

THE PORTLAND BRANCH'S ANTHROPOSOPHICAL LENDING LIBRARY

By Sandra Burch, Portland, Oregon

Many of us are becoming more aware of the importance of simple living and consuming less. Libraries can be a good way to share and enjoy a good book without having the baggage of owning the book or paying the credit card bill for it at the end of the month. Our family cut spending way back this fall and it is an answer to an unspoken prayer to find such a large variety of books by Rudolf Steiner and other anthroposophists.

I offered to dust the five big bookshelves late this autumn. It took me much longer than I expected. One book at a time, I had to look at each title. There are many great out-of-print treasures; for instance, books by Albert Steffen or Friedrich Rittelmeyer. There is something comforting in reading an article about a person's struggle with what actions to take in these difficult times and realize the article was written in 1918 or 1934 or 1949 or 1954. It places our times on a continuum of development as humanity moves toward transforming the earth.

I thought it would go much quicker when I got to the shelves of books in languages other than English. But, even there I had to try to exercise my rusty German. Even on these shelves I found books to borrow: a small volume of short verses by Angelus Silesius (the Angel from Silesia). Pictures are all that is needed to make some books accessible. So, even though I could not read *Goetheanum Glasfenster* by Georg Hartmann, the photos were enough to entice me to borrow the book. The images of the windows in the *Goetheanum* are the clearest I have come across. It is very nice for me as an artist to see such clarity and color in each window.

We all have so much information coming at us every day. It is nice to know we don't have to take out every new magazine subscription. There are many, many issues of *The Journal of Anthroposophy* at the library. You can stand in front of the shelves, hold your questions in mind, and close your eyes (or not) and reach for an issue and let its contents answer you. A pamphlet could be a good way to go if you are short on time. Sometimes a whole book by Steiner seems like too much to tackle.

There are many pamphlets, of single lectures, on all sorts of subjects - lectures given for a certain festival or biodynamics or medical issues, for instance.

What we each need is just possibly available at the Library. You may look at the library catalog at Steiner Storehouse and you may pick up books there as well. You may also call Tom Klein directly at: (503) 777-3176. The catalog will be on-line and the items will be categorized by Title, Subject or Author, soon. Happy Reading to you.

**IF I GO FORWARD, I DIE.
IF I GO BACKWARD, I DIE.
IT IS BETTER TO DIE GOING FORWARD.**

By Maika Munske (age 19), Järna, Sweden



It's the little things here that make me feel as a though we could learn to understand the nature of today's gloom. We, in response to the instabilities of modern interests, are charged with the task of making agreements to change; to change the core of our sense of being and through this, to change the failing systems of the outside world.

The International Youth Initiative Program (YIP, www.yip.se) is a one year social entrepreneurship training held in Järna, Sweden. As a group of young people varying in age and backgrounds, we have come together to pioneer a program that aims to give a method to our call for a new consensus. We live in a house filled with all the strife that comes with youthful responsibility, shared rooms and no privacy. I see our living situation as the ultimate test of patience and sanity, while also being a central aspect of learning how to harmonize with community and settling with the imperfections of a collective.

Each week, a new workshop is brought by a contributor, with themes ranging from Health & Nutrition and Economics, to Social Activism and Portrait Painting. During our week spent with Orland Bishop (Mentoring), he said something that struck me as one of the essential elements of what it is that we struggle against: "Our

currencies have worth because there is a limited amount; obviously there is an intention that not everyone will have what is necessarily needed." This is the type of rationale that we are trying to understand and spread in order and to initiate consciousness into ourselves and the world.

The task of summarizing our week spent with Jaap van der Haar is somewhat comparable to that of cooking a pot roast in a sieve: it's difficult to be thorough, let alone to complete. Although the week was interesting, his ideas were sometimes so unique that they were often

hard to grasp or identify with. The topic we were mainly focused on was a branch of sociology dealing with the development of human consciousness throughout history.

We began on Monday by drawing comparisons between the overall state of consciousness in specific ancient cultures (such as the Persian and Egyptian civilizations) and the human mind. Using what is known of their history and societal methods, we learned for example to connect the ancient Greeks with contemporary 21-28 year-olds. Throughout history, the Greeks advanced both technologically and intellectually in ways that an average mid 20-year old mirrors; this is of course not to imply that one civilization was once better than another, it simply shows similarities in the development of a mindset. Nowadays, we carry the capacity to conceive such ideas as an automobile assembly line or powdered eggs, but only because of thousands of years of pre-conditioning and mental evolution. Before the Industrial Revolution the human mind was focused on earthly survival and community; later however, value was put on production and money. Thus, the concept of addiction was born.

Due to Jaap's personal history and involvement in Dutch politics (particularly the legal status of marijuana in Holland) we had many questions about the culture around this phenomenon. Is legalization of a drug actually the solution to addiction? Simple examination of history and some more recent statistics tell us that by trying to control a substance, the desire to experiment with it greatly increases. As we saw during the Prohibition, the outlawing of alcohol only gave the business over to criminal organizations, as they took up the production and distribution of alcohol with gusto, allowing addiction and petty crime to flourish. The same scenario can be found in the United State's current war on drugs; the country's staggering number of addicts seem only more outrageous when placed next to Holland's relatively few (and legal) marijuana consumers. The freedom of choice makes quite a difference in how we treat the decision itself. The opposite of addiction is freedom; freedom to choose, freedom to create your own relations, freedom to follow any path.

Not unlike the oppression of the Prohibition (and in close association) the Church used to govern the political, scientific, and of course spiritual standard in most cultures. However, individuals like Aristotle and Galileo broke this chain, and kick-started the revolution of logical and sequential thinking, something that we

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PORTLAND BRANCH OF THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, PLEASE CALL DIANE RUMAGE AT (360) 241-7854.

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The *Portland Anthroposophic Times* is published twelve times a year by the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in America to serve members and friends in the wider anthroposophical community. Printed copies of the newsletter are available at the Steiner Storehouse, Portland Waldorf School, Cedarwood Waldorf School, Shining Star and Swallowtail School. The newsletter and calendar are also posted on the Portland Branch website at www.portlandbranch.com.

Questions, suggestions and submissions may be sent by e-mail to anthroposophy@earthlink.net. Items selected for publication in the *Portland Anthroposophic Times* may be edited for style, content and length. The deadline for submissions to the *Portland Anthroposophic Times* is the first day of each month for publication in that month's edition. Submit calendar items to branchcalendar@mindspring.com no later than the first of each month for publication in the next edition.

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consider to be the norm today. Instead of letting religion rule Western consciousness, we now are directed by a complex political structure and the insatiable desire for economic gain. In order for us to move past this destructive way of thinking, each person needs to be able to decide for themselves about how and what they want to follow. It is not difficult to imagine why people thought differently in the past; we form our belief systems from what is around us, from various input. When our surroundings change, our logic and spirituality also change. Humanity now has a choice to make: either we fortify our military presence in the world and let conflict and fear make reality, or we can make a conscious decision to spread a notion of global equality; a notion that everyone in this world is a grain of sand on the same beach and together we are Truth.

SHINING STAR WALDORF SCHOOL NEWS

By Marsha Johnson, Portland, Oregon

The smallest and newest Waldorf School in the metro area has undergone some significant shifts and transformations this past fall. The fact is, economic times and pressures certainly do affect poorer families much faster than wealthier ones, and in a school that was formed with the specific mission to create accessible Waldorf education, things happen fast. Our return enrollment for Fall 2008 was adversely impacted in the summer months and the school became top-heavy with faculty rapidly. In the midst of the restructuring, many families and teachers decided to depart from the school and create new venues to meet their individual needs. The Bio-Immersion Outdoor K program at Tryon Farm separated and became its own entity under the legal umbrella of the non-profit farm organization. There was a nice letter about that program in a recent edition of *Mothering Magazine*.

From a school with several ECE programs and grades 1-6 in September, we became a much smaller entity by January 2009. About 50 families elected to stay with Shining Star School and carry on our work in the NE Portland area. We now have a fully enrolled preschool and kindergarten program at the 602 NE Prescott site and a small mixed-ages Grades Class for grades 1-2-3 at the 4317 NE Emerson site. In effect, the mission of the school with the ideas of mixed ages classes and access for families of all means, re-emerged. We are attempting to answer the indications of Rudolf Steiner who mentions that "should a child come knocking at the school door, let him in!" It has not been easy to keep that door open, but we are persisting.

We imbue the feeling of responsibility of soul in our community and as such we have embraced and welcomed the home schooling population of the region, inviting them to attend our grades class on a part time basis and currently 10 children attend one or two days a week, some from as far as two hours driving away, others from Corbett, Rainier, McMinnville, and Washington State. We provide a glimpse into the world of Waldorf as well as a take-home guide each week to carry on with the 3 day rhythm, teaching tips, and the school offers quarterly workshops for parents who wish to learn more about the Arts of Waldorf. The next one will be Saturday January 31st, 2009 if you are interested (fee \$60, all goes to the school).

Founder Marsha Johnson is happily teaching again as the Lead Grades person and the children are enjoying Spanish, French, Handwork, Games, Music Class, and Play in their Monday-Thursday 9 am - 3 pm class. The mixed ages class offers the children the chance to nurture and share with one another, to take turns helping one another, and to form a social culture that embraces each individual. Parents have really stepped up to help in the class and support the teaching with Park Duty and teaching help.

Susan Rice is the Kindergarten teacher at the Lindentree Kindergarten and has a full class of 4, 5 and 6 year olds who are eager to dance, sing, and play in the site's full size garden lot every day. She also is leading the Friday Family Playgroup which offers a taste of Waldorf to new young families and has been a major resource for directing families into the early childhood programs around the area.

Julie Gatti is in her 5th year of working with Shining Star School and teaches the preschool class called the Moonbeams. Twelve little children gather each day in her arching pink classroom to paint, do finger plays and circle games, and learn how to listen to stories. Julie has been a steadfast and devoted community member of the Alberta Arts District for many years and works hard to uphold our fundamental mission at the school.

We covet your kind thoughts and intentions as we carry on the work of providing spiritual science based education for children and adults in our inner NE sites. Please check our website at www.shiningstarschool.com for further news about Folk Art classes, workshops, and Open Houses. We are filled with the beauty of the children, the wisdom of our experiences, and the thrill of providing spirit based education for adults and children in the community!

WINTER SOLSTICE RETREAT

By Robin Lieberman

Wow! What amazing weather we experienced in December! And with that weather came an opportunity to benefit from the harsh, cold, blustery wind and darkness. In some ways we were "forced" to turn inward and hibernate inside our homes and our souls (except, of course, our heartier lot who relished in the snow)!

While Marion van Namen and I collaborated to create a Winter Solstice Retreat (indeed, having SO much fun painting and planning) the actual solstice got snowed under. So then what do two creative, like-minded therapists do? Transform the workshop into a New Year's Day Retreat, quickly!

What a splendid idea and 11 other people thought so, too! We spent what seemed a brief three hours moving between wet-on-wet watercoloring and singing and making music. We shared our work, sipped tea and relaxed into the spirit of community, connecting with self, soul and others in honor of the darkness and the light. The in breath and out breath of painting and playing music/singing was organic like the dance between the darkness and the light. There was a lovely rhythm in each activity and also created by the movement in-between the two activities.

All participants whetted their appetites for more-we learned that folks wanted to spend more time on each painting (we did three) and more time with the beautiful instruments and singing. It was truly a soulful and heartfelt experience. We are in our planning stages of seasonal retreats - why wait another year for the Winter Solstice when the beautiful blossoming of spring is on its way?- please join us on March 22, 1:00-5:00 PM at Bothmer Hall for our Spring Equinox Retreat in celebration of rebirth and renewal with painting and music! (for more information please call Robin at 503-222-1192 or Marion at 503-956-4046. Thank you to all the beautiful beings who came together and created such a splendid day!

STUDY GROUP STARTS SOON ON MEDITATION AND PRACTICAL SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

Yumiko Abe and Siegwald Elsas are planning to offer a new study group on practical questions of meditation and the spiritual path. Depending on the needs and interests of the participants, we plan to work by preparing selected text portions from many sources,

including but not limited to "Knowledge of Higher Worlds", "Occult Science", "True and False Paths of Spiritual Investigation", "Instructions for Esoteric Training", "Stages of Higher Knowledge" and the Karma lectures for discussion in the group. We may consider conditions for spiritual practice, the meaning of imagination, inspiration, intuition, karma exercises or anything else of interest to the participants. In the spirit of true spiritual science as practiced by Rudolf Steiner, we may on occasion also compare anthroposophical meditation with methods from other mystery streams that are also practiced today.

We look forward to a lively conversational exchange of questions of all kinds and of personal meditative experience from both beginners and experienced meditators alike. As this study group considers basic questions of meditation, it might also be of interest to those preparing to join or already attending the School of Spiritual Science.

Beginning Feb. 26, we plan to meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 6:30 pm in our house at 9510 SW View Point Terrace, off of Terwilliger near Lewis and Clark University. If available, eurythmy or house shoes would be appreciated! Our phone number for questions or directions is (503) 244-2277. If possible, please RSVP by email at elsas@ohsu.edu.

The Portland Branch Of the Anthroposophic Society, Inc. FINANCIAL REPORT as of December 31, 2008

Revenue:	
Donations:	\$ 5,393.00
	<small>(includes: advertising, lectures & donations/dues)</small>
Interest Earned	\$ 56.42
Expenditures:	
Newsletter Expenses	\$ 1,276.54
	<small>(printing, copying, mailing, stamps, etc.)</small>
Lecture Expenses	\$ 2,375.38
	<small>(Lecture fees ,travel, food & rentals, etc)</small>
Corporation Fees	\$ 60.00
Website Expenses	\$ 142.89
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 134.73
	<small>(Shipping/postage expenses for donated books)</small>
Total Expenditures	\$ 3,989.54
Current Fund Balance	\$ 1,459.88
Carry-over Fund Balance	\$ 5,797.34

TOTAL Branch Fund Balance * \$ 7,257.22

* Summary: Fund Balance : Checking Account	= \$5,180.02
Certificate of Deposit	= \$1,020.78
Building Fund (Certificate of Deposit)	= \$1,000.00
Interest Earned (Certificates of Deposit)	= \$ 56.42

THOUGHTS OF SPRING© BY JANNEBETH RÖELL, PORTLAND, OR



Portland Anthroposophical Society Calendar - February 2009

Ongoing Events and Study Groups

Anthroposophical Medicine Study Group

Once a month Monday (after the second Sunday) at the Takacs Clinic 7-8:30 PM. John Takacs at johntakacsdo@hotmail.com or Kevin Kane at drkev@involved.com.

Curative Education

Second and fourth Friday 7:30 PM - 9PM study of Rudolf Steiner's *Education for Special Needs*. Call Betty Baldwin for information 503-747-6367.

Deepening Our Experience with Six Basic Exercises

Saturday 9:00-10:00 AM once a month. Beginning and advanced students welcome. 2525 NE 13th Ave, Portland, OR 97212. For information call Twila at (503) 281-9349 or write her by e-mail at Twila@spiritone.com.

Karma Exercises and Study

The group that has just completed its multi-year work with the entire Karmic Relationships lecture cycle is starting to work with Rudolf Steiner's karma exercises on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Call James Lee for information 503 249-3804 or e-mail him at anthroposophy@earthlink.net.

Meditation and Practical Spiritual Science

The second and fourth Thursdays (beginning Feb. 26), 6:30 PM at 9510 SW View Point Terrace, off of Terwilliger near Lewis and Clark University. If available, eurythmy or house shoes would be appreciated! Contact Siegwald Elsas or Yumiko Abe. The phone number for questions or directions is (503) 244-2277. If possible, please RSVP by email at elsas@ohsu.edu

Mystery Dramas, with Speech-Formation Exercises

On the second and fourth Wednesdays each month, 7:30 - 9:00 PM, in SW Portland. Currently working with Rudolf Steiner's *Portal of Initiation* and the *Genesis* lectures. No acting experience necessary, just a love of the Word. Call Diane Rumage at 360 241-7854 for information.

Mystery Knowledge and Mystery Centers

Meeting once a month on the fourth Thursday at 7 PM at Bothmer Hall. Contact Joan Takacs by e-mail at joantakacs@yahoo.com.

Occult Science

First and third Tuesdays from 7:30 - 9:00 PM at 3046 NE 33rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97212. Contact Donna Patterson and Bob Kellum at 503-331-7393.

Portland Waldorf School Community Choir

Every Monday morning from 8:45 - 10:00 AM (at the Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison Street, Milwaukie) in the music room of the high school building, whenever school is in session. Anyone in- and outside the PWS community who enjoys singing songs through the seasons, across the centuries and around the world is very welcome, including drop ins. This event is free and a community builder. More information: Marion Van Namen (503) 956-4046.

Portland Youth Discussion Group

Come join the Portland Youth Discussion Group as we pick-up *Becoming the Archangel Michael's Companion* in order to understand what our task, as the youth of the world, is in the 21st Century. There is something new and exciting in the air among the young people as a new generation prepares to take on the responsibility of this world and so we gather to hold that space, to marvel and to share what others are doing in the world and to work more deeply with one another. We welcome new people who are open to exploring Spiritual Science and conducting their own research and those who are interested in learning more about the youth in Portland, the North American and International Youth Section and more! There is so much going on. For more information about when and where we meet, please contact Leslie Loy at (503) 819-3399 or leslielal@yahoo.com.

Waldorf Education and Teacher Training

Lectures and courses conducted throughout the year by the Micha-el Institute. Contact John Miles at 503/774-4946. johncmiles@usa.net.

Take a look at the report on the 2009 North American Youth Initiative Meeting that took place last month in Portland attached at the end of the e-mail and the online versions of the Portland Branch Newsletter.

Upcoming Events

Mondays, JANUARY 26- MARCH 2

Experiencing the Planets

Marion van Namen and Diane Ramage invite you to study the planets and their influences through music, movement and speech. Classes will be held at Bothmer Hall, 5919 SE Division Street, Portland from 7-9PM. Register by calling Marion van Namen by phone at (503) 956-4046 or contact her by e-mail at marion@octavemusictherapy.com. Cost: \$195 for 5 sessions, or \$50 per class. \$15 discount for signing up before January 19th. Small scholarship available, no class on 2/16. If you register with a friend then he or she gets in at half price.

FEBRUARY 28

Mothers, Daughters, Women and Friends

Cheri Munske and Susan Beck of Austin, Texas, will co-teach an artistic workshop in support of understanding and strengthening the intimate female bond. Using color as the expressive language, we will explore, glorify and unearth how we bond with one another. 10:00 AM- 1:00 PM Bothmer Hall, 5919 SE Division St. \$99 for a couple. Contact Cheri Munske by phone at 503-484-4133 or by e-mail at woolhorse@earthlink.net.

MARCH 6-10

Moving Trough Trauma

Countless people suffer from the paralyzing effects of trauma. This course will explore techniques for escaping the trauma trap and is for those who want to begin the work of breaking the patterns of the past and choosing new gestures that support their goals. Novel ways of living in our bodies and new ways of interacting with our surroundings will be experienced. The event is sponsored by the Spacial Dynamics Institute. Open to everyone. Location: Bothmer Hall. The tuition for the course is \$500. Contact sdiadmissions@earthlink.net or 518-695-6377.

Sunday, MARCH 8

First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Takac's Clinic, Blue card required - Discussion on Lesson 15 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 16. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Ramage at (360) 241-7854.

Sunday, MARCH 22

Spring Equinox Retreat

Retreat in celebration of rebirth and renewal with painting and music, from 1-5 PM in Bothmer Hall, 5919 SE Division Street. For more info call Robin Lieberman 503-222-1192 or Marion van Namen 503-956-4046

Sunday, APRIL 19

First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required - Discussion on Lesson 16 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 17. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Ramage at (360) 241-7854.

Sunday, MAY 10

First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required - Discussion on Lesson 17 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 18. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Ramage at (360) 241-7854.

Sunday JUNE 28 - Tentative (could be Saturday)

Virginia Sease to Meet with the Portland Branch

Virginia Sease is a longtime friend of anthroposophy and a member of the General Anthroposophical Society's Executive Council in Dornach, Switzerland. She would like to meet with members and friends of the Portland Branch while she is in Portland. Efforts are also underway for a meeting with members of the School of Spiritual Science. Meeting times and locations will be reported in future editions of the newsletter.

JUNE 12-14

Discovering our Future

Youth will come together to bring Rudolf Steiner's ideas on Karma to life. An in depth look will be taken at a lecture from "Anthroposophy in everyday life: Facing Karma". Denver Waldorf School, Colorado. For more information, please contact Bridget Blanning: 303-902-1326 or bmbllanning@hotmail.com

Sunday, JUNE 14


First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required - Discussion on Lesson 18 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 19. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Ramage at (360) 241-7854.

AUGUST 1-8, 2009

Encircling Light-Expectant Silence

The Anthroposophical Society in Canada hosts this conference on the North in White Horse, Yukon. Full details about all aspects of the Conference are available on the conference website, www.encirclinglight.ca.



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2009 North American Initiative Meeting Report

Dear Friends,

As I sit here and think on this past weekend, I find goose bumps crawling up my arms and down my back because something *magical* happened, something perhaps even historic unfolded in the basement rooms of the Portland Waldorf School. In this report, I will strive to share what we did with the same level of consciousness and heart with which the 2009 North American Initiative Meeting was planned and unfolded. What I can clearly articulate now is that when twenty individuals, each engaged with Anthroposophy in his or her own way, come together and hold space with thought, feeling and intention, a new path is created for us all.



On Friday, January 16 we opened the 2009 North American Initiative Meeting with a welcoming circle and met one another, through words and gestures, in the cold winter's night. The first meal we ate together was a hearty group-cooked meal, shared by candlelight. These two events quickly brought the group together and with already a communal tone and energy, everyone gathered to hear Nathaniel Williams speak on the history, and intention, behind the Youth Section. What Nathaniel brought set the quality for our work together. Over the weekend, we were each able to really began to work with the five conditions which Rudolf Steiner indicated for the Youth Section in the context of the 21st Century in North America:

- ❖ Find other people who *want* to be together and spread the heart of Anthroposophy and who agree to meet regularly with missing *as few* gatherings as possible.
- ❖ The mood of these gatherings should be *open* and *tolerant* so that everyone feels free to speak agreements and disagreements fully.
- ❖ Develop an *enduring loyalty* and remain so throughout life.
- ❖ Do not listen for precision or thought technique but rather try to listen into a *freeing experience* of others.

- ❖ Pour will into thinking so that it becomes felt even in the body as *experiential thinking*.

Dawn Stratton then led the group in exercises which included some honest foolery and which enabled us to meet one another in a simultaneously profound and playful way. After already five hours of work, individuals parted ways, some going to bed to rest while others gathered 'round the fire in the chilly Portland air, basking in the glory of connecting with others who we were asking interesting and engaging questions. *Flames were recognized and fires were sparked!*



Saturday morning, Julie Griggs

led some exercises in Spatial Dynamics and Peter Alexanian brought singing exercises to the group. Together, these exercises awakened and heightened our senses to something greater at work—as we hummed our tones together, an electrifying current could be felt rising up in the air and spreading out, warming hearts and minds. But, perhaps, the most spectacular experience was the sense of something sacred being formed in-between individuals, as listening was enlivened and hearts quickened, in developing a sensitivity towards understanding the depth and genuine joy of our collective work.

Stefan Klocek, who graciously took on the task of facilitating our discussions, guided the group through dyad and group work around six central questions over the course of the Meeting:

1. What has inspired our work?
2. What challenges are we experiencing?
3. In what form is Anthroposophy appearing in our work?
4. How can we work together to bring our work to a new level?
5. What have we learned over this weekend?
6. How do we move forward effectively?

These questions were intentionally left ambiguous, to encourage real thinking and collaboration in discussion, in the hopes of stimulating and highlighting the similarities, and differences in how each individual thought and worked. Perhaps most exciting to witness was how the group discussions allowed for the collective whole to see the *commonalities* and the full picture of what inspired our work and how we were experiencing the work we were doing



in the world. Understanding not only our individual work but also the impact and possibility of our collective work, empowered and inspired each of us to ask, "What can we do together? What task can we leave the Initiative Meeting with and return with to our communities?" And it was this question, focused specifically on the future of the North American Youth Section, which took the stage of our final discussion on Monday morning.

Together, the group worked consciously and deeply on every level to make this weekend not only a meaningful experience, but also one with far-reaching implications. The twenty individuals who met were representative of an active and engaged body of young or youthful people who are interested in social change and in taking care of one another and the world. Furthermore, concern for how

Anthroposophy is portrayed and brought to the world and how this gesture can be enlivened and truly nurtured in the world was discussed. Exercises in art, movement and thought allowed the entire experience to be a three-fold exploration of how Anthroposophy lives within us and how we express it in our very selves.



On Sunday evening, a few Portland community members joined in the circle discussion and shared thoughts and questions around what Anthroposophy was, whom it related to and, most importantly, how it engaged intergenerational conversations. Many of the participants were inspired by a question of bridging the gaps between generations, particularly the older and younger, and asked how this



was possible. What was understood was that this could become a task of the youth to truly share their work with others and to listen and learn how others were actively seeking, researching, experiencing and sharing Anthroposophy in their own lives.

While no singular answer was arrived at, what came together was a powerful group of people committed to a common task: a modern knighthood. Inspired by the flame in one another and by the call of the times to really change the world and to support one another more actively through engagement and *interest in one another* something was created and held, with the understanding that future work and meetings would be necessary to nourish what was born on this particular weekend. Together we walked away from our gathering with our own mantra, a verse that we can each work with, Karl Konig's poem on knighthood:

There is a knighthood of the 21st century
Whose riders do not ride through the darkness of physical forests, as
of old, but through the forest of darkened minds.

They are armed with a spiritual armor,
And an inner sun makes them radiant.

Out of them shines healing,
Healing that flows from the knowledge of the human being as a
spiritual being.

They must create inner order, inner justice,
Peace, and conviction in the darkness of our time.

They must learn to work side by side with angels.

We invite you to join us and have chosen, by group consensus, to be reminded of this verse and our commitment to one another by the full moon and by any ambulance with its sirens sounding—a call to attention and to consciousness. This will enable us to elevate our awareness and to imbue the poem with our own conviction and sense of connection in that moment.



Many individuals came to the Initiative Meeting with the desire to feel less alone in the world and in their work and to find trust that the work that we were taking on was effecting real change. If anything, they left with the sense that they met nineteen other amazing individuals who understood their experiences in the world intuitively and who consciously supported their work. It is rare, and indeed a blessing, to meet someone who truly *understands* to be committed to this work and it is even more rare to find someone who *inspires* the continuation and collaboration of this work. But this is exactly what we found at the Initiative Meeting. Twenty inspiring voices, all seeking to connect through the commonalities, to trust in one another's work, to stand for good and to work together for an even better future for



human beings in this world, came together and united, determined to return with their inspiration and their renewed enthusiasm to their local communities.

Now we can envision the web that stretches across North America, with pockets of activity throughout and strong,

shiny silver tendrils that connect each and every one of us to one another. This image is strong and strengthened by the sense of a new group of knights who are stepping into the foreground to carry on good work, to strive against the darkness, to inspire the light and to seek, within each individual they meet, that flame which flickers, alive, and filled with the possibility inspired by hope and vision.



I can only express the gratitude that I feel for the heartfelt support for this unique experience that our entire community demonstrated. We are awakened to the future and to the infinite possibility it presents and we are motivated to actively engage with the task that stands before us. Join us and help us usher Anthroposophy into a new and enlivened era, focused on community, compassion and striving in these most intriguing of modern times.

I also extend my appreciation for the incredible commitment of my fellow planners, for each individual who took on a leadership role and for those who followed—each of us met our tasks with enthusiasm, with love and with a gesture of kindness that is simply moving to remember. *Thank you, each and every one of you.*

*Warmly,
Leslie Loy*