A Message from the Chair, Anne Beneventi

Dear Global Awareness Members:

Welcome to our fall newsletter! As we open a new school year, I am struck, as I am sure you are, by how fortunate we are to be able to work with children and influence their lives. Along with that good fortune comes the responsibility to respect the needs, interests and development of each child. We are in the amazing position of being able to influence the lives of children who come under our care. Thanks to all of you who take that responsibility so seriously and provide good care and guidance through educating, parenting, counseling, or assessing gifted children. NAGC provides a resource for understanding and meeting the unique needs of gifted children.

Now that we’ve settled into the new school year, we’re busy making plans for the 60th Annual NAGC Convention. If you are unable to attend this year, please share with us any ideas of what you would like to see from our network as we continue moving forward. We value participation from all of our members.

For those attending the convention, we invite you to connect with us personally at our Business Meeting, Global Awareness Sessions, and our Global Gala Celebration. We are also co-hosting the Legacy Series with the Conceptual Foundations Network, honoring our own Dorothy Sisk. The Legacy event will take place on Friday, Nov. 8 at 3:15-4:45 pm. Let us know if you are available to help with hosting.

Our Annual Business Meeting is Saturday, November 9 from 10:45-11:45 am, Room 105. Do join in and get involved in this uplifting visioning and planning session. It’s a wonderful way to get a more intimate glimpse of the internal workings and thinking of the Global Awareness Network.

Please check out all of the Global Awareness Sessions listed on page 3 of this newsletter. We’re excited to exchange our experiences and collective wisdom of how to best meet our global learners intellectually and emotionally and how to allow them to inspire us with their own innate wisdom.

Finally, we hope you can celebrate with us at our Global Awareness Gala on Friday, November 8, at 7:30 pm. We will showcase the first recipients of the Annemarie Roeper Global Awareness Award. Our Gala always proves to be an informative, festive, and fun evening.

Please join me in welcoming Sharon Slodounik and Kelly Parks to the Global Awareness Leadership Team. Sharon was elected as incoming Chair, and Kelly is our future Program Director. Kelly will be Co-Chair until taking over from Barbara Mitchell Hutton who enthusiastically served as Program Chair for several years.

Thanks to Ellen Fiedler, our newsletter editor for concluding the “Year of Annemarie”, with a second edition honoring the life and work of Annemarie Roeper, co-founder and guiding light of our network.

At this unprecedented time in history, our world grows ever smaller and nurturing the wholeness of our children and caring for the environment is vital to our future survival. Thanks to you, our members, for joining us in promoting interconnectedness in our thinking and acknowledging and developing the global perspectives of our children.

Sincerely,

Anne Beneventi
A note from the Editor . . .

With this issue of Global Visions, we conclude the “The Year of Annemarie” as dedicated by the Global Awareness Network of the National Association for Gifted Children. You’ll see a poem by our beloved Annemarie Roeper, co-founder of the Global Awareness Network, and most of the articles focus on her work. Her influence goes on and on.

The first annual Annemarie Roeper Global Awareness Awards will be presented at the Network’s Global Gala on Nov. 8th in Indianapolis.

Our Network’s intent is to recognize those who respond to the concerns of the gifted and talented about the future and the world they live in by giving them opportunities to grow in understanding of different cultures and global interdependence and who provide them with the tools and experience to participate in the shaping of their destinies.

So many facets of Global Awareness are reflected in this issue, including the list of the sessions that will be presented at the upcoming NAGC Annual Convention in Indianapolis. These reveal how the seeds planted when Annemarie co-founded the Network are continuing to take root and grow, blossom and flourish. Read on and imagine Annemarie smiling with us all as all that she cared about so deeply continues to manifest in our world.

Ellen D. Fiedler, Ph.D., is Professor Emerita of Gifted Education from Northeastern Illinois University and an educational consultant.

The Annemarie Roeper Global Awareness Awards honor the legacy and work of Annemarie Roeper, co-founder of the Global Awareness Network of the National Association for Gifted Children. They will be given each year in recognition of significant efforts by one individual and one organization or institution that reflect the mission, goals and focus of the Global Awareness Network.

Establishing an annual award in honor of Annemarie Roeper was a heartfelt decision made at last year’s NAGC Convention by the Global Awareness Network leadership team. Annemarie’s work and life had a profound impact on gifted educators, gifted education and the lives of gifted individuals. Because of her visionary leadership throughout her lifetime, the Global Awareness Network team requested and was granted approval by the NAGC Board of Directors to institute annual Annemarie Roeper Global Awareness Awards beginning in 2013.

An open nomination process culminated in the decisions regarding the Award winners. At least 3 members of the current or past Network leadership team evaluated the nominations against criteria taken directly from the Mission and Goals of the Global Awareness Network. (You’ll find these shown on p. 16 of this issue of Global Visions).

We are excited about announcing the first recipients of the Annemarie Roeper Global Awareness Awards! If you can, be sure to join us for the news and to meet the award winners as we celebrate them and all that they do. The Awards will be announced at our Global Gala, 7:30 p.m. on Friday night, November 8th at the 60th Annual NAGC Convention in Indianapolis!
Global Awareness Sessions at NAGC in Indy

The Global Awareness Network is coming to Indianapolis for the NAGC Convention, and we hope you’ll be there, too! Here’s your handy-dandy reference guide to Global Awareness Network activities at the convention.

Global Awareness Network Business Meeting: Sat. Nov. 9th, 10:45-11:45 am
(A great time to connect with other network members, find out what all is going on with the network, and get involved.)

Global Gala: Friday, November 8th, 7:30-9:30 pm
(Our super celebration… and will include presenting the first winners of the Annemarie Roeper Global Awareness Awards!)

Concurrent Sessions – Friday, November 8th
9:30 am Identifying & Serving Those Gifted in World Languages: International Mindedness & the First Globals
Christopher Reynolds

9:30 am Breaking Through: Dabrowski’s Theory Experienced!
Edith Burke & Amy H. Gaesser

9:30 am A World on the Move: Teaching Primary Students About the Effects of Immigration & Migration
from Personal to Global Levels
Merzili Villanueva

10:45 am Spreading the Word: Taking Gifted Education Best Practices to Where It Is Most Needed
Karen Bendelman

1:45 pm Infusing Service with Learning
Katrina Weimholt

1:45 pm Infinite Possibilities: How to See the Power of Our Thoughts
Anelia Wetter & Gretchen Ehret

1:45 pm Valued & Engaged: Why Facebook is So Popular
April Keck DeGennaro

1:45 pm Moving Dabrowski into the Pit: Addressing Dabrowski’s Overexcitabilities in the Classroom
Robert (Bob) W. Seney

Poster Session – Friday, November 8th
9:30 am Peace Be With You: A Year Long Study of Peace & How to Become a Peacemaker
Martha M. Champs

Concurrent Sessions – Saturday, November 9th
8:00 am Let’s Get Critical!: Social Justice Across the K-12 Curriculum
Merzili Villanueva, Micah Bruce-Davis, & William Hooper

12:30 pm Wisdom of a Lifetime – Gifted Seniors Share Their Insights
Sharon Collins

1:45 pm Mother Earth & Father Sky: Promoting Living in a Harmonious State with the Environment
Diana L. Beck

3:00 pm Moral Sensitivity Empathy & Giftedness: New Research
Linda Kreger Silverman, Nancy B. Miller, & Frank Falk

3:00 pm Innovative Learning Promoting Global Thinking Through Stunning and Hilarious Art Images
Karen Kimball

Sunday Super Session – Sunday, November 10th
8:00 am Moving from Social Justice in a Global World to Social Action (8 am-10:15 am)
Dorothy A. Sisk & Michele Kane
Sharon Slodounik, our new Network Chair Elect, wrote such an eloquent Statement of Candidacy that we decided to print it “as is” (with Sharon’s permission, of course).

NAGC’s Global Awareness was years before its time
Looking toward diversity and interdependence across the world
Prior to the instantaneous Wi-Fi
where faces separated by thousands of miles
talk as if across from each other in the same room.
Global Awareness looked beyond talented minds
To touch the heart, to provide a balance of emotions
with caring for the earth on which all feet trod.
Today a technology standard is “digital citizenship”
But it responds most to the mechanics of being connected
The proper protocol and “how tos”
True global awareness is more about the “to dos”
to make our world a better place . . .
to extend a hand to others . . .
to bring steadiness and stability . . .
Nurturing the very superior cognitively able
To be responsible vibrant global citizens
at a time in which we need “hope
and involvement and constructive change”.
NAGC Global Awareness exudes the emotional energy
to connect the heart to the mind
to address issues and solve problems
Bringing benefit to all . . .
Because we have been “here”.
It is the mission of Global Awareness that touched my heart and
Helped open my understanding of a healthier, holistic approach
to affect and influence the precious children whose lives I touch daily.
It is this passion and commitment that draws me to Global Awareness leadership.

By Sharon Slodounik 2012
My name is Kelly Parks, and I am excited to take on the role of Convention Program Co-Chair for the Global Awareness Network. I’m looking forward to working with Barbara Hutton on our Convention Program for 2014 during this coming year.

I have seven years of experience working as a Gifted and Talented teacher in both the elementary and middle school environments. My passion for gifted individuals came from my own experiences as a gifted child. Through my unique journey, which was not always easy, I found a voice and a purpose…to help gifted individuals navigate their lives and understand our world. I adore gifted individuals of all ages and believe that together we create the future not only for ourselves and our immediate community, but also our entire planet. This is just one of the many reasons I am attracted to the Global Awareness Network.

We must think of ourselves as global citizens and prepare our children to do so also. I believe that gifted children are naturally curious about our global diversity, empathic to others, and thrive when they find positive ways to impact the world. Embedded within the varied experiences of our own individual lives we view the world with a unique perspective. If we allow our gifted youth to share their perspective with others, while learning to respect, honor, and cherish the moments when someone else shares their story with them, we all benefit and connect on a much deeper level. This connection combined with a sense of curiosity can open an infinite door of endless educational opportunities.

I am honored to serve a network that demonstrates a sense of interdependence and need for understanding the world through global awareness. Thank you for this opportunity.

~ Kelly Parks
The Roeper Philosophy of Self Actualization and Interdependence
by Michele Kane

An alternative model of education called, “Self Actualization and Interdependence” (SAI), sees education as a global, all-encompassing process of growth.

—Annemarie Roeper

Crisp, cool air fluttered through trees that had only just begun to lose their scarlet and orange leaves. It was a typical fall day at the Birmingham, Michigan campus of the Roeper School. Yet, October 12, 2003 was not just an ordinary school day. Hundreds of people had gathered to celebrate the eighty-fifth birthday of co-founder Annemarie Roeper.

Inside the auditorium were rows of guests tightly packed. Students scrambled to find more chairs as latecomers arrived. Amidst a stage set that was still under construction, five members of the Forensic Team had assembled. Center stage was Annemarie Roeper, the school’s co-founder and co-author of the piece that the students were about to perform. Their gift was a choral presentation of the Roeper Philosophy, the educational philosophy of Self-Actualization and Interdependence that provided the framework of the Roeper School. They began the piece midway through the celebration under the direction of teacher/mentor/coach Dan Jacobs. In unison, the students began sharing core elements of the philosophy:

“Our philosophy is a way of life...”
“To develop skills of cooperation...”
“Not a hierarchy, rather interdependence”
“Equal human rights”
“Our promise to children”

Together, in pairs and individually, the group continued to thread the key points that shape the Roeper Philosophy. The performance was a demonstration of the philosophy-in-action as it unfolded. Both the content shared as well as the process itself reflected its vital spirit.

Seamlessly, each student either blended with the others or remained silent. The phrasing only served to underscore the coming together in community as well as the rights of each person to maintain individuality. Even the stumbling over words or rushing through a line simply showcased that all is co-mingled and enfolded into the whole. These miscues served to enrich rather than diminish the piece. The teacher/coach stood in the wings and was clearly visible, supportive, and available but not intrusive. The performance highlighted the underlying mind-set that “a philosophy is only as valid as its implementation” (Roeper, 1990, p. 19).

This Philosophy of Self-Actualization and Interdependence (SAI) or philosophy of life is the heart of the work that Annemarie developed along with her husband George. Together, they developed the essence of their educational beliefs, which they describe as “an idealistic philosophy of life based upon self-actualization, interdependence, diversity and human rights” (Roeper & Roeper, 1981). It presents parents and educators an alternative lens through which to view the education of children. In this framework, the growth of the Self of the child is paramount rather than educating for college and academic achievements.

This is a humanistic and child-centered approach, which embodies the concept of social-emotional learning, which is the curriculum of the Self.

In this nontraditional model of education, the goal is to honor the Self by providing these opportunities for self-actualization and interdependence. Child-centered curriculum is created that emphasizes emotional as well as intellectual development. The school community is of equal importance in this model. Accordingly, the Self in relationship to community is also a vital component educationally for the developing child.

According to Annemarie (1999), the community is the context that provides a safe harbor for the child to explore his place in the world. Relationships become critical for self-development. In community students begin to identify with each other and exchange their ideas and feelings honestly. Boys and girls are able to relate in ways that are not superficial. In such a nurturing environment, learning evolves from the inside out and is based on the inner agenda of each child. Emotion is not divorced from intellect. The mutual respect for Self, other individuals, and the community fosters academic growth and is a by-product of the educational process not the main goal.

Annemarie has outlined these beliefs in Educating Children for Life: The Modern Learning Community. The book was published in 1990, the year of her retirement from Roeper School, and illustrates how the approach is a departure from traditional education. In the foreword of the book, Annemarie stated that only after retirement were she and George able to see their philosophy as one of uniqueness rather than universality. She then articulated the philosophy on behalf of the couple, which allowed it to move beyond the school walls. Although George influenced her writings tremendously, it was Annemarie that translated the ideas into the written word.

This vision of education is nestled in the arms of Max and Gertrud Bondy, Annemarie’s parents. They were both progressive educators and founded several schools in...
Germany. From Max, her father, she came to know the importance of community and from Gertrude, her mother and a Freudian psychoanalyst, she learned the importance of the inner world. George was a student at her parents’ school and was similarly imbued with these ideas. In this milieu, the Roeper Philosophy of George and Annemarie emerged.

Drawing on a strong foundation, they were able to create, change, hone, and implement this philosophy both as educators and administrators. The Roepers were active participants and practiced their theoretical beliefs just as it had been modeled for them. In Educating Children for Life: The Modern Learning Community, Annemarie began by sharing the dilemma of modern education:

*Humanity has made two promises to its children. The first is to prepare a world, which accepts them and provides them with opportunities to live, grow and create in safety. The other is to help them develop their whole beings to the fullest in every respect. Education is the vehicle through which we try to keep these promises.* (p. 3)

The remainder of the book examined what is described as the three components of education, namely, the goals and philosophy of education, the characteristics of the students and finally (from the interaction of the first two components) the third component, the process of education. The first component is discussed here to give an overview of the philosophy and the resulting framework of this educational model.

At the core of the book are simple questions such as: What are the philosophy and/or goals of education? Annemarie believes that many models of education answer the question with conventional formats. These frameworks replicated outdated approaches and ignore the impact of modern society and child psychology. Many educators continue to perpetuate the old thinking and do not grapple with the fundamental issues regarding the purpose of education, nor do they respond to a changing and interdependent world. In this worldview, the education of children is linear. That is, educating for elementary school, then for middle school, then high school, and then college or the world of work.

The successes and failures of the national educational system continue to wax and wane as the purpose of education is uncritically examined. Education becomes divorced from life. The experiences of the children become fragmented as the relevance of these experiences to Self and to their world seem inconsequential and disconnected.

In general, Annemarie believed that the philosophies and subsequent goals of education have not been explored in a meaningful way. Administrators, far removed from classrooms, often impose time-honored methods of teaching and assessments ignoring the real needs of learners. The current national testing frenzy has created an atmosphere where teaching to accomplish testing benchmarks is the focus of most teaching and learning. In a hierarchical structure, the learning needs of the student are directed from above rather than emerging from the needs of the child. Roepers’ ideas are a contrast to these traditional perspectives. Annemarie stated:

*Out of the SAI concept develops a different model of education; the growth model as opposed to the success model. In the growth model, the Self is seen as healthy, not pathological. It wants to grow and learn, and not to be fixed. The tasks of learning and teaching are seen from a different perspective. A child’s inner agenda is seen as part of reality, [and] therefore, defines that reality in a different manner. We must respond to that.* (Unpublished article, 1999)

The differences between the SAI/Growth Model and traditional concepts of “success” are further shown in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAI/GROWTH Model</th>
<th>Vs. TRADITIONAL/SUCCESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who am I?.........</td>
<td>What can you do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evolvement...</td>
<td>Fulfill expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth.............</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning...........</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Free will.........</td>
<td>Imposed Limitations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power of self......</td>
<td>Power of society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never bored........</td>
<td>Boring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner agenda......</td>
<td>Empty vessel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active learner....</td>
<td>Passive learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependence...</td>
<td>Hierarchies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutuality..........</td>
<td>Survival of the fittest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many causes and effects</td>
<td>Cause and effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self as power......</td>
<td>Self ignored, unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: from inside out</td>
<td>Education: from outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies include the unknown and the mysteries......</td>
<td>Conquering life, making the unknown known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-range view........</td>
<td>Short-range view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No winners or losers; a circle of interdependence........</td>
<td>Belief in victory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support of the ecology........</td>
<td>Support of hierarchy</td>
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(Source: Roeper, Unpublished document, 1999)

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Michele Kane & Annemarie Roeper

~Continued on page 8~
According to Annemarie (1990) the Philosophy of Self-Actualization and Interdependence:

...originates from a combination of an idealistic commitment to equal rights and a realistic view of the limitations of power by our mutual interdependence. It provides a unifying principle. It is based on the following realization: there is neither absolute power nor complete dependence or independence. The fact of interdependence or human ecology becomes more and more apparent in today's world. (p. 15)

This leads to the following philosophy of learning and life, "We are concerned with the whole impact of life on the young person and the impact the person will make on society. We are concerned with the development of the Self" and the interdependence of all "Selves" (Roep, 1990, p. 15). Most recently, Annemarie expanded her ideas. When I asked her to reflect on aspects that she remembered as important in the creation of the school she shared the following:

It was a school based on a principle to which I gave a name much later on, but which was functioning all the way through, which I called Self-Actualization and Interdependence (SAI). The goal of education was to help the child to become who he was, which included all the academic work and everything that was needed to help this particular person. It is a mistake to think that if you think about the Soul, academic work is not a part of it. It is a very important part of it, but the goal is a different one. The goal is to help the Soul rather than to get into college. So we tried to create the kind of school that allowed children to do that.

It follows then that the goals evolve from the philosophy of education. Annemarie believed that both goals and philosophy must be aligned so that cooperative action of all members of the school community becomes the ultimate moral goal. Specific goals that enhance the general goal were also developed.

Turning back to the lovely fall day in 2003, it was apparent that the Roeper School continues to provide opportunities for children to grow in a supportive community. Students share with each other as part of the community. The educational future envisioned by George and Annemarie, which is their legacy, lives on.

References

"We are concerned with the whole impact of life on the young person and the impact the person will make on society. We are concerned with the development of the Self’ and the interdependence of all ‘Selves’.”
What happened to the smoothness of our lives?
Everything used to have its proper place:
Students belonged at desk, parents at P.T.A.,
Administrators in offices, achievements in tests,
Subject matter in departments, education in schools,
Religion in churches, families in homes,
Recreation in weekends, life into the years after high school,
Sex into marriage, feelings into otherwise unscheduled moments.
And teachers belonged in the front of classrooms
At proper distance from the children,
And the children’s minds were marching in proper formation,
In proper time intervals, toward the promised land:
Adulthood
Where they were then allowed to choose their well-defined niche;
Mother and housekeeper; reader of Life Magazine,
Climbing through the ranks of corporation; or
Killing people in a war.
It was all so nice and tidy,
And everything that might clutter up the scene was put away.
And then, oh the greatest miracle of all; it did not exist!
Poverty, discrimination, corruption, loneliness, fear and anxiety,
And also creativity, softness, truthfulness and joyfulness
Could not be placed in neat little rows and therefore not seen.
How manageable life used to be.

What happened to the smoothness of our lives?
All of a sudden a light began to fall in the corners and under carpets,
And we found it all.
It became highly visible and now it exists:
The heaviness of hate and the depth of hope;
The desperation and the loveliness.
We found it in little disconnected piles,
Covered with dust, rusty for lack of use,
With a sparkle here or there, reflecting the new light that shone on it.
And we saw that much of this belonged to the children in our classes.
We saw that John had learned his ABCs and that he had grown big.
But his spirit lay limply in the corner of his soul.
And some of us began to dust his spirit and we saw it was colorful,
And it began to shine by itself
And it started to stretch and fill out a little.
It still took up a small place only, beside the powerful ABCs,
And it began to pull on us; it began to demand attention,
And it began to hope for help.
And slowly – all that had been hidden from sight
 Came out in the open and it attached itself to those shapes and minds and sizes in front of us
And instead of 24 second grade 7 year olds there were 24 people.
People who were filled with many feelings and who stretched out their hands to us
Because they hoped we might help them grow.
Help them grow to be themselves
Not shape them roughly into preconceived forms
Which might hurt them in the process.
And now they have left their desks and crossed the space between us and them and
a new sense of apprehension comes over us
For they might find out things about us that we have hidden from ourselves.
And we began to look at ourselves, and we found that our spirit lay limply in the corner of our soul.
It too had been put into preconceived channels and not allowed to grow and glow.
And we find that it is our spirit that the gifted need
And our celebration of their uniqueness,
So that they can learn from us
How to be themselves.
Global awareness was central to Annemarie Roeper’s heritage and philosophy, and closely aligned with her understanding of human nature.

Annemarie believed that human beings have two primary tasks in life – to come to understand who we are – our passions, our strengths, our limitations, our own individual quirks – and to find a way to be engaged and happy in the world, contributing to it in a meaningful way.

Not unreasonably, she thought that if those are fundamental human drives, they ought to be fundamental to education. In Annemarie’s words, “The growing child has one overarching task which determines all his behaviors, actions and reactions: to make cognitive, emotional and physical sense of this world, and to find a place in it which will accommodate his unique self, his own inner agenda.”

All the things we think of as education – curriculum, knowledge, skills, socialization – are the tools we use to fulfill our drives to know ourselves and be engaged in the world. They are not the ends in themselves – they are tools in service to those needs.

She called her approach to life and education a philosophy of Self-Actualization and Interdependence. That to be truly happy, we need to be who we are meant to be, and that we come to that understanding though our interconnectedness with the world around us. In her words, “The concept of interdependence says that we can only survive if we understand that we depend on each other. It means realizing that there is not one cause and effect but many, that every action has many reactions, and that our past, present, and future, our thoughts and actions are all interdependent with every facet of the world around us.”

She always thought of that interconnectedness in global terms. She was a European by birth, always more aware of the nations around her than we ocean-bounded Americans. But she also thought globally because of the family and milieu she grew up in.

Her parents, Max and Gertrud Bondy, were idealistic reformers and educators born in Hamburg and Prague, respectively, at the end of the 19th century. After the First World War, Max and Gertrud’s response to the resulting devastation and social disruption was to turn to education, to try to educate the next generation in a way that would lead them to create a better world.

Max and Gertrud eventually opened the boarding school of their dreams on a farm named Marienau outside Hamburg. Their goal was to educate children to become people who could “think for themselves but feel with the community.” At Marienau, adults and students shared responsibility for decision-making and chores. It was co-educational and intellectually cutting-edge as they studied Bauhaus, Kafka and jazz, and full of art – dance, theatre, and music. Students and teachers went rambling for miles over the fields of heather, philosophizing about the world and everything in it.

~ Continued on page 11
This was the idyllic world Annemarie grew up in and where she met her future husband, George Roeper, who was a student there.

This idyll came to an end in the 1930s with the rise of Nazism. The Bondys were Jewish by heritage, although they had converted to Lutheranism in 1924. They were compelled to give up their school and fled first to Switzerland and then, 1939, to the US.

In 1941, Annemarie and George were invited to come to Detroit. Annemarie was going to be the director of a psychoanalytically oriented nursery school, and George started an elementary school. They were very young, especially Annemarie who was barely 23 and George who was barely 31. They were quickly successful, because although they were young they were steeped in this clear and appealing educational approach. They planned their program based on the kind of person they wanted their students to become: confident, self-aware, compassionate and engaged.

To do that, they wanted a strong, diverse, democratic community. They were appalled by the racism in America and planned to integrate their school from the beginning but were advised to hold off until they secured their citizenship. But in the early 1950s, their school became the first integrated independent school in Michigan. They sought students of all economic levels, religions, ethnicities and experiences.

An environment of emotional security was fundamental, so children could feel free to be who they were, because how can you figure out who you are if you disguise yourself all the time? As one Roeper student described it, “Roeper lets me be who I want to be until I’m able to figure out who I am.”

Mutual respect was key. They sought out teachers who were truly interested in honest, non-hierarchical relationships with students, so that the students can learn from their experiences and feel truly free to share their own.

Authentic choices for the students about what they study and how they approach it – even to the point of letting them fail – so that they can truly own their education and let their own interests inform it was another central element. Annemarie began offering Free Choice at the Kindergarten level back in the ‘50s, in which children chose which class they would go to for one block, so they could begin to experience what it felt like to make a decision and felt the consequences.

Diverse academic, social and cultural opportunities allow students to explore and discover what excites them – and what leaves them cold. Also, the curriculum explicitly emphasizes the interconnectedness of events and people, with a global perspective.

Most fundamental is a respect for emotional development, with a pace that allows the time and space and ability to respond to children, whether that’s a meltdown or a withdrawal or something more difficult to discern. This commitment to the primacy of the emotions led to the school’s conversion to a school for the gifted. In the 1950s, as the US became more interested in identifying gifted children as part of talent development to win the Cold War, George and Annemarie became concerned that our lack of knowledge about gifted children’s emotional development might mean that gifted children would be educated badly, blighting their ability to fulfill their potential and losing their gifts to the larger society. So in 1956, they redesigned the school’s program and became only the second elementary school in the country to be exclusively devoted to gifted education.

~ Continued on page 12
Annemarie lived globally, and thought globally. But it was supremely important to her that people realize that the ability and desire to participate fully and meaningfully in that world begins with a sturdy sense of Self. In one of her last speeches to the graduating class at Roeper, Annemarie said, “If your Roeper education has led you to love yourself, and with that to love your community and your world, then you will be fulfilling the task that we’ve been hoping for.”

You cannot love the world unless you love yourself. Anything in a school that takes away from the students’ ability to value themselves, takes away from their ability to value others.

This article is based on the presentation that Marcia Ruff gave as a panel member for a Symposium that we organized for the 20th World Conference on the Gifted and Talented on August 11, 2013. The Symposium was entitled “Annemarie Roeper: Global Visionary.”

Linda Silverman, Michele Kane, Ellen Fiedler, Marcia Ruff, Barbara Hutton, Anne Beneventi, & Patty Gatto-Walden

A book that you can’t put down…. A Book Review by Noreen Ward

Off the Charts: Asynchrony and the Gifted Child
FEATURING: 19 CHAPTERS WITH 14 LEADING GIFTED AUTHORS, published by Royal Fireworks Press in 2013
Edited by C. Neville, M. Piechowski and S. Tolan
Dedicated to Annemarie Roeper

Roeper defined giftedness as “a greater awareness, a greater sensitivity, and a greater ability to understand and transform perception into intellectual and emotional experiences” (1982)

Why it is difficult to put this book down…. The nineteen Chapters cover a wide spectrum of fascinating and informative gifted topics. The book explores: defining asynchrony, early childhood, sensitivity, over excitability, families, parenting, differentiation, acceleration, numerous resources, tips for parents and teachers, identification, assessment, history, homeschooling, personality attributes, and other complexities. Other enlightening information is shared about adulthood and aging.

Five Reasons Why I Personally Love This Book:

1. The inclusion of a chapter by our beloved Annemarie Roeper, author of “The ’I’ Of the Beholder”, creator of Roeper Review, and beloved gifted pioneer and mentor.

2. An admiration for the notable authors and their valuable contributions over the years.

3. My personal experiences in: starting a gifted program, advocating for gifted children for over 30 years and being a mom to four remarkable children and five grandchildren.

4. Collectively, the book is an amazing resource. The passion and dedication of these gifted advocates jump off the pages. Each chapter is as worthy as the next.

5. I could not put the book down. Off the Charts: Asynchrony of the Gifted Child is a bible for truly understanding the ’ I’ of the beholder.”

Noreen Ward is a Part-time Reading/High Ability Specialist for Brownell-Talbot PK-12 Preparatory School in Omaha, Nebraska.
"Be the change you wish to see in the world." Ghandi makes it sound so easy! Those traveling with gifted learners are aware it is a never-ending journey down a roaring river through a tangled valley with the most exquisite views. Where is the manual, the 10-step guide for growing inspiring leaders empowered to transform our world? Wait…there isn’t one? Gifted children with deep and complex thoughts, feelings and ideas can have myriad diverse factors influencing their development. As we tend to children’s soul roots, there are some starting points for consideration in creating new programs for bridging student’s rich inner lives with the outside world so their dreams can be transformed to reality.

Deep listening, beyond the ears, is requisite to uncovering unmet needs and innovating. In laying thoughtful foundations and constructing challenges replete with opportunities to be responsive to individual passions, we ignite students and encounter more than we thought could exist. Just the other day I introduced angle postulates in geometry. Students designed their own problems related to new concepts and in a blink we were in a whole new learning dimension. Instead of answering questions that someone else had already posed, we invented our own which took us on a road far surpassing any preconceived destination. Teaching children to trust their intuition can be life-altering; it can transform the unseen to visible. Teachers schooled in supporting the development of the whole child and then set free as action researchers not only take instruction to a new level, but also foster a culture of problem-solving and creation. Magic happens outside the box - the testing box, the classroom box and perhaps most importantly, the “known choices” box. Listen and limitlessness is found. I wonder what would happen if listening was a participation measure and we studied the types of questions students posed when evaluating teacher effectiveness.

Social emotional intelligence is like a tangerine sunrise. We can all breathe in its beauty and appreciate the light, yet also take for granted the science behind how our skyline transforms. Our children’s big feelings provide important data. I invite schools to thoughtfully consider the structures needed to support the development of specific competencies and skills as social emotional growth is inextricably tied to cognition and achievement. Extraversion and likeability are often confused with social emotional intelligence. Sensitivities are strengths and empathy is brilliance. Children must be able to walk with calm, confident courage when their ingenious ideas bump up against tradition and the familiar. Intimate knowledge of one’s self facilitates deep connection with others. Unveiling the essence of our beings is difficult in the absence of others to reflect our inner truth; we all need like-spirited journymates. Likewise, awareness of systems and our places in them progresses us towards greater peace. Children shine in giving. One of the most difficult lessons for the altruistic soul is learning to receive; we need fuel to light others. Under the big umbrella of social emotional development, optimism is critical. Optimism frees us to interpret challenges as learning opportunities, to see the light in others and to soar after falling.

The ying and yang tension between struggle and comfort, collaboration and accountability, and high expectations and compassion in nurturing children is like nature herself, day and night. We need both. In aspiring to continue Annemarie Roeper’s legacy, let’s illuminate countless contribution paths, inclusive of space for the yet-to-be-carved, and at the same time, explore the dark. Recently a student asked me, “Why would a teacher ask me a question that the book already explains the answer to?” Touché, point taken – let’s venture into the unknown together.
The recent tributes to Dr. Annemarie Roeper at the Global Awareness Gala last November and in the April issue of Global Visions caused me to reflect more deeply on the challenges faced by gifted students. In the field of gifted education, it is sometimes easy to become overwhelmed or discouraged by obstacles that exist due to a lack of understanding about the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted youth. We become frustrated with how to create and sustain programs that fully support best practices in the development of their gifts and talents. Along the way, we encounter visionary individuals like Annemarie Roeper and other leaders in our field, who help us to more deeply understand and connect with the essence of a child, as well as provide further knowledge to shape practice.

Speaking at the 2012 Global Awareness Gala at the NAGC 2012 Conference, U.S. Department of Education Assistant Secretary, Deb Delisle, reminded us “behind every piece of data and every number, is the heart and soul of a child wanting to achieve.” I found Ms. Delisle’s words inspiring and thought more intensely about a group of gifted youth rarely discussed in gifted literature—those who have had to deal with trauma in addition to developing their talents. Take all that we know about gifted children, heightened sensitivities and empathy, abilities to see life’s intricacies and paradoxes, to think deeply and divergently — and couple all of that with facing significant tragedy. The question of how best to support the development of potential then becomes even more complex. How do we help some of our most vulnerable gifted youth, those from war-torn or poverty-stricken countries, or who live daily with forms of domestic or neighborhood violence? In addition to all of the other challenges faced by gifted youth, these young people also need support to heal from some of life’s greatest challenges. We may find ourselves asking; Is it even possible to help them overcome such adversity and fully maximize their potentials?

In order to think and act on a global level, questions such as these need to be addressed if we are to truly support talent development in all of our gifted youth. The work being done by Dr. Lori Leyden and her team at Project LIGHT is reflective of Dr. Roeper’s efforts and offers one roadmap to support the healing and development of some of our most challenged gifted youth. Inspired by her work with orphan genocide survivors in Rwanda, Dr. Leyden founded the non-profit Create Global Healing (CGH) in 2007 and established Project LIGHT Rwanda in 2009. The mission of Project LIGHT is to be an international holistic resource center serving disadvantaged youth where young people receive emotional healing and training, real opportunities for economic independence and the freedom to become heart-centered leaders; LIGHT stands for Leadership, Inspiration, Global Healing, and Transformation. In a recent interview with me, Dr. Leyden shared her account of the program’s formation:

I started in 2007, but in 2008 we instituted a program where we trained 50 student leaders in tapping; it’s a train the trainer model. Using tapping and breathing and a number of other things that we taught them, trauma outbreaks at the school were reduced by 90% in less than a year and their test scores and passing the national exams went up. I realized that trauma healing alone for these kids wouldn’t be enough when they graduated. They have no opportunity to go to college, they were living in poverty, they had no one to take care of them, they had no job skills, there were no jobs, and their fate was to go back to their villages and to be homeless. In 2009, I started to dream this dream — what if we combined trauma healing with heart centered leadership skills and entrepreneurship skills? What had been done by humanitarian aid before was send kids to college or do disaster relief, but not these three pieces together. The trauma-healing piece is the glue that creates success. Without the heart-centered leadership training, how are we going to get the next generation to be collaborating together? And of course, without the entrepreneurship piece, without economic sustainability, it all falls apart.

The vision was to open the first international youth healing center in Rwanda with the notion that if these young people who have experienced the worst of human tragedies could heal and forgive and work and lead us into a peaceful future, anybody anywhere in the world could do that.

The tapping Dr. Leyden refers to is part of an innovative approach to mental health treatment known as Energy Psychology. Energy Psychology has a growing body of research that is supporting its effectiveness in addressing issues such as trauma, anxiety, and depression among others. Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) and Thought Field Therapy (TFT) are among the evidence-based protocols used in Energy Psychology. During treatment, clients are taught acupoint stimulation, often by tapping on the identified points, to support their recovery process. Dr. Leyden explained one of the theories regarding how it works.

~ Continued on page 12
Because of the somatic release opportunity from EFT, these kids could heal traumas. This is elemental because what the EFT did for them was to help them feel safe in their bodies for the first time. From a place of feeling safe in your body, you can have memories that now do not trigger you. You can change the amygdala in the fight/flight/freeze response of trauma, dealing with the brain response, the neurophysiology of trauma.

In addition to assisting in the treatment of trauma, EFT and other innovative strategies are incorporated throughout the leadership and entrepreneurial trainings, as well as utilized to assist the youth in dealing with on-going stressors. According to Dr. Leyden,

We use EFT for problem-solving, creativity, efficiency, productivity, even the leadership training. They are learning self-awareness, self-regulation, and collaboration — skills of a good leader. From one day to the next, they would come in with deep challenges — a bus went off the cliff and I lost my cousin, I was diagnosed with HIV — huge concerns. Tapping was a beautiful mind-body regulator that helped us figure out next steps.

Through the support of Project LIGHT, the youth went from feeling hopeless and with no vision of the future to going onto pursuing their dreams of going to college, opening businesses, and contributing to their communities. “They just wanted to get better so they could help others get better,” Dr. Leyden said. At age 22, these young people who had experienced unthinkable horrors as children are now seen as leaders in their communities and beyond. Twelve graduates from the orphanage have also participated in a four-week Project LIGHT residential training program. Dr. Leyden stated,

We have been working with them for two years now and they are showing no signs of trauma. They are teaching tapping to hundreds of thousands of people in their communities. They are giving speeches at the memorial time of the genocide, inspiring people to heal and to forgive. The vision was to connect these young people to other young people around the world and to have Project LIGHT Centers anywhere in the world. It would look different in each community. With those kinds of resources and with that kind of inspiration, we could create a whole new generation of leaders. And the amazing thing is I watched these young people completely transform.

Known as the Project LIGHT Ambassadors, these young leaders are helping make the Project LIGHT vision a reality by connecting with and offering support to other children and youth affected by tragedy. They listen, offer words of understanding and encouragement, and share the strategies that helped them heal from their own traumas. Project LIGHT is making an impact around the world including the Middle East, India, and Sudan, and the United States. Most recently, Dr. Leyden and her team were asked to come to the Newtown, Connecticut, which was deeply shaken by the December 2012 shootings of 20 school children and 6 adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary School. Dr. Leyden offers an example of how Project LIGHT is working here in the United States:

I came here because I knew that if we could heal in Rwanda, we could heal here too. It all came full circle when I started working with a boy who had lost his brother in the shooting. He was very depressed and angry and wasn’t going to school. He thought tapping was a bunch of malarkey. I said, “What if I set up a Skype call between you and the Project LIGHT Ambassadors?” He said, “Sure.” The Project LIGHT Ambassadors were extraordinary in speaking to his heart. They understood completely where he was and then they taught him to tap at the end of it. The next day, he went right back to school; he has gone from being traumatized to organizing young people in Newtown. He still has some issues, but we are working through them and he is making great progress.

Dr. Leyden’s vision and commitment to helping young people move beyond trauma to realize their greater abilities resonates with the dedication and work of Dr. Annemarie Roeper. Dr. Roeper was able to see beyond the external distractions to the essence of who the gifted child was and his/her potential. Given the examples of both Dr. Roeper and Dr. Leyden, how can we better assist gifted youth impacted by trauma? Should we be considering if a gifted child’s behavior is indicative of the cycle of hypervigilance resulting from a past trauma versus overexcitabilities? To what heights could they soar if we were able to help gifted children impacted by violence and tragedy address adversity by incorporating some of the tools used by the Project LIGHT team? What kind of talents and gifts could be realized? Don’t we owe it to all of our gifted youth to explore these questions further and find out?

Video clips:
Project LIGHT Rwanda: The beginning:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2WFseaTkOk&feature=youtu.be

Tap into LIGHT: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ylsv4zHDZMw

Websites:
Project LIGHT Rwanda — http://projectlightrwanda.com
Create Global Healing — http://www.createglobalhealing.org
Mission
The mission of the Global Awareness Network is to respond to the concerns of the gifted and talented about the future and the world they live in by giving them opportunities to grow in understanding of different cultures and global interdependence and by providing them with the tools and experience to participate in the shaping of their destinies. Therefore we are concerned with the following global issues:

- Cooperative sharing of resources
- Nonviolent conflict resolution
- Technological abilities to create and destroy, and
- Living in a harmonious state with the environment

Our Goals
- To serve as a source of information and inspiration regarding global issues that impact gifted education and all the children in the world.
- To serve the psychological needs of gifted and talented children by creating avenues that generate hope and enable active involvement in constructive change.
- To enable educators to infuse the learning environment for the gifted and talented with global issues.
- To explore, develop, and disseminate curricular materials and methodologies for integrating ethical considerations into curricula for the gifted and talented.
- To collect, develop and disseminate global issues-related materials and curricula for use in classes for the gifted and talented.
- To serve as a network among organizations for the gifted and talented and to link with global-awareness communities of other organizations.
- To provide opportunities for educators of the gifted and talented to act upon their commitment to global cooperation in their professional lives.

Our Focus
Helping students understand and learn about:
- A global perspective
- Cultural diversity
- An attitude of interdependence among all people
- Conserving natural resources
- Positive social action around the world

Wanted: Your Items for Our Newsletter!

Global Visions needs your contributions! Do you have a story to tell about your efforts to encourage gifted students and guide them toward greater global awareness? Have you been implementing aspects of global awareness in your professional or personal life? Do you know of students who are making positive contributions to our world? We need you to send in articles, ideas, photos, poetry, artwork, information about relevant programs, websites, or print materials …. whatever you think other members of the Global Awareness Network would find interesting. Please send your submissions to: Dr. Ellen D. Fiedler, Global Visions Editor, ellenfiedler@comcast.net

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