



AAPAE NEWSLETTER No 11
26th May 2008

2nd ASIA/PACIFIC Regional Democratic Education Conference (APDEC)

will be hosted by Dr Kaila and Dr Kushal

SUNDAY 28th – Tuesday 30th December 2008
at
DAV Public School, New Panvel,
Mumbai
India.



Dr Kaila as many of you will remember travelled from India to attend and support the 1st APDEC Regional held in conjunction with AAPAE's 7th Conference at Kinma in Oct in 2007. He is Editor - Journal of Psychosocial Research and Professor and Head (Psychology), Dept. of PG Studies & Research, 6th floor, S.N.D.T. Women's University, Churchgate, Mumbai-

400020, & Vice-President: Counsellors Association of India. Chairman - TASH Foundation. We hope that this gathering will enable APDEC to take the next steps in its evolution.

Those who would like to register may contact for details on the e-mails:

kailahl@hotmail.com and
davro@vsnl.com

A REMINDER of THE DECISIONS made at the AAPAE 2007 AGM in OCT 200

1. In order to give equal time and importance and to conserve stretched resources, we decided that we would hold the AAPAE Conference and ASIA/PACIFIC Regional Democratic Education Conference (APDEC) in alternate years.
2. We accepted Dr Kaila and Dr Kushal's offer to host the next Asia/Pacific Regional Democratic Education meeting in Mumbai in India during 2008. (28th -30th December 2008)
3. The next AAPAE gathering will be hosted by Tamariki Christchurch, New Zealand in 2009. Date to be decided. The conference will take place on a Marae.
4. We suggest to Gab and the students at Blacktown Youth College that they organise and host a Student Voice weekend during 2008. Date and Venue to be decided. Juli G to liaise with Gab about this.
5. We hope to fund raise and financially support 2 AAPAE representatives to attend IDEC 2008 in Canada, the Asia /Pacific Regional Conference in India, 2008 and 2 Blacktown Youth College students to attend the AAPAE conference in NZ in 2009.

THE YOUTH FORUM - Report from Juli Gassner

My original intention at the October 2007 AAPAE gathering at Kinma was to have a youth forum - led by youth. The goal was for the youth to guide the event - and for them to run it around their interests - not have their interests squeezed in around our dialogues and speakers. The latter is often a complaint made at Democratic Education gatherings.

The thought was that the students from Bidwill (The School Gab started in Blacktown) - supported by some other students (possibly university students) could be the key people.

I have since visited Bidwill and hope to keep doing so at least once a term this year (hopefully more). It became clear to me that it was my intention for them to have their voice heard through an arts/ craft/ sports forum - not theirs. While I must say that Di (Assistant principal - who some of you have met at various AAPAE events) was also keen for some sort of involvement of the Bidwill students with Currumbena and Kinma students, the notion of a forum was too much.

Through dialogue with Julie C, Wendy, Sue and Cec, I have decided that exploring options with Bidwill over the coming year as we build the foundational relationship so necessary for jointly paving a way, is the route I am keen to take.

Whether we then host a youth forum in a different way is open to question. Are students from Preshil interested in taking a lead? Are there any students at Booroobin who would have any interest? Perhaps there are a group of homeschooling students? Is there a large enough group at BIS or one of the other Victorian schools?

While I can speak on behalf of the Kinma crew in saying that our students would be pleased to join a venture, they are not able to do it alone. Further we have a new staff member on the Older class and it would be inappropriate to ask her to facilitate such a process.

So at this stage I open a 'forum' to all of you- and encourage you to share your thoughts on the listserve regarding the youth forum - which we were originally imagining holding in the

October break.

An overnight camping gathering?
Perhaps a tad expensive for an
interstate affair?

Please go back to your students and
ask them also

Looking forward to hearing from you

juli gassner

Federal Funding Agreements 2008-2013

We all remember the scramble we experienced when the Federal Government's Quadrennial Funding 2003-2008 was announced a few days before Christmas with all the requirements (flagpoles, comparative reporting, testing etc) linked to this funding and the difficult task of co-ordinating a response from AAPAE. The next round of Quadrennial Funding 2009-2013 will be upon us soon and the Minister Julia Gillard has given notice that discussions are underway about many issues related to this as well as a review of the whole funding process. AAPAE is currently preparing a letter to put to the Minister so if you would like to discuss this or contribute to the submission please join in discussion on the ausschools elist or contact Cec directly with your ideas.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Many of you will remember Rotem Mor, a student at the Institute for Democratic Education in Tel Aviv studying for a degree in Democratic Education who gave a presentation at IDEC2006. Rotem wrote recently about his change of direction to the study of Middle Eastern music and about some of his thinking since IDEC2006.

It has been almost two years since I spoke at IDEC 2006, my last formal encounter with Democratic Education. In my talk at the conference I discussed the history of the state of Israel from the beginning of the Zionist movement until today. I outlined the effect of the Zionist movement on our land, emphasizing the current realities of occupation, discrimination and racial separation which are enforced by the Israeli authorities upon the Jewish and Palestinian populations of the land. I then discussed some of the grass roots education and activist projects which I have taken part in over the last few years such as seminars for youth who are contemplating their army service, joint (Palestinian□Israeli□ International) protest against the Israeli built separation wall, support groups for young Conscientious Objectors, alternative summer camps for youth and others. After the first part of the talk I had the chance to answer some questions by the other participants in the conference and later I had a chance also to talk to some of them in private as well. Many of these conversations have been rolling around in my head since then and for some time I have wanted to write a follow up to my talk which will detail a grander vision for Democratic education as a force for a comprehensive Democratic transformation of our country and the world. I have finally been able to complete this piece of writing, which I now offer to

my friends and teachers in the Democratic Education community in Israel and worldwide. In this article I will examine how insights I have gained from my work for social justice can be applied in the thoughts and practices of Democratic educators in Israel and worldwide.

For the full article, *A vision for Democratic Education as part of the movement for Democracy in Israel/Palestine and worldwide*, go to

http://www.aapae.edu.au/documents/Vision_for_Democratic_Education_in_Israel_Palestine_and_worldwide.pdf

IDEC 2008

Vancouver, Canada □□11th – 18th August 2008.

at the University of British Columbia.

□ **<http://www.idec2008.org>**

□ "Experience democracy: live it, learn it, share it!"

Imagine young people growing up with a deep sense of meaning, respect, connection, self-direction, passion and community. Join parents, educators and young people in celebrating learning that is based on democratic processes.

The 16th Annual International Democratic Education Conference (IDEC) will meet in Canada for the first time Aug 11th-18th 2008. IDEC is an international gathering of teachers, parents, students, researchers, and the wider public who have a common interest in democratic education.

Democratic education offers a unique alternative to conventional schooling. By engaging in participatory democracy, a school's whole community is involved in its operation. Such a school offers its students the day to day experience of democracy in action. Democracy is lived.

This open-space format, 7-day conference will include keynote speakers, workshops and multi-media presentations. There will be lots of room for participants to lead workshops, and informal brainstorming and discussion.

Keynoters will include:

Helen Hughes; Founder, Windsor House School
Yaacov Hecht; Founder, Institute for Dem. Ed. in Israel
Mimsy Sadofsky; Director, Sudbury Valley School
Donna Barker; Dem. Ed. researcher
Jerry Mintz; Founder, AERO
And many more...

Windsor House Live will be the IDEC program geared to the interest of younger participants (aged 6 and up) and run by volunteer alumni, current teens, parents and staff from Windsor House School. There will be many scheduled and self-directed activities, including theatre, music, arts, play, outings and other fun stuff. The running of the space will be modelled on Windsor House practices of school council and judicial committee so all involved will be able to /live democracy/ as it is practiced at Windsor House.

IDEC is hosted by the Vancouver based Society for the Advancement of Non-coercive Education (SANE) and is closely affiliated with Canada's most established democratic school: Windsor House
<http://sane.at.org> <http://whs.at.org>

For information and registration visit: www.idec2008.org or call registration desk: 1-866-352-5976

A Development from IDEC2006 in SYDNEY – Go tech angel Bryn!!!

BlueCraneMedia, based in Berlin, has started 'IDEC OnLine'.

This project aims to provide coordination, structure, infrastructure and support for Distance Conferencing applied to future IDECs, starting with IDEC 2008, allowing people who cannot attend in person to join in "virtually". The web site will also provide an audio/visual archive of previous IDECs.

For more details visit <http://thebluecrane.com/idec%2Donline/>

5th Annual AERO Conference □ "Moving From Ideas to Practice" □

Hosted by the Alternative Education Resource Organization (AERO)

□ June 26th - 29th 2008, Russell Sage College, Troy, NY

Conference Director Isaac Graves

After months of organizing and anticipation, the 5th annual AERO conference is nearly upon us. Only 5 days remain to register! Deborah Meier, Matt Hern, Khalif Williams, Wesley Clark, Mary Leue, Dave Lehman, Pat Montgomery, Charles Eisenstein, Jerry Mintz, Chris Mercogliano, Tim Seldin, and Ron Miller are only a sampling of the names and faces that will take part in this impressive 4 day event. Act now to secure your spot.

Visit www.AEROConference.com, e-mail aeroconference@gmail.com

EUDEC 2008 □

The Eudec Conference at the University of Leipzig will run from July 25 – August 3.
Conference Flyers and Posters Now Available

Please help us with outreach! Europe is a large area to cover, and we need support in spreading the word about the conference. Flyers and posters can now be downloaded from the website www.eudec2008.org <<http://www.eudec2008.org/>> in both English and German. If you would like us to send you some printed copies to distribute at your school, university or organisation, just send us a mail at info@eudec2008.org.

European Democratic Education Community, EUDEC, Founded

The European Democratic Education Community, EUDEC, was officially founded on 16 February at the 5th European planning meeting for EUDEC 2008. This network sets out to pursue the following aims:

To support all forms of democratic education throughout Europe

To promote democratic education as the sensible educational model for all democratic states.

To establish, in legislation, the right to found and attend democratic schools

To provide aid and support to democratic schools and start-up groups

To facilitate exchange of information between democratic schools in Europe and create connections between schools for cooperation and mutual learning

To evolve into an independent and sustainable organisation with charitable status

The 39 participants of the founding meeting also elected a Council with 11 members, including four school students from the UK, Denmark and Germany. For information on membership, please contact Leslie Ocker (leslieocker@aol.com).

EUDEC Chosen as Official UN Decade Project

The European Democratic Education Community, EUDEC, has been chosen as an official project for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development for the period 2008/2009.

This network, whose founding members include students and teachers from Summerhill, Sands School, the Freie Schule Leipzig and the Kapriole Schule, as well as representatives from democratic schools in other European countries, is working to become the foremost advisory organisation and connective network for democratic education in Europe within the next five years.

Blue Mountain

There is good news from Blue Mountain. What follows is a letter from Therese Nguyen, a Blue Mountain parent and board member.

I want to thank you all once again for emailing letters to State Superintendent Susan Castillo on behalf of Blue Mountain School. On March 6, we received an email from her office with good news for now. The state superintendent's office confirmed that the school will remain open until the end of the school year while they review the mounds of evidence in the appeals case. Your letters have made a difference. They are looking at the case seriously, instead of just writing the school off. I think it also helped that Blue Mountain's lawyer submitted a well-written filing exception to the proposed final order, which as he noted, were ridden with "fatal flaws" in logic.

I received copies of over 70 letters to the Superintendent, which were all forwarded to the local district board and local Superintendent. A couple of the local board members who voted in support of the school were very appreciative of your comments and looked forward to receiving them every day. As some of you know, there was not only support from all over the U.S. – like Florida, New York, Texas etc... but also from all over the globe – India, Italy, Australia, Spain, England, Canada, and Germany, to mention a few. It was impressive, and the school community enjoyed reading your letters as well.

I'm not sure if you all watched the youtube video, but there are over 800 views to date! I have uploaded a new video with the updated information above, and ask that you forward it to folks who support democratic education. It certainly won't hurt to keep the stream of emails flowing to the Superintendent's office as she reviews the information.

In the meanwhile, the Blue Mountain community is looking into creative ways to keep the school going. There is a committee researching the potential of obtaining a new charter contract. There will be brainstorming meeting in April for the students and families to explore ways to keep the community together. I'll keep you posted with more news, probably sometime this summer.

Once again, my many, many, many, MANY THANKS once again to your letters of support. Hurrah for Blue Mountain School!!!!

New web site

Dana Bennis and Isaac Graves, associated with the American group AERO and its magazine Education Revolution, have set up a new web site at

www.democraticeducation.com. Their aim is to list every known school, educational program and supporting organization involved in education where students are respected as equals and have the right to control their own learning. They will also include a reading list. Contact them at <http://www.democraticeducation.com/contact.htm>.

AAPAE 's Website!
www.aapae.edu.au

AAPAE Committee for 2007/2008

Cecelia Bradley (ACT) - President
Sue Goode (NSW) - Secretary
Keith Goode (NSW) - Treasurer
Chris Price (NSW)
Adrienne Huber (WA & NSW)
Ian Sheppard (NSW)
Wendy Pettit (NSW)
Juli Gassner (NSW)

Please consider becoming a member of AAPAE.
Membership forms can be found on the website
www.aapae.edu.au

IDEC WEBSITES
www.idec2006.org

www.idec2007.org

www.idec2008.org

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