

Report on the Research Institute for Waldorf Education

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The past year at the Research Institute for Waldorf Education and Waldorf Publications was filled with exciting new opportunities and challenges, most notably in advancing the Qualitative Meta Research project, described on page 55 of this issue, and exemplified by the studies conducted by Jason Child and Nettie Fabrie (see pages 56-63).

Waldorf Publications

For the past eleven years, one of our key goals has been to get our literature more recognized and circulated beyond the North American Waldorf community. Support from Waldorf schools, who started Waldorf Publications in 1987, through the Book Bank program is extremely helpful in this area. Waldorf Publications has been working to expand its readership and develop markets beyond our immediate community. Last January, we joined a group called Faire, which is a platform to assist “Main Street” stores with their purchasing and marketing as well as helping titles and publishers find their way to small store fronts. Through this platform we have connected to 20 retail stores in the United States and in Canada. Our hope in this is to spread information about Waldorf education as far and wide as possible and to build support for RIWE.

High on the list of WP’s recent accomplishments is publishing volume 2 of Nana Göbel’s brilliantly written *History of Waldorf Education Worldwide, volume 2, 1945 to 2019*. Nana took on volumes 2 & 3 of the original German edition and rewrote it substantially to create a single volume for the English version. Volumes 1 & 2 of the English edition now comprise the complete 100-year history of Waldorf education worldwide.

Also among significant completions is the last book in the series of *Play! Recorders in the Classroom*. This final volume completes the series of five volumes (grade by grade, starting with grade 3) with two books in each volume: one is a teacher’s guide and the other is almost nothing but music for students to play, with many songs chosen to support the curriculum for each grade. With the whole series completed, there is nothing like it anywhere else! Teachers can now proceed with stepwise guidance on how to introduce and play recorder with a

class, as well as mastering a musical instrument themselves, right along with their students.

In addition, Michael Holdrege’s much awaited book, *Embryology, Genetics, and Ecology: Windows into the Dynamic Nature of Living Organisms*, will be on its way to schools soon. Teaching life sciences in eleventh and twelfth grade is made lively and fulfilling as Michael leads the way on “how to do it.”

RIWE’s annual Board of Trustees meeting (2024)

took place in Harlemville, New York, and Sheffield, Massachusetts. The gathering included an expanded meeting with educators from several walks of life, who assembled to discuss important questions about the future of education and the preoccupation with testing as a limited assessment tool for decisions about how students are faring.

Lastly, take a look at RIWE’s Online Waldorf Library (OWL) re-born!

Marianne and Dave Alsop, with their technology team, have refurbished the OWL, and it is now not only able to accommodate the increasing volume of wonderful resources, but it is beautifully replete with illuminations from the work of students from many Waldorf schools! The OWL comprises our most potent platform for reaching beyond our own borders into the world. Last year, 637,000 hits were recorded on the OWL – an average of 1,750 per day, or roughly one each minute. Among the 105,000 active users are residents of Central and South America, as well as Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, and other Asian countries. How Marianne and company managed to sustain this level of activity with only a few days offline to complete the reconstruction of the entire collection remains one of life’s mysteries — is a miracle!