

2015–2016 ANNUAL REPORT FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS

We would like to provide you with a picture of the thriving life and activity of our Waldorf Early Childhood Association in 2015-16. Thanks to the generous sharing of resources and talents from our growing numbers of individual and organizational members, board members, regional representatives, committee members, volunteers and friends, and the capable work of our professional staff, WECAN has expanded its activities in service of the development of Waldorf early childhood education on our continent. Thank you for your support!

Highlights of the Year 2015-16

Membership

Our total organizational membership reached 500 this year – 52 Developing Members, 136 Full Members, 7 Registered Initiatives in Mexico and 12 Teacher Education Institutes. WECAN had 470 Individual Members this during this time.

WECAN organizational membership includes home programs, as both Developing and Full Members. We welcome home programs and were especially pleased that among our new Developing Members in 2015-16, four programs fall into this category.

New Developing Members: City School - Lake Balboa, CA; Mountaintop School - Saugerties, NY; Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton – Edmonton, AB, Canada; Windsong School - Spokane, WA.



Photos: Malamalama Waldorf School, Kea'au, HI; Apple Blossom School & Family Center, Wilton, CT.

New Full Members: Apple Blossom School & Family Center, Wilton, CT; Berkeley Rose School, Berkeley, CA; Great Oak School, Tomball, TX; Ithaca Waldorf School, Ithaca, NY; Malamalama Waldorf School, Kea'au, HI; Neighborhood Playgarden, San Francisco, CA; Sandpoint Waldorf School, Sandpoint, ID; Sea Star Initiative, Boca Raton, FL; Upper Valley Waldorf School, Quechee, VT.

This was a busy year for membership in WECAN as well as the final year for our Membership Coordinator, Nancy Foster, from Washington, D.C., who retired at the end of the school year. Nancy guided, developed and refined our membership processes since 2010 and was in touch with many of our members along the way. She is very much appreciated; her work enriched and strengthened our movement. We are very grateful that she will continue to serve on our Membership Committee!



Early Childhood Teacher Education

The WECAN Teacher Education Committee oversees the institute membership processes for WECAN and supports institutes and early childhood trainers in their work in new, developing institutes and established programs. There are currently twelve Member Early Childhood Teacher Education Institutes. In October, Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto became the first Full Member institute to participate in a joint Self-Study and Peer Visit by WECAN and AWSNA. One Developing Member training center completed its renewal process: Alkion Center for Adult Education in Harlemville, NY.

The Teacher Education Committee circulated Birth to Three Training Guidelines, developed through the WECAN Birth to Three Task Force, to member institutes. It is the hope that these guidelines will stimulate discussion among colleagues involved in early childhood education and encourage the addition of this increasingly important area of our work with young children to existing core curriculum.

WECAN Conferences and Regional Gatherings

The WECAN Early Childhood Conference was held from February 7-9, 2016 in Spring Valley, NY, the third and final conference on the theme of “Nurturing the Sense of Life and Wellbeing in Children and the Adults Who Care for Them”. The keynote speaker was Barbara Baldwin, a curative educator from Australia, who spoke on “Point and Periphery: Towards a Deeper Understanding of the Nature and Disturbances of the Senses”. Attended by 380 participants, this major professional development event also included puppetry and eurythmy performances, workshops, work-alike sessions and mini-sessions.

In addition, regional WECAN gatherings and conferences took place throughout North America, including the following:

TMSCR Regional Gathering - Jan. 9, 2016 at Shining Mountain Waldorf School, Boulder, CO. “The Eilersiek Hand Gesture Work,” with guest presenter Kristina Parow from Stuttgart, Germany, Lynn St. Pierre and other guests. Hand gesture games from birth-to-three and the kindergarten were presented.

Northwest WECAN Conference - February 12-14, 2016 at Cedarwood Waldorf School, Portland, OR. Laurie Clark was the keynote speaker on the theme, “To Enkindle the Soul of Another: A Format for Child Observation,” continuing the region’s exploration into constitutional imbalances in young children, reflecting on their movements, senses and behaviors as well as other aspects (including the study of children’s drawings) that can guide a healing response.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Gathering - “Continuing to Create Ways to Tame the Media Monster,” March 12, 2016 at Meadowsweet Early Childhood Center (on the grounds of Beaver Run Special School), Glenmoore, PA. Carol Grieder from Green Meadow Waldorf School presented her school’s highly respected media curriculum policy and their approach to parent education on this topic.

Northeastern Regional Gathering - April 16, 2016, at the Hartsbrook School, Hadley, MA. This gathering was a facilitated conversation about the life sense. Workshops included circle work for two and three year olds (with Michelle Brooks) and making spring tissue paper transparencies (with Ronja Elliston).

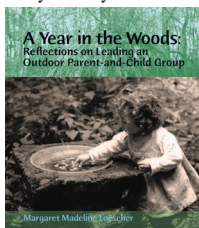
WECAN Publications

In addition to the twice-yearly Gateways newsletter, WECAN published the following books in 2015-16:

Play With Us: Social Games for Young Children

by Freya Jaffke, translated by Nina Kuettel

With games for indoors and outdoors, building skills and dexterity as well as for the pure joy of play, this small but rich collection will soon be an essential part of every early childhood educator’s toolkit.



A Year in the Woods: Reflections on Leading an Outdoor Parent-and-Child Group

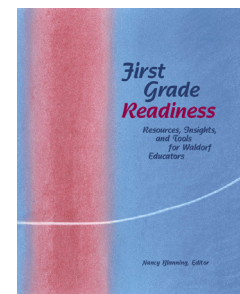
by Margaret Madeline Loescher

Reflections on the changing seasons and the relationship between human beings and the natural world are accompanied by crafts, poems, and songs appropriate to each time of year.

First Grade Readiness (Second Edition)

edited by Nancy Blanning

Guidance from experienced teachers, doctors, and therapists on the nature and needs of the child between six and seven is provided by this book. Focus is upon observing children for signs of school readiness and creating a healthy transition from kindergarten to the grades. This revised edition includes new material and updated versions of the sample observation forms.



Nøkken: A Garden for Children (Second Edition)

by Helle Heckmann

WECAN is pleased to present a new edition of this classic book, first published in 2003 to celebrate Nøkken, an inspiring Waldorf kindergarten in Denmark. The newly corrected and expanded 2016 edition includes an updated list of resources, a new bibliography, and selections from the original.

Guidelines for Observing School Readiness (Brochure)

Suggestions to help early childhood educators and parents consider the developmental readiness of the whole child for grade school enrollment. Signs of physical and soul readiness are described, and areas of concern identified. The guidelines look widely and deeply at questions of human development, honoring the individuality of each child.



The WECAN Board

The WECAN Board added two new members in 2015-16 – Adrienne Doucette from Bellingham, WA and Heather Church from Toronto, ONT – and said goodbye to Trisha Lambert from Davis, CA. The fall board meeting took place in Spring Valley, NY, with an opportunity to meet with the WECAN Staff and committee members, and the spring meeting took place on Whidbey Island, which allowed board members to visit WECAN member programs in Washington State and to have a regional meeting with colleagues in the Seattle area.



The 2015-2016 WECAN Board - left to right: Susan Howard, Holly Koteen Soulé, Magdalena Toran, Nancy Blanning, Louise deForest, Heather Church, Adrienne Doucette, Ruth Ker. Absent: Patricia Lambert.

Content of the Board meetings always looks to the quality of social life between colleagues and with parents as well as administrative and financial matters. Specialities in Waldorf early childhood are becoming more prominent as groups in programs are designated as birth-to-three, parent-child, toddler, nursery, pre-school, and kindergarten. How to support work in each of these areas while also holding a whole and inclusive picture of development from birth-to-7 is also a thread that weaves through every WECAN board meeting.

Reaching Out into the World

WECAN released a series of six short videos on What Do Today's Children Need - Waldorf Early Childhood Education. Produced by filmmaker and former Waldorf parent, Tom Klitus, the videos feature Waldorf early childhood classrooms in rural, suburban and urban settings, with a focus on the qualities featured in our recently produced and very popular brochure on Waldorf Early Childhood Education.

WECAN formed a fledgling WECAN Public Policy Task Force; Susan Howard was joined by Sarah Arnold, founder/director of WECAN Member Evergreen Playgarden in Massachusetts. The task force and WECAN board members are committed to developing the capacities needed for WECAN to engage in the wider educational debate, both at the policy level and as a voice for healthy child development in general.

Susan Howard gave a presentation at the annual convention of policymakers and officials from US registry offices in Orlando, Florida, in September 2015, and joined together with leaders of the



left to right: Susan Howard, WECAN Coordinator; Alison Lutton, Senior Advisor for NAEYC; Dr. Rebecca Pelton, President of the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE); Mary O'Connell, LifeWays Training Coordinator, and Dr. Kimberlee Belcher-Badal, MACTE Vice-President for State Relations.

NAEYC, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and LifeWays movements to make a plea for recognition of our “alternative” early childhood teacher education credentials. The Montessori Education Teacher Accreditation Council (MACTE) president reflected after the meeting that “the overarching outcomes of this activity both moved mountains and made history.”

International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE)

WECAN is one of 32 Member country and multi-country Associations in IASWECE. Louise DeForest and Susan Howard continued to represent WECAN on the IASWECE Council, which met in October 2015 in Tiv'on, Israel, and April 2016 in Krakow, Poland. Some of the key issues the Council identified and worked on in 2015-16 include the following:

- **the importance of sleep and movement for the child from birth to three. (This is being taken up by the birth to three group).**
- **gender fluidity and transgender children, and working with boys and girls in the kindergarten.**
- **working with migrant and refugee children.**

IASWECE also collaborated with the Pedagogical Section on processes for granting permission to use the names “Waldorf” and “Steiner” around the world, further articulated guidelines for early childhood teacher education, and established the “Essentials for Steiner/Waldorf Care and Education for the Child from Birth to Three”. IASWECE also moved its legal seat from Sweden to Switzerland. Further details are available at www.iaswece.org.

Support for International Projects

WECAN supports the international activities of IASWECE through membership contributions from our Developing and Full WECAN Member organizations. This year WECAN was able to offer a contribution of \$32,000 in support of mentoring and training projects in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America.

Fundraising at WECAN Conferences in 2015-16 focused on support for Waldorf early childhood activities in Nepal, site of a major earthquake in spring 2015. Early childhood colleagues at our conferences generously donated more than \$3,600 in support for Nepal.



New Waldorf teachers in Nepal

Through grant funding from several sources, Louise deForest and Helle Heckmann made the first of two visits to Mexico to explore the needs of many new initiatives there. They visited 11 Waldorf initiatives in southern Mexico in September 2015, offering guidance and support, and providing the WECAN board with a detailed picture of the growth and needs of this region. A second trip was planned for September 2016.

Finances 2015-2016

Waldorf Early Childhood Association Profit and Loss Statement, June 30, 2015

INCOME

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

Unrestricted

Appeal and Donations 6,748

Corporations 5,204

Conference Sponsors 4,300

Total Unrestricted 16,252

Restricted

Individuals 5,346

Foundations 117,250

Total Restricted 122,596

Reimbursements from IASWECE 48,840

Total GIFTS AND DONATIONS 187,688

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual Members 22,210

Developing Organizational Members 22,660

Full Organizational Members 114,962

Registered Initiatives 360

Application Fees 1,367

Total MEMBERSHIP DUES 161,560

CONFERENCES 97,409

SALES INCOME 88,522

OTHER INCOME 5,069

TOTAL INCOME 540,248

EXPENSES

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES 173,591

COLLABORATION WITH IASWECE 48,661

CONFERENCES 91,852

INT'L DUES AND DONATIONS 39,676

OTHER PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS 41,383

PUBLICATIONS 68,406

GENERAL OPERATING 58,620

TOTAL EXPENSES 522,189

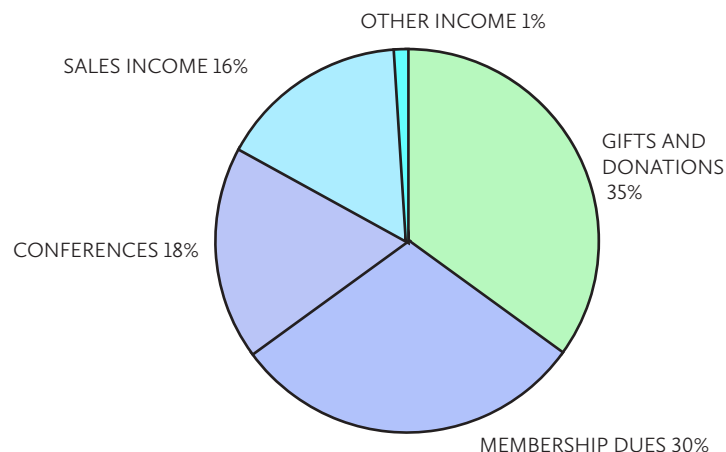
Net Ordinary Income 18,059

Carry forward from previous year 19,926

Sub total 37,985

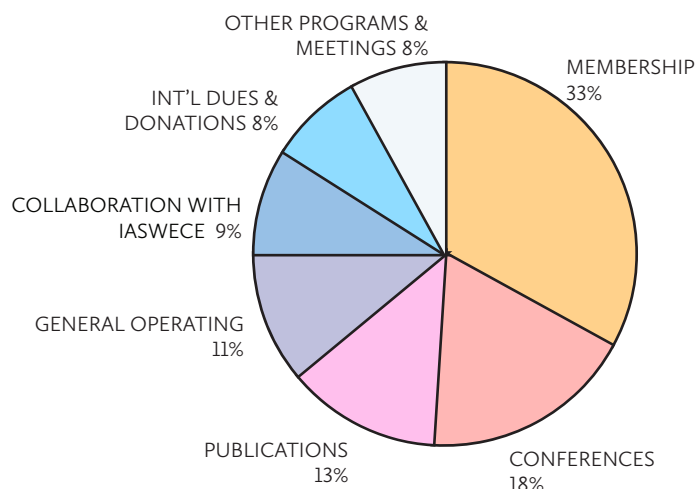
Carry forward to next year (12,834)

NET INCOME 25,151



INCOME

EXPENSES



A few notes of explanation:

WECAN members pay a portion of their membership dues to support IASWECE and this is shown as membership income and also as a dues/donation expense.

Susan Howard, who is employed full-time by WECAN, works half-time for WECAN and half-time for IASWECE, and IASWECE donates funds to WECAN to support the personnel and other related costs for this activity. This accounts for the expense for international collaboration with IASWECE and the equivalent amount of international support in donations from IASWECE.

Donors and Supporters 2015-2016

We are extremely grateful to our many friends and supporters, including individuals, kindergartens, foundations, businesses and other organizations, many of whom are listed below:

Individuals & Organizations

Adrienne Doucette
Alkion Center at Hawthorne Valley
Amanda Blanco
Amy Unger
Andrea Gambardella
Andrea Pisacano
Andree Ward
Anna Hall
Anne Branzell-Spiegler
Arlene Kamo
Barbara Grance
Barbara Klocek
Beate Schnittker
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Catherine Foote
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Cecilia Starin
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Teresa Horsting
Terri Petrie
The Denver Waldorf School
The Little Farm School
The Raven Kindergarten
The Rose Garden
Theresia Weber-John
Walburga Zay
Wendy Weinrich

Foundations

The Community Foundation of
Louisville
The Glenmede Trust Company
Foundation for Rudolf Steiner Books
T. Rowe Price Foundation
Waldorf Schools Fund, Inc.

Corporations

W.S. Badger Company

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Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto
Sophia's Hearth Family Center
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Sunbridge Institute
The Fellowship Community
The Puppenstube
Threefold Educational Foundation
West Coast Institute

Other Conference Support

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Elizabeth Stubbs
Flowering Hearts
Hearthside Toys
Heavenly Hues
JoAnne Dennee
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Mimi's Designs
Natasha de Castro
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WECAN's mission is to foster a new cultural impulse for the work with the young child from pre-birth to age seven. Based on an anthroposophical understanding of human development, WECAN is committed to protecting and nurturing childhood as a foundation for renewing human culture.

WECAN is a member of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education.

Board Members and Staff 2016-2017

Board Members

Nancy Blanning (Chair)
Louise deForest (Secretary and Vice-Chair)
Heather Church (Treasurer)
Adrienne Doucette
Susan Howard
Ruth Ker
Holly Koteen-Soulé
Patricia Lambert
Magdalena Toran

Staff

WECAN Coordinator

Susan Howard, Amherst, MA

WECAN Administrator

Melissa Lyons, Spring Valley, NY

Membership

Laura Mason, Issaquah, WA
Susan Wallendorf (Baltimore, MD)

Publications

Lory Widmer, Temple, NH
Donna Miele, Spring Valley, NY

Teacher Education

Holly Koteen-Soulé, Langley, WA

Communications

Gretchen Devinsky



Candle dipping at Berkeley Rose Waldorf School, CA