



# The Montessori OBSERVER

Reality

Published by the International Montessori Society • 912 Thayer Ave. • Silver Spring, Md. 20910 • Phone (301) 589-1127

## Parents Fight Compulsory Schooling in Maryland

Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Dirks (Frederick Co., MD) have found they must fight state compulsory school laws in order to educate at home their nine year old daughter, Melissa.

The Dirks' fight with the state of Maryland arose from the filing of a criminal warrant against them by the local school board on Oct. 30, 1981. The warrant alleged that the Dirks failed to comply with compulsory school attendance laws of Maryland, Section 7-301 of the Maryland Education Code.

In response to this warrant, the Dirks filed a motion to dismiss the charges asserting that their home school for Melissa is a "bona fide" church school, exempt from state regulation. Notably, the motion to dismiss stated: "...the State of Maryland would impose its will over every facet of individual freedom if given a chance... The case... is nothing more than a patently unconstitutional attempt to either coerce the Defendants, LeRoy and Sharon Dirks, to "establish" their church in the state of Maryland... or forfeit their fundamental rights."

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## Alternative Education in Southwest

The support of non-coercive education in the schools of the Southwest United States is a primary concern of the **Rio Grande Educational Association (RGEA)**. This non-profit corporation, first established in 1968, provides a flexible coalition and support on behalf of its member schools in the states of New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and Texas.

The RGEA is a regional organization of the **National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools (NCACS)**. Participation in RGEA requires membership in both organizations.

Since 1974, the RGEA has formally adopted procedures for the accreditation of educational programs provided by its members. Such accreditation is useful to member schools which seek to assure the public as to the responsible operation of their programs.

For information, contact: RGEA, P.O. Box 2241, Santa Fe, NM 87501.



Child working at the Big City Montessori School (San Francisco, CA)—See article on this page.

## IMS Member Schools . . .

The following schools have recently acknowledged their commitment to Montessori principles through IMS Montessori school membership.

### Big City Montessori School San Francisco, CA

The Big City Montessori School is under the direction of **Deborah Melikian**. The school serves a total enrollment of 98 children ages 2-9. A full-day program is provided for all age levels.

A substantial in-service staff training program has been established by Ms. Melikian since her arrival at the school in November, 1980. Presently, Ms. Melikian is math instructor for the IMS/Santa Rosa Montessori Teacher Training Program.

Special program features at the school include a parent education program and a summer "Children's University". This special summer Montessori program enables children to participate in projects such as cooking, carpentry and sewing.

For further information, contact: Deborah D. Melikian, Big City Montessori School, 240 Industrial St., San Francisco, CA 94124, (415) 648-5777.

### Incarnate Word Montessori Corpus Christi, TX

The Incarnate Word Montessori School is sponsored by a non-profit corporation. **Sister M. Christina Bradley** is the school director.

The school program includes a half-day session for children ages 2-6 and a full-day session for elementary aged children ages 6-9.

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## Louisiana Supports Freedom in Education

Louisiana state legislator **Woody Jenkins**—author of recent legislation to lift regulations on private schools—recently clarified for IMS legislative issues affecting Montessori education in the state.

Notably, Mr. Jenkins indicated that, in essence, *all* private Montessori schools—whether "certified" or not under that state's "Montessori" legislation—are entitled to operate free of any state regulations except those concerning fire safety and occupancy requirements.

The Louisiana legislator notes that many people in Louisiana have strongly supported his legislative efforts on behalf of educational freedom. "...hundreds of Louisianians wrote to their legislators in support of private schools and home education. The reaction of legislators was *very favorable!*"

Cont'd Page 3, Col. 2

## Rhythm-a-tics to Teach Rhythm

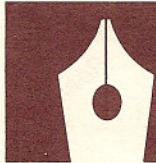
**Alan Watts** (Las Vegas, NV) has developed an approach to teaching rhythm to children which he calls *Rhythm-a-tics*.

Mr. Watts views rhythm as fundamental to the development of the musical sense in children. In addition, Watts asserts that his "Rhythm-a-tics" approach "extends far beyond music to include mathematical and scientific awareness".

In "Rhythm-a-tics", rhythm awareness begins with a study of the work cycle—e.g. swinging a hammer. Ultimately, a series of written symbols are employed in conjunction with tapping/clapping exercises.

Mr. Wells is planning to present his ideas in a book entitled "Rhythm-a-tics". Future publications will extend the materials and exercises of this basic text.

For further information, contact: Alan Wells, P.O. Box 2150, Las Vegas, NV 89125.



# Reality

"... a child knows that reality is his to shape as he wishes... the adult cannot see beyond the limitations of the standard conceptions of reality."

**Brad Steiger**  
From *Mysteries of Time and Space*

Dr. Montessori's "new education"—a universal commitment to the principles of observation, individual liberty and preparation of the environment—envision a new reality in fundamental opposition to the existing "agreed-to" conditions in society. Thus the individual committed to Montessori principles is engaged in a conflict of realities—the "new" with the "existing". Such a conflict of realities lies at the heart of the mystery surrounding one's participation in the process of creating the "new education".

### Reality as Concept

Society's view of "reality" is as a permanent state of certain conditions within which all human experience occurs. However, such a view of "reality" is challenged by the evidence of fundamental changes in social conditions throughout history.

### "Reality" is Alterable

History teaches that society's conceptions of "reality" are alterable—subject to the individual's unique creative powers. For example, the concepts of "the world is flat" and "man cannot fly" have forever lost their permanence by the well-known achievements of Christopher Columbus and the Wright brothers. Thus society's view of "reality" is actually an array of conceptions held in place by mutual agreement. Each individual experiences this "reality" according to one's own point of view.

### Adult Reality

The adult experiences reality as a fundamental conflict between society's conception of reality and one's own concrete experiences in the present moment. Such conflict presents a continual paradox which can only ultimately be resolved by recognizing the true nature of reality.

### True Reality

"Reality", in essence, is one's own conscious state of being. Thus true reality is not inherently "permanent" but rather changes in time as a function of one's conscious awareness. The young child most clearly reflects this true experience of reality.

### The Child's Reality

The young child experiences reality essentially as its own concrete awareness in the present moment. Certain concepts and abstractions common in adult society—such as government and social

institutions—are inconceivable and non-existent in the child's reality. This true experience of reality—awareness in the present moment—is the aim of Montessori education and emerges naturally from the adult's commitment to Montessori principles.

### The Montessori Reality

The single individual committed to Montessori principles expresses the new "Montessori reality"—alien to the existing conditions in society. This inner state of being—committed to certain principles—gradually grows in strength and power through the individual's communication and participation with others. This process of creating a new reality in society is evident in the Yoga idea of the "tulpa"—the thought form which can appear to assume life independent of the individual's psyche.

### Tulpa

A "tulpa"—the externalization of an inner reality—manifests the power of an individual's will and intention. Futurist Brad Steiger in his book *Mysteries of Time and Space* states that such a "tulpa" is created and enlarged through its shared communication and engagement with others. "...similar thoughts, emotions, and mental emanations can add to the strength of the tulpa enabling it to acquire power and grow." Thus a new reality in society can be created from within individuals—whether recognized or not.

### Reality Created

In sum, all reality is created from within the individual. A "new" reality—e.g., universal commitment to Montessori principles—is possible when an individual becomes consciously aware of such reality within one's self. Thus the expression of one's commitment to Montessori principles creates the "new education" in society.

## Life is a Fight

The April, 1982 issue of the **Educational Network News** reprinted the following excerpt from an article appearing in *The Educational Forum*, Winter 1982:

"(William James)...accepted the labor pains of human freedom. He would be saying something like this to us now: '... what we freely choose to do makes a difference; real issues are at stake... when it is really lived, life "feels like a real fight" and it is by throwing ourselves into it that life may become worth living."

## IMS Montessori School Membership

### Benefits Include:

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For application and membership criteria, contact:

**IMS, 912 Thayer Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910**

Look for the  
**September Observer**  
featuring  
**Power of the Individual**

## The Montessori Observer

published by  
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY  
912 Thayer Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 589-1127  
Lee Havis, Executive Director

*The Montessori Observer* is mailed eight times each year to IMS members throughout the world. *The Observer* is sent during the following months: Jan., Feb., March, April, May, Sept., Oct., and Nov. The purpose of this publication is to provide news and information about the development of Montessori education to extend awareness of Montessori principles and promote harmony within the Montessori community.

### INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, U.S.A. The purpose of IMS is to support the effective application of Montessori principles throughout the world.

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### SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription to this publication may be obtained by requesting IMS membership which is open to all individuals for a \$15 yearly fee. IMS school members also receive a subscription to the *Observer*. Complete the membership application form to obtain an individual subscription and other benefits of IMS membership.

### ADVERTISING

Advertising space is available for services and products relating to Montessori education. Marketplace ads are \$7/line. Position and Placement ads are \$10 each and will be set and edited by us to conform to space requirements. Write for our advertising outline for rates and other information about design advertising.

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## Announcements

**The Education Network**, an organization whose purpose is to support the transformation of education to create schools that work for everybody, publishes a newsletter entitled *Education Network News*. This newsletter aims to enhance communication among people consistent with the purpose of the Network. Yearly subscription is \$16.00. Contact: Education Network News, P.O. Box 6006, Alhambra, CA 91801.

**The Association for Experiential Education** will hold its Tenth Annual Conference scheduled for Sept. 9-12, 1982 near Eureka, CA. Workshops and interest group activities in experiential learning will be conducted. Contact: AEE, P.O. Box 4625, Denver, CO 80204.

**The Rio Grande Educational Association (RGEA)** publishes a newsletter *Kokopeli Notes* for its member schools. For further information, contact: RGEA, P.O. Box 2241, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

**Friends of Montessori** is organized to bring libertarian ideas (i.e., respect for the individual) and Montessori education together. For further information, contact: Leo Alman, 6300 Alderson St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

### Parents Fight

*Cont'd From Page 1, Col. 1*

Although the charges against the Dirks have now been withdrawn, the threat of future criminal action remains. Presently, the Dirks continue their home schooling of Melissa.

The Dirks case represents a growing controversy throughout the United States in opposition to compulsory schooling and the coercive conditions in the public schools. In Maryland, the Dirks have joined with others throughout the state in the *Maryland Home Education Association* to support their mutual interests on behalf of the education of their children outside of the public schools.

### Louisiana Supports Freedom

*Cont'd From Page 1, Col. 3*

However, Mr. Jenkins warned that detrimental efforts are underway in the state to re-impose restrictions and limitations on home education and private schools. For example, one bill proposes to force all five year olds to attend mandatory kindergarten classes.

IMS applauds the efforts of Louisiana—and, notably state legislator Woody Jenkins—on behalf of legislation favorable to Montessori education in the state.

## Quality of Staff Vital to Parents

According to a recent study conducted by the **Child Care Information Exchange (CCIE)**, "Staff Characteristics" and "Logistical Factors" are among the most important concerns of parents in selecting a center for their child.

The CCIE study rated "Staff Characteristics" (e.g., patient, loving, responsible, dependable) as the number one concern of parents in selecting a child care center in five of the ten surveys conducted. "Logistical Factors" (e.g., cost, convenience of location, and hours of service) were also found important to parents. "Group Characteristics" (e.g., staff-child ratios and group size) and "Organizational Characteristics" (e.g., sponsorship, parent involvement) were rated of least concern to parents.

The CCIE study recommended that centers can most effectively respond to parents' concerns by providing logistical information in a clearly written publication containing fees, location, hours and ages served. In addition, CCIE suggests that parents have an opportunity to observe and talk to the teacher whenever possible during their initial visit to the center.

## Positions & Placements

**Montessori Teachers:** (3-6) (6-9) for Fall 1982. Well-established school. 30 miles north of Boston near ocean and wildlife sanctuary. Salaries negotiable with benefits. Contact: Susan McDonough, Harborlight Montessori School, 243 Essex St., Beverly, MA 01915 (617) 922-1008.

**Montessori Teacher:** (2-6) for 13 yr. old non-profit school. Parent board, unique built-for Montessori facility. Extended child care for enrolled children only. Contact: Little Rock Montessori School, 3704 Woodland Heights Rd., Little Rock, AR 72212 (501) 225-2428.

**Montessori Teacher:** (2-6) to work with co-teacher and assistant in a house-classroom with 36 children. Hours 7:30 p.m. - 12 noon. Beautiful environment. Salary negotiable. Please mail resume to: Children's Center for Cultural Development, 3668 Dimond Ave., Oakland, CA 94602, or call (415) 482-3111/Eve. (415) 655-5935.

**Montessori Teacher:** needed by second week in June for four year olds. Small school. Orange Co., 20 min. from Disney Land. Established 15 years. High reputation. Contact: Montessori Children's World, 431 East Palm Dr., Placentia, CA 92670, (714) 524-2262.

**Montessori Teachers:** (3-6) (6-9) (9-12). Begin August, 1982, with class of experienced Montessori children. Call or write to: Montessori Child Development Center, 620 Elizabeth St., Denver, CO 80206, (303) 333-9478.

**Montessori Teacher:** (2-6) needed immediately for south-eastern Wisconsin Montessori pre-school in city thirty miles north of Milwaukee. Enthusiastic, versatile person required to expand present curriculum for school in parent-operated, well established, non-profit school. Send resume to: Jo Benidt, 5650 Colleen Lane, West Bend, WI 53095 or call collect (414) 342-3236.

**Elementary training sponsorship:** 1982-83, new parent-run school emphasizing authentic doctrine and genuine Vatican II renewal, opening 6-9, 9-12 classes in Fall, 1983. Candidates must be practicing Roman Catholics. Send resume to: Seton Academy, P.O. Box 192, River Forest, IL 60305.

**Elementary training sponsorship:** summer of 1982. Contact: Harborlight Montessori School, 243 Essex St., Beverly, MA 01915 (617) 922-1008.

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## OBSERVER

The Montessori



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## IMS Membership Directory

Price: \$5.00

This directory lists all individuals and schools associated with IMS through membership. The purpose of this directory is to enhance communication and participation among IMS members and to publicly acknowledge the membership association of schools and individuals with IMS.

The directory is divided into three separate sections, each listing the three distinct membership categories: individuals, associated schools and Montessori School members. IMS Montessori school membership information includes name, address, telephone, administrator and other program features such as enrollment and age level.

To order, send payment to:

**IMS, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910**

*Free to IMS Montessori school members.*

International Montessori Society



Membership Directory

Vol. II, No. 1  
Spring, 1982

## Compulsory Schooling

In 1843, **Charles Lane** wrote in *The Liberator* (William Lloyd Garrison, ed.) about the dangers and harm of mandatory schooling: "Never was there a greater absurdity than to pretend to enfranchise the human mind from ignorance and bad passions by force. Love alone can aid in this work. . . Children will find their way to school where love teaches the lessons. . ."

*From Maryland Home Education Association Newsletter, May 1982; Manfred Smith, ed.*

### IMS Montessori Schools . . .

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For further information, contact: Sister M. Christina Bradley, Incarnate Word Montessori, 2930 South Alameda, Corpus Christi, TX 78404, (512) 882-5413.

### The New School Cincinnati, OH

The New School is sponsored by a non-profit corporation. **Linda J. White** is the business manager.

The school program provides full-day sessions at the primary and elementary levels. The elementary program serves children up to the age of twelve.

Special program features include French as a foreign language and a summer Montessori program.

For further information, contact: Linda White, The New School, 3 Burton Woods Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45229 (513) 281-7999.

### Oakridge Children's House

Ft. Lauderdale, FL

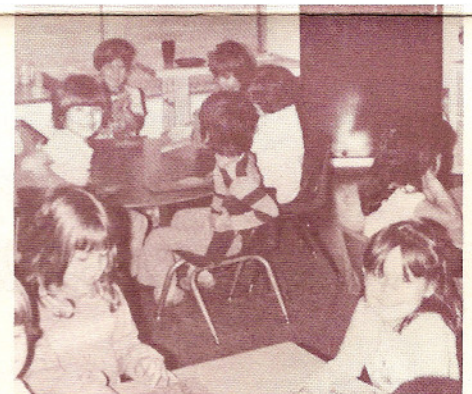
The Oakridge Children's House is sponsored by a non-profit corporation under the direction of **Robert J. Mueller**. A full-day Montessori program is provided for children ages 0-9.

Special program features of the school include art, music, dance, Spanish as a foreign language, parent education and day care services. In addition, a summer Montessori program is offered.

For further information, contact: Robert J. Mueller, Oakridge Children's House, 1100 S.W. 21st St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33315 (305) 524-5160.

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## The Montessori OBSERVER



Children at Oakridge Children's House (Ft. Lauderdale, FL) - See article this page.

**IMS Membership:** Montessori school members acknowledge their commitment to Montessori principles as set forth in IMS membership criteria. Contact IMS for membership application and criteria.