, we bought an old parochial school and there was so much absentee landlording in that whole area that there were dozens of buildings uninhabited and uninhabitable. We bought them up for very little - we got a four story building just four doors up from the school itself for just \$1500. During the Free School romantic period,

young people, college dropouts, or people in their twenties came in. They heard about the school and came and we rehabbed these buildings ourselves. It's been a very exciting way to live.

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Caller:: I think the education system is deplorable due to lack of teacher enthusiasm. Teachers are missing kids with disabilities - learning problems - and they still pass them on to the next grade. maybe due to overcrowding in the schools, I don't know. But these teachers are really missing serious problems and the kids have bigger problems in the older grades. As a parent what can we do to intervene to wake up these teachers and the school system to the problems the kids are having?

MARY: The way the public schools run at this point is so entrenched with all kinds adjunctive institutions such as University Teacher Training Institutes; the concept of scientific verification of methods so that they're attempting to demonstrate their scientific viability; and the necessity to place student teachers in different school systems. It's a very political issue indeed, in fact, it's been compared to what President Eisenhower once called the "military industrial complex." It's a very tricky issue and I understand your concern. There's a movement to do something about it called the "inclusion movement" which is also a two-edged sword. In the Journal of Alternative Education I published an article based on a study by a group out in Stockton, California, on the positive and the negative effects of this inclusion movement which would do away with special education as a separate entity and incorporate these children into the regular classrooms. That might be out of the frying pan into the fire unless the quality of the teachers themselves - and they are as good as their training and their character - in other words you're working back into basics of how we do things, how we train people in schools, and so on.

JERRY: Mary, basically what you're saying is that you're not sure what the individual teacher can do on this, that there's a systemic problem.

MARY: Yes, teachers really do not have that much autonomy in doing what their natural instincts might tell them to do. They've got follow a prescribed curriculum, they've got to be accountable for the results to their principal and superintendent and the school board. And if the national standard for curriculum goes into effect, they'll have even less autonomy.

JERRY: There are a lot of people who think they can't homeschool because their kids have special needs, but I think that just the opposite is true. In a lot of cases, the parent is the best one to be able to meet those needs. What do you think about that?

MARY: Yes, I think by and large that is likely to be true. Even though the parents may not have all of the technical qualifications of trained professionals, they do have the personal connection and deep, deep concern for the welfare and the success of their children. And they're likely to reach out for adjunctive services if they feel that they're deficient in

some areas. I absolutely agree. It's not universally true, of course, there are some parents who are products of a bad environment themselves, and a bad school system themselves, and they may not always have the best ways of doing things. But just the same, they are their children, and that makes a big difference. I hate the idea of children being raised by strangers, which is essentially what we're doing. We're turning over our children's whole childhoods to strangers.

JERRY: How is your school different from that?

MARY: It is a school, but it's as close to being a family as a school can get to be and we do not separate ourselves from the families. The parents know that they are welcome, can walk in and feel comfortable and free to talk. Our parent teacher meetings are universally attended, we have lots of dinners and it's wall to wall people. It's a very open-hearted community institution where the artificial separations are minimal.

JERRY: I gather that you do a lot of stuff with your community itself. In other words, you go beyond the things that ordinary schools do. What is the Money Game?

MARY: It's something that I thought of years ago. When we were in Texas, my husband was teaching down there, we were members of a credit union. When I had my school going, none of us had any money so I said to myself, why can't we set up our own credit union? I first looked into what it would take to set up a regular thing and it was just too much. And this is what the money game really is. None of us had any money but we each had a monthly pledge maybe as low as \$5, and if it's a child, 50 cents. Then when enough money came together, we invested it in stocks and bonds. Why can't poor people have higher interest in investments? We now have \$120,000 that we hold jointly. It's all in our own account, you know, and we've been doing it since 1974.

JERRY: And you do the same thing with insurance, is that right?

MARY: Yes! Well, we do our own insurance. Liability was way, way up and doubled one year and we said that's it and then fire insurance finally got way beyond us. So we have an insurance fund; it may not do all that insurance does, but it's enough. And then we make loans to our own people. People can make home improvements or take vacations. We have a limited health insurance fund for teachers, dentistry and pregnancy.

JERRY: So you really established a community right there in the inner city that kind of circles around your school.

MARY: Right, and we're growing. It's a very nice way to live.

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JERRY: Okay, we have Roz from New York with a question for Mary. Where are you in New York?

Caller:: We're close to Middletown, New York, in Orange County. Mary, hi, I have a two-point question. First, can we come to visit your school because we're close enough to do that?

MARY: We love it. Unfortunately, from the point of view of visiting and

seeing the children actually doing school, you need to wait till fall because we had our graduation.

Caller:: Oh, are you operating offices in terms of information?

MARY: Oh, sure, we can do that. The school number is 518-434-3072. My number is 518-432-1578.

Caller:: The second question is how exactly did you finance the school?

Mary: As I started saying, and somehow, Jerry and I got off it, during the first four or five years of the school, we gradually bought these old buildings at public auctions and fixed them up, and we made these city row buildings with three to four apartments in each building. Each floor that we renovated we would rent out to a family. We are non-profit, and they allowed us to do that on a voluntary basis as long as the families were involved with the school. That worked out fine; and we now own 11 buildings, including one that Jerry helped us to get a grant for which is going to be a great asset. That pays over half of our tuition, you see.

JERRY: What kind of a program are you looking to start there, Roz?

Caller:: Well, we are looking at alternative schools. Actually, we were looking into charter schools, if possible, which is something that is talked about in other states.

JERRY: Yea, I just got a copy of the new bill that has been proposed - a new bill that's been proposed in New York State. You can contact us at the AERO office; the number is 800-769-4171.

Hi Jerry,

I've been finally enjoying my Fall issue of the Aero-Gramme. I'd like to find out if we can get your program on a network here in Tampa Florida. I'm in charge of creating the Feb. newsletter for our Homeschool Group and can inform everyone if it airs here. I finished reading Homeschooling for Excellence a few months ago and enjoyed your interview with David Colfax. I envy you for the time you were able to spend with him!!! Thank you for all that you do for we Homeschoolers and for spending time with such great people so that we can spend time with them through you!!! Your publication helps to keep me on track with my goals! Keep on doin' it! Sincerely,
Rachel Layman MZMT57C@prodigy.com

Ed note: Please ask your local talk radio station to carry our show!

Teachers, Jobs, and Internships

The Venice Community School is seeking teachers for the following programs: Discovery (ages 4 -7), Explorer (ages 8-13), and Mastery (ages 14-18). Responsibilities include program coordination, collaborative teaching in a student-directed environment and community building. Please write Amy Cooke, 31191 Road 180, Visalia, CA 93292 or call (209) 594-6704 or (209) 592-4999.

Gesundheit Institute is building an experimental hospital in an eco-village context in West Virginia in an effort to address health care delivery problems. They are looking for two teachers who would like to help create a school at the communal hospital. All staff will live at the facility. Contact Patch Adams, 6855 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22213.

Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School is in its second year with 105 children ages 8 to 16. The school is looking for an innovative educational leader with a history of successful leadership in a progressive school environment and proven experience in the development and implementation of project based curriculum, staff development and teacher evaluation. Send resume, statement of interest, and three letters of reference to: Ms. Nelia Decker, President MVPCS, PO Box 546, West Tisbury, MA 02575. Tel: 508-693-9900. Fax: 508-696-9008 or Rufus W. Peebles, P.O.Box 338 West Tisbury, Mass. 02575

The Department of Education of Antioch New England Graduate School is accepting applications for three full-time faculty positions. These positions will begin July 1, 1998. Anyone interested should contact Antioch for more information on each of the positions at 40 Avon Street, Keene, New Hampshire 03431-3516. Tel: 603-357-3122.

The November 1997 News: Schools for Tomorrow reported that the Children's Village School (Moo Ban Dek) in Thailand is looking for an English teacher to work there for a year. There is no salary, but board and lodging are provided. Contact the school at telephone number 0171-487-3139.

The Renaissance School is a small, progressive elementary school in Lakeland FL. Lakeland is between Tampa and Orlando. The school is a public charter school. The school has an immediate opening for a "Master Teacher" to teach a small mixed-age class of K-2 graders. Annual salary: \$26,000 + benefits. E-mail Jean for more information, or fax your resume to (941)701-1046. Applicants should be degreed and have experience in a progressive teaching environment (learner-directed, student-paced, authentic assessment). Jean Bias, bias@gate.net

Chuck Estrin sent us this: Long established, academically focused small Seattle Public High School that values shared decision-making and personalized education seeks passionate teachers certified in math, LA, science, or social studies. Minorities encouraged to apply. Contact: chuck@novaproj.org <http://www.novaproj.org> The Nova Project, 2410 E. Cherry St. Seattle, WA 98122 Phone: 206-726-6730

There's a sudden spurt of enthusiasm for a new school - about eight families of 5 to 6 year olds are eager to begin PR campaign for other families and staff person. So, "Future Maui (Hawaii) Sudbury model school

wants interested families and staff persons." More later-----much love, Liz Wertheim, liz@maui.net

We have an opening at the Community School for a weekend/ camping trip, outdoorsy kind of person who likes teenagers, and is willing to work in a mostly consensus based decision model among the faculty with 8 former high school dropouts, in a residence in Camden Maine. The School has been going for 24 years now, and we are a fascinating and challenging place to work. Pay starts at about \$16,000 with benefits. Please send resume' to Lauri Donleavy, the Community School Box 555, Camden, Maine 04843, 207-236-3000 email Lauri at cschool@community.pvt.k12.me.us

Teachers Looking for Jobs in Alternative Schools

Katie O'Connor is interested in learning about alternative schools, visiting them, doing internships, and eventually finding or founding a school at which she would feel comfortable, happy, and challenged. She graduated in 1996 with a BA in anthropology from Pennsylvania State. She would especially like to learn more about Summerhill School or others like it. Please write to her at 417 Brookway Rd., Merion, PA 19066.

A substitute teacher with 10 years public and private school experience is looking for a full-time position, particularly in an alternative school. Farrell Winter has taught students ages 3 to 18 and is willing to relocate. He can be reached at Box 11, Graton, CA 95444. Tel: 707-829-3763.

Philip Ross has developed an innovative curriculum called World Music in Schools that teaches young people how to perform rhythm music while learning about the music and lifeways of cultures around the World. The program integrates performing arts and social studies, along with science, math, and instrument making, to provide a full appreciation of the world of music. Philip Ross has a B. A. in Anthropology and has been offering his program in schools for the past seven years. He is currently seeking a teaching position or internship, in an alternative school in the San Francisco Bay Area. Philip Ross 5521 Volkerts Rd. Sebastopol, CA 95472 707-823-0369, songo1@pacbell.net

A quite willing, able and promising addition to your free school/ alternative school staff. Montessori teaching experience. Unschooling network/resource center volunteer - (Genius Tribe-Eugene, Or) Various tutoring of high school and middle school students. Mary Simons, (203)261-3685. 21 Fuller Road, Trumbull, CT 06611

From Marjohna K. Madsen: I am a teacher looking for alternative school employment opportunities. I live in Colorado now but will be relocating to Utah within the year. While I was studying education at Brigham Young

University I was very interested in alternative education and I am excited to find your page. Good job! marjohna@compuserve.com

From John Ivens: I am a social studies teacher at an at-risk charter school in Middleton, WI. Alas, the school I teach at is not as innovative as I would have hoped coming out of my second year of teaching. Does anyone have any teaching openings for a dynamic social studies teacher who wants to focus on learning (like the progressive schools of the '30's)? 2098 Springdale Ctr.Rd., Verona, WI 53593; or guano26@hotmail.com

Joe Darak is a graduate of Duquesne University with PA certification in secondary social studies. He is looking for employment in an alternative school. "As a teenager, they threw me out of high school for leading a student democracy movement. As an adult certified teacher I'm still at it. I prefer a rural setting but will consider relocating anywhere. " 777 1/2 Chestnut St., Coraopolis, PA, 15108. Ph: 412 269-2694.

I am looking for alternative views on education and life in general. Also, always open to a new teaching job. Mark D. Wise, mwise@mail.acps.k12.va.us

I am doing some research about Alternative high schools for at-risk students. I have recently moved to Massachusetts from Canada and was working at an Alternative program in Nepean, Ontario. I'd love to continue working with those students, in a nontraditional setting. Sharyn M. Sweeney, teachsms@usa.net

I'd like to introduce myself, give you some background about myself and tell you what I'm looking for. I teach at the Democratic School of Hadera in Israel. After 16 years of living here, my wife and I have decided to return to the United States. I am looking for work in education, particularly in an alternative framework. At the Democratic School I teach English (all ages) and work as a "tutor" or personal counselor for students ages 11-19. For the past five years I've also led an adventure-based education course, using adventure exercises in an outdoor setting to promote learning at a multitude of levels. I've also done successful fundraising for the school, mostly by writing proposals and developing projects. This year I chair the school's field trip and camping committee and just finished a course in mediation as part of the school's mediation committee. In the past I've worked extensively in Jewish-Arab relations, and currently am very active in the school's cooperative projects with Palestinians. I am an American citizen, fluent in English, Hebrew and Spanish (I grew up in Puerto Rico) and have a pretty decent grasp of spoken Arabic. I was trained as a medic during my obligatory service with the Israeli army. I have two small children, Tenara, almost 5 and Devin, 2 and a half. My wife, Joanie, is a darn good music teacher. If anyone out there has any suggestions, ideas or leads as to possible employment opportunities, please drop me a line at the email address listed. All

responses will be deeply appreciated. Douglas and Joanie Calem
dcc@actcom.co.il

Brad Kose writes, "I am seeking employment in a holistic public school as an elementary teacher and willing to travel nearly anywhere. I am interested in schools especially for low socioeconomic children, and in the Pacific Northwest. Anyone have any leads? In regards to holistic education, has anyone read Ken Wilber and considered the implications of his work? kose.1@osu.edu
Columbus, Oh, 151 E. Oakland Ave, Columbus, OH 43201 Ph: 614 421-9328

Michelle Senzon recently graduated from Prescott College, an alternative liberal arts, environment based school in Arizona with an Early Education/Alternative Education degree. She is looking for work in New York and/or Long Island this summer from May through September in an excellent early childhood camp, school or program. Please contact her by e-mail at chellbee@hotmail.com or 1980 Sherwood Dr. Prescott, Az 86303.
Tel: 520-772-8930

Also, see Alberto Alegre, under International section, SPAIN.
Conferences

June 12-14, Los Angeles, CA, The Link 2nd Annual KID COMFORTABLE Homeschool Conference at the Westlake Hyatt Hotel, 50 miles northwest of Los Angeles. John Taylor Gatto, David & Micki Colfax, Sam Blumenfeld, Pat Farenga from Growing Without Schooling, Dr. Pat Montgomery from Clonlara. Early registration fee is \$59 per couple if paid by 3/1/98. Admission price for kids 5-15 is only \$5 no matter when. Under 5 is free. 805/492-1373 or e-mail hompaper@gte.net.

April 15-19, Dartington Hall, Devon, England, Learning for Sustainable Living, Lyn Brown, Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon England TQ9 6EL, 01803 866688, E mail: dart.hall.prog@dartingtonhall.org.uk

April 22-25, Glenmoore, PA, 23rd Annual National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools Conference, Upattinas School, 429 Greenridge Rd, Glenmoore, PA 19343, 610 458-5138

April 23-24, Indian Lakes Resort, Chicago, IL, Professional Learning Communities at Work, Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement, National Education Service, 1252 Loesch Rd, PO Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402-0008, 800 733 6786, e Mail: nes@nes.org

April 28-may 2, Sheraton Meadowlands Hotel, East Rutherford, NJ, 16th Annual International Conference of Magnet Schools of America, Dr. Donald Waldrip, PO Box 8152, The Woodlands, TX 77387, 281 296-9813, e mail:

director@magnet.edu

May 1-2, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma's 1998 Home Educators Convention, PO Box 270601, Oklahoma City, OK 73137, 405 521-8439

May 22-26, Grapevine, Texas, Rethinking Education, Speakers John Taylor Gatto, Jeannine Parvati-Baker, James Loewen, Mark Wahl, Cafi Cohen, Bob Philban, Michael Fogler, Jim Weiss and Marian Henley. Sponsored by MINDFULL--Exploring Old Ideas in Brave New Ways. www.flash.net/~lisadahl or e-mail source@flash.net or call 817-540-6423

June 25-27, Orange, California, 1998 International Alternative Education Conference, Chapman University, Sponsored by LEARN and the Orange County Department of Education, Yvette Rosevear, International Alternative Education Conference Information, 16490 Harbor Blvd., Suite B, Fountain Valley, CA 92704, e mail: susan_condrey@code.k12.ca.us 916 322-5012

July 10-12, Boxborough, MA, Homeschool and Family Learning Conference, PO Box 1056, Gray, ME 04039, 207 657-2800

July 19-21, 1998, Chicago, IL, Future Quest: Strategies for the New Millennium, World Future Society, 7910 Woodmont Ave, Suite 450, Bethesda, MD 20814, 800-989-8274

July 30-August 2, 1998, Washington, DC, National Coalition of Education Activists Conference, PO Box 679, Rhinebeck, NY 12572

August 7-8, Burlington, VT, Shaker Mountain School 30 Year Reunion, Madelin Colbert, 25 Greenwood Dr, Colchester, VT 05448, 802 860 4889.

August 7-8, Livonia, MI, Homeschool and Family Learning Conference. PO Box 1056, Gray, ME 04039, 207 657-2800.

August 15, "Homeschooling For Everyone" 1998 Colorado Conference, Teikyo Loretto Heights University, 3001 S. Federal, Denver, CO. Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Education Connection, email: connect@pcisys.net, <http://www.pcisys.net/~dstanley/>

October 25-6, Vichy, France, Annual Meeting of Les Enfants d'abord, Brigitte Guimbal, 474 Chemin de Font Cuberte, 06560 Valbonne, France, E mail: bguimbal@aol.com, Ph: 04 93 12 93.49

AERO Books, Videos, Subscription, Ordering Information

Note: You can now order by credit card by calling 800 769-4171 !

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*GREEN REVOLUTION, the newsletter of the School of Living
AERO-GRAMME readers can become members of the School of Living and get a subscription to the Green Revolution for half price. The SOL is a 60 year old organization which pioneered the environmental protection movement, consumer protection, and is involved with land trust and communities movements, and is the sponsor of AERO. \$10_____

AUDIOCASSETTES:

New! \$5 each! The tapes from our new show, The Education Revolution on the TalkAmerica Network are now available. The shows we have on tape now are #2:Homeschoolers Leni and Anthony Santoro. She talks about a lending

library of educational games and toys she has developed. #3 Live from Youth Summit, in MA, Chris Kawicki a Hampshire College graduate starting a new school in VT, and with a Berea College student. #4. Live from NCACS conference in Chicago. Interviews with Marvin Garcia about Pedro Albizu Campos School, and with a teacher at Clonlara School #5 Steve Boncheck of Harmony School in Indiana. #6: John Potter, founder of the New School of Northern VA # 7 Mary Leue, founder of the Free School in Albany #8: Andy Smallman, founder of Puget Sound Community School, Seattle #9: Interview with Professor Margit Watts, expert on educational uses of Internet #10 Mary Adams and Andy Shaffer, who raised their children using Doman concepts #11: Joanna Camp, about remineralizing the Earth, and Ron Miller, editor of Great Ideas in Education #12: Joe Weber of Contra Costa Alternative School #13 Les Garber of Horizons School, Atlanta #14: Elaine Young, about the NYS Charter bill #15: David Colfax, CA homeschooler #16: Mike Denisenko, Graduate of School Within a School, Brookline, MA #17 \$5 each_____

VIDEOS

(Note: An AERO intern has recently begin cataloging AERO's extensive video library of educational alternatives and conferences, with over 150 done so far. Let us know if you would like a list of the ones done to date.)

*22 Minute video of the FRENCH-AMERICAN ALTERNATIVE CAMP at Theleme School, in the French Pyrenees \$10 _____

*2 hour video of the DEMOCRATIC SCHOOLS CONFERENCE at HADERA SCHOOL, in Israel, April 1996. Includes tour of Hadera School.....\$25 _____

*7 Country trip to Europe and Russia, Including European Forum for Freedom in Education Conference, Democratic Schools Conference in Vienna, Eureka Avant Garde, in Ijevsk, Russia, School of Self-Determination, Moscow International Film School, Brockwood Park Krishnamurti School, Herman Jordan Montessori School, Theleme School \$20_____

CONTACT AERO FOR VIDEOS OF OUR OTHER RUSSIAN TRIPS

*SUMMERHILL VIDEO:

Two videos in one: the 1990 International Alternative School Conference at Summerhill, with interviews of Summerhill students and alumni, as well as vivid footage of the Summerhill end of term celebration. Also, Summerhill's 70th anniversary celebration in August, 1991, featuring more alumni interviews, and a Summerhill democratic meeting. We also have a 1995 tape of Sands School and Summerhill \$25_____

*Nellie Dick and the Modern School Movement:

A fascinating two hour interview with a 96 year old pioneer in the

alternative education movement. Born in the Ukraine of Jewish anarchist parents in 1893, she started anarchist schools in England back in 1908, went to the United States in 1917 to teach at the Modern School, in New Jersey, based on the work of Francisco Ferrer, and taught at and ran Modern Schools until 1958. Her son Jim, who was a student at the Modern Schools and is now a 70 year old pediatrician is also interviewed. There are also excerpts from the Modern School reunion in 1989 which featured the Spanish Modern Schools. \$25_____

*Transcript of Nellie Dick and the Modern School! \$5_____

CONTACT AERO FOR FOUR OTHER MODERN SCHOOL VIDEOS

*DEMOCRATIC MEETINGS:

A two-hour tape of demonstrations of various democratic meetings, including one at Summerhill, a meeting of Russian students at the New Schools Festival in the Crimea (translated into English), a demonstration meeting with Long Island homeschoolers, age 4-13, a meeting setting up a democratic system for an "at risk" public high school alternative, and a democratic meeting at a public "choice" high school. \$25_____

*CODE CRASH--For quickly learning the Morse Code
Hundreds sold! This is a tape in which two 12 year old homeschoolers, a boy and a girl, each learn the Morse code by our unique copyrighted association method, in less than 20 minutes each. People interested in getting their amateur radio license will be amazed. It works. We guarantee it. You'll learn it. Show to a whole class. Recently glowingly reviewed in Growing Without schooling " We were all amazed and impressed with ourselves that we suddenly knew the whole Morse code in an hour." \$20_____

*HOMESCHOOL RESOURCE CENTERS

A video of a homeschool resource center, featuring the Snakefoot Education Center, at Common Ground Community. This is a group of families that created a center in which 15 homeschooled children meet three times a week. They also hired a resource person.

\$20_____

*Two WPIX TV shows about Homeschooling and Alternative Education.

In the first, Jerry Mintz introduces alternatives in the tri-state area, with on site visitation of the Long Island Homeschoolers, and Manhattan Country School. In the second, Jerry and two homeschoolers are grilled by WPIX interviewer in the studio. One homeschooler started because her son had cancer, and the schools refused to teach him. She homeschooled, and when he was cured, returned to find he had passed his class. If you want, we'll ad the interview with Jerry Mintz and Jenifer Goldman on CBS Up to the Minute, in which they discusses their books. 25_____

*GABRIELLE SHOW, November 1995 A one hour video aired nationally on the

FOX Network, featuring homeschooling and a homeschool resource center, with public and homeschooled children, and Jerry Mintz debating with a public school union representative. \$25_____

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LOYO AERO is on NPR's Talk of the Nation

In early February a call came in from National Public Radio, in Washington, DC. They wanted to do a story on alternative education on Talk of the Nation, and had found our web site. The pointed out that this was not yet definite, and they also wanted to get somebody else on the show who would be a proponent of traditional public school education, to get an opposing point of view. .It was to be a full hour, live, call-in show.

I was enthusiastic about the idea, but I has a couple of concerns. One was that I didn't want to set a debate format between myself and the traditional public school proponent. What I really wanted was to present the idea that this is a spectrum, and that alternatives are choices which parents need to know about. Secondly, I asked that we be able to give some contact information, so that people looking for alternatives be able to call AERO.

These concerns seemed to annoy the NPR representative. She said that she would call be after she had talked to her producer, but that she didn't think that we'd be able to give that information because "national Public Radio can't give out any commercial announcements." I pointed out to her that AERO is anon-profit, and in order to do our job properly, people would

need to be able to contact us. She said she would call back by the end of the day, however she did not call back, and I was afraid that I had blown it.

After the weekend she called again, and the show was on! Furthermore, they said that I would be able to give contact information for AERO, our 800 number and web site. The other person on the show was to be Clara Hempill, author of *The Parents' Guide to New York City's Best Public Schools*.

National Public radio doesn't want to interview by telephone, and arranged for us to go to their studio in New York City. On February 5th I went to Second Avenue and 42nd Street. Ray Suarez, the host of the show, was in their Washington studio, and interviewed us from there.

After 20 minutes of interviews, the phone lines were thrown open, and we responded to many interesting calls. At the very end of the show I was able to give contact numbers.

After the show there were so many calls to AERO that even the busy signals for the 800 number were overwhelmed and gave some people the message that the number was out of order. For the next several days the phone hardly stopped ringing. We gave out all sorts of information, signed up lots of new subscribers and sold many copies of the Almanac. This was graphic illustration of the tremendous interest that there is in educational alternatives, if only we can find the way to tell people about them.

Of course, our weekly radio show on the Talk America network continues every Sunday at 9 PM EST. If all of our readers would contact their local talk station and ask them to carry the show, we would have even more impact. There are about 35 stations around the country that are carrying the show now. It can also be heard on the Internet at www.realaudio.com and www.talkamerica.com. If you do contact a local station and they are interested, have them call the AERO 800 number for more information, 800 769-4171, or call us yourself, and we'll follow up. Also, call us if you would like a copy of the NPR show.

get an opposing point of view. I was nervous about the idea, but I had.

These concerns seemed to annoy the NPR representative. She said that she would talk to them. Furthermore, they said that we National Public Radio New York City. On February 5th we that the number was out of order a lot of, the Education Revolution. Here are some of them: KZNG AM, Hot Springs, AR, KUKI AM, Ukiah, CA, WYOO FM, Springfield, FL, WIEL AM, Elizabethtown, KY, KEEL AM, Shreveport, LA, WKMI AM, Kalamazoo, MI, KLID AM, Poplar Bluff, MO, KDRG AM, Deer Lodge, MT, KICA AM, Clovis, NM, WIOI AM, New Boston, OH, KBNP AM, Portland, OR, WMTN AM, Morristown, TN, WREL AM, Lexington, VA, WIGM AM, Medford, WI, WRNR AM, Martinsburg, WV. KGAB AM, Orchard Valley, WY.

Our sponsors now include Antioch College, Goddard College, Clonlara Home Based Education Program, the Resource Center for Redesigning Education, and the Consortium of Innovative Boarding Schools, which AERO

; nity School is sponsoring a day-Tuesday, th in Augusta, on Charter Schools- ain, 8 - 2:30. For more informationu who are interested to come. ion for a strong and effective charter-school bl Elements of Effective Charter- It may not charge tuition. , ice. It is actively chosen by w may let the founders its board. There is real site-e student. This amount tra funds for students from low-in state retirement programs.

This list was developed by Minnesota State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge, Ted Kolderie, and Joe Nathan. For further information, contact the Center for School Change, Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota, 301 19th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55455, (612) 626-1834. For more information, see Charter Schools, by Joe Nathan, published by Jossey Bass (800) 956-7739. 780 charters have been created:, ,c. 1994 - 59 schools,, ,.

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\rivate schools, or started homeanother form of public school, cpetitive pressures is become,to succeed. From my work with substance abuse prevention,mply put, students and familiesr capabilities. A system of charter schoolsthese niches, both through the c,tween conventional schools and c.itors. He sent me the following note:', and professional-looking-- Her mom and dad had divorced, and mhad no sense of self-direction.se kids represent a small cross-or 19 days on a Rocky Mountain wedition in the Absaroka Range in their experience, and perhaps all outdoor education, was the fear-courage-tis central to wilderness life: fallenge that seems overwhelming; cport, the challenge is engaged; and tto r experiences in the outdoorscrease in motivation, and in their developingon. Kim is now a ski instruct in Vermont, and after completing in the spring of 1998,ermont where she will major in outdoor e the t on the wilderness environment In 1997 ed an impact study to redesign minimum impact wilderness use c,ved college credit. His cutting- ell, becoming an emergency medical td attaining certification as a wilderness l, “Experiential p-e “corporate

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