

Report from the Research Institute for Waldorf Education and Waldorf Publications

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Big news for both RIWE and Waldorf Publications is the completion of the Survey of Waldorf Graduates, analyzed and compared with data from the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and, in some cases, data from U.S. government statistics on employment and education. The final, completed work has been submitted for publication and is likely to be issued in book form during this season of Waldorf100, celebrating a century of success in the Waldorf educational movement. The final report and the book have an intriguing title: *Into the World: How Waldorf Graduates Fare after High School*. A summary of this research is featured in this issue of the *Research Bulletin*. Each AWSNA-recognized Waldorf school in North America will receive a copy of the book, once published, through their Book Bank participation. Keep an eye out for its final published glory!

Another contribution to Waldorf100 from RIWE was just completed in its “Screen-Free September” project with participants from around the world. Our first participant came from Croatia. In the European Union, Eliant, a group campaigning to eliminate screens from the lives of children, and Witten University in Germany asked to help through a pre-and post-survey of our “Screen Free-ers” to add to their ongoing study of the impact of screens on the lives of children and adults. At the offices of Waldorf Publications, we instituted practices—in a business that prints, ships, edits, tracks, and depends upon the Internet for all its work—to limit our screen usage by an hour-and-a-half during the day and after hours. No one used a screen for work from home after 4 p.m. each weekday and on weekends. We noticed that moods improved, days went more quickly, and we all felt squeezed by not having enough time for all that we do. Consciousness of how very much time we spend online was made abundantly clear. We still are processing the experience for decisions about “life after Screen-Free September.”

Douglas Gerwin, Executive Director of RIWE, was part of the Waldorf100 celebrations in Stuttgart on September 7, the very day the first Waldorf school celebrated its official opening. He then went on to Berlin for an international festival of Waldorf education that brought to the German capital performing troupes of Waldorf students from as far away as Australia, China, Japan,

and Namibia. Thousands joined both celebrations which started early each day and continued late into the night. The Lord Mayor of Stuttgart, addressing the Waldorf assembly in his city, spoke of Waldorf education as the “yeast” that could serve to leaven the whole of education in his country.

Also at the Stuttgart event were authors of some of the key books produced by Waldorf Publications of late, in addition to the *Into the World* contribution. Among them was Sophia Christine Murphy, granddaughter of Emil Molt, the founder of the first Waldorf school who, in collaboration with Rudolf Steiner, built up the first school. She took with her copies of her new book from Waldorf Publications, *Emil & Berta*, based on the diaries of her grandfather and her own recollections of gratitude for the very existence of Waldorf education. Nana Göbel, Executive Director of the *Freunde der Erziehungskunst*, was present both in Stuttgart and Berlin, where her offices are located. Her new book, describing the colorful history of these 100 first years of Waldorf education, has been published in German and is in the process of being translated into English by Jan Kees Saltet under the auspices of Waldorf Publications. Volume I of this epic history should be available by the end of the year.

Jan Kees Saltet has also translated twelve brief essays by Tomas Zdravil, a leader of the Waldorf teacher training seminar in Stuttgart, who took it upon himself to create living vignettes of the very first Waldorf teachers. Compiled now in book form, these biographical sketches catch the spirit of the first Waldorf school and the enormity of the task these heroic first teachers accepted when they answered, “Yes,” to Rudolf Steiner’s request to teach in his revolutionary new school located in a converted restaurant on the Uhlandshöhe bluff overlooking the center of Stuttgart.

Next in line for research projects is a new survey, this time of Waldorf school parents. The purpose of this survey, to identify the power of Waldorf education to influence parental changes in lifestyle, family practices, personal philosophy, worldview, approach to technology, and vacationing choices.