THE OAK GROVE NEWSLETTER

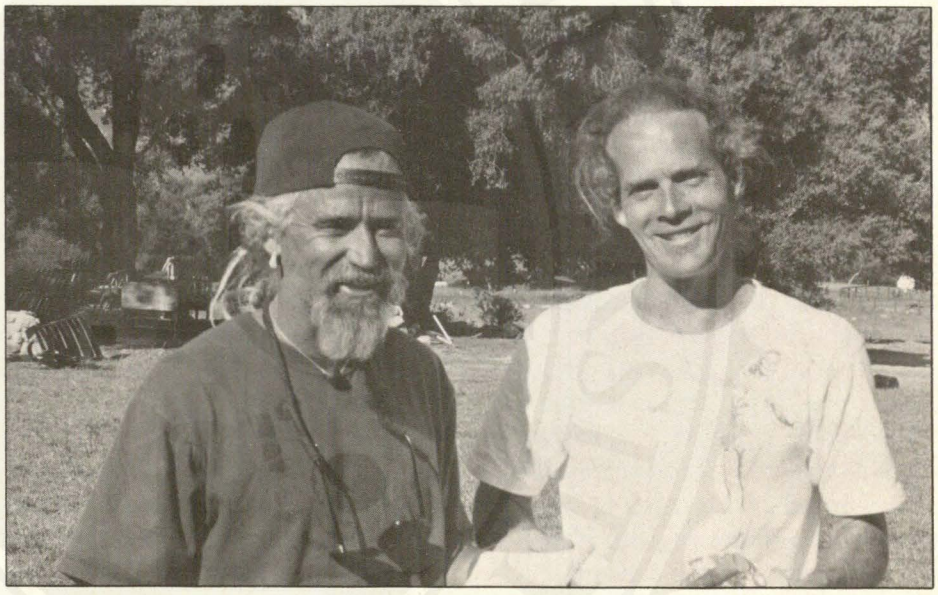
A publication of the Oak Grove School of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America Spring 1993

Oak Grove High School's Well-Integrated Sports Program

The daily physical education curriculum reflects the intent of the school, which focuses on the total growth of the student through sustained, systematic personal development. General physical well-being is developed through activities that integrate flexibility, strength and endurance. A typical class might include a warm up stretch session led by a dance student, an upper body/ abdominal exercise series and a mile run.

Diversity of movement is a fundamental objective approached through a combination of skill-building and activities that challenge a student's total physical potential. Students may spend half a period involved in specialized soccer drills after testing their balance and reflexes on our gum tree balance beam and the popular spider web. Yoga, taught by Sonia Nelson, and co-ed aerobic dancing are regular features that provide diversity.

In 1990 we were fortunate to build a new tennis and basketball court just east of the High School. Funded by the KFA, these courts have enabled us to offer greater variety in sports activities and to invite other teams to play here.



Jake Ainsworth and Jeff Otterbein on the playfield.

Hosting team sport events at Oak Grove has been a key element in our interscholastic program. Also, the school has recently become a member of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). CIF is the governing body of high school sports which enables us to participate in interscholastic games.

This fall, Oak Grove girls participated in their first CIF volleyball season. Practicing three times a week, and traveling in their "singing bus" all over Ventura County, the *Lunas* steadily molded themselves into an integrated spiking machine that is increasingly challenging to other Tri-County volleyball teams.

The boys' soccer team traveled as far north as Midland School in the Santa Ynez Valley during their most successful season yet. With only a few years of experience, the team has matured into a dynamic combination of a controlled, patient defense and an innovative, improvising offense.

Winter CIF participation features the boys' basketball team and the girls' soccer team which played various Tri-County teams throughout the month of January

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and February. Spring sports started in late February, when a boys' volleyball and a girls' softball team were formed for the first time.

As the High School continues to grow, we hope to include tennis, track and field, and cross-country running in the interscholastic program.

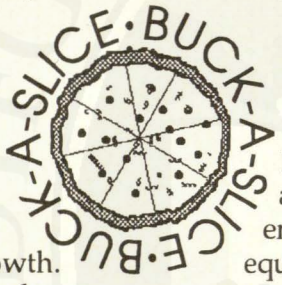
The charged atmosphere of games on the play field provides the avenue for inquiry into personal growth. For example, we encourage students to observe how competition affects their perception and performance. Instead of labeling it as good or bad, we try to see how competition affects relationship. Chloe Gladstone of the girls' volleyball team says, "It was fun playing other schools. Sometimes the competition was intense, but it brought us together as a team."

Physical education at Oak Grove is also concerned with cognitive growth. We teach the principles and strategies of team play, and the problem-solving activities encourage creative thought. Associated knowledge (physiology, statistics, professional sports, etc.) is investigated through the regular homework program of the school.

Also included in the program are extracurricular activities that take place after school hours and on weekends. Basketball practices Sunday afternoons and weekend backpacking trips are some of these activities.

We end each sports season with a traditional student/staff game. As a result of this fall's volleyball game, an after-school group is being formed to continue student/staff play on a regular basis.

We would like to thank Posy and Bob Smith for the generous use of their family swimming pool last fall. All classes have been able to enjoy this treat on hot days when we combine a cross-country run through Besant Meadow to the pool for a well-rounded, refreshing workout.



Since last spring, the P.E. department has held a weekly pizza sale. The buck-a-slice sales have been quite popular and the proceeds have enabled us to acquire new equipment. Badly-needed soccer goals have been partially financed through this student-run program. New soccer team uniforms, basketballs and the CIF referee fees have also been funded by pizza sales. This program will continue throughout the school year. ■

– Jeff Otterbein,
High School P.E. & French
and Jake Ainsworth, P.E.
and Horticulture

"To raise a child sanely, to help him to be perceptive so that he sees through these stupid prejudices, we have to be in close relationship with him. We have to talk things over and let him listen to intelligent conversation; we have to encourage the spirit of inquiry and discontent which is already in him, thereby helping him to discover for himself what is true and what is false."

– J. Krishnamurti,
Education and the Significance of Life

GOOD NEWS FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Oak Grove is the happy recipient of several special gifts that benefit the school's scholarship program. There are currently 40 students receiving financial aid as part of our commitment to make the school available to low- and middle-income families.

Two thoughtful bequests have been made this year. One from the estate of Monica Ros, a former trustee of the KFA in the 1970s and a School Board member in the 1980s. The second was from Louise Ganz (known to us as Phoebe) who lived in Hemet, California. She has been a kind and generous supporter of Oak Grove in the last years of her life.

Next Fall, Oak Grove will also be the recipient of a generous $10,000 scholarship grant from the School of the Pacific Islands. The foundation's board requested that this grant assist a High School Student. The school selected Aisha Umar who will graduate from 8th grade, and will enter High School this September. Our thanks go to parent and School Board Chair Ted Moore for facilitating this grant proposal.

We are also very excited to learn that Miss Linne Lundbeck of Ventura has made plans to provide a scholarship for a High School boarding student. Miss Lundbeck's generous gift is deeply appreciated.

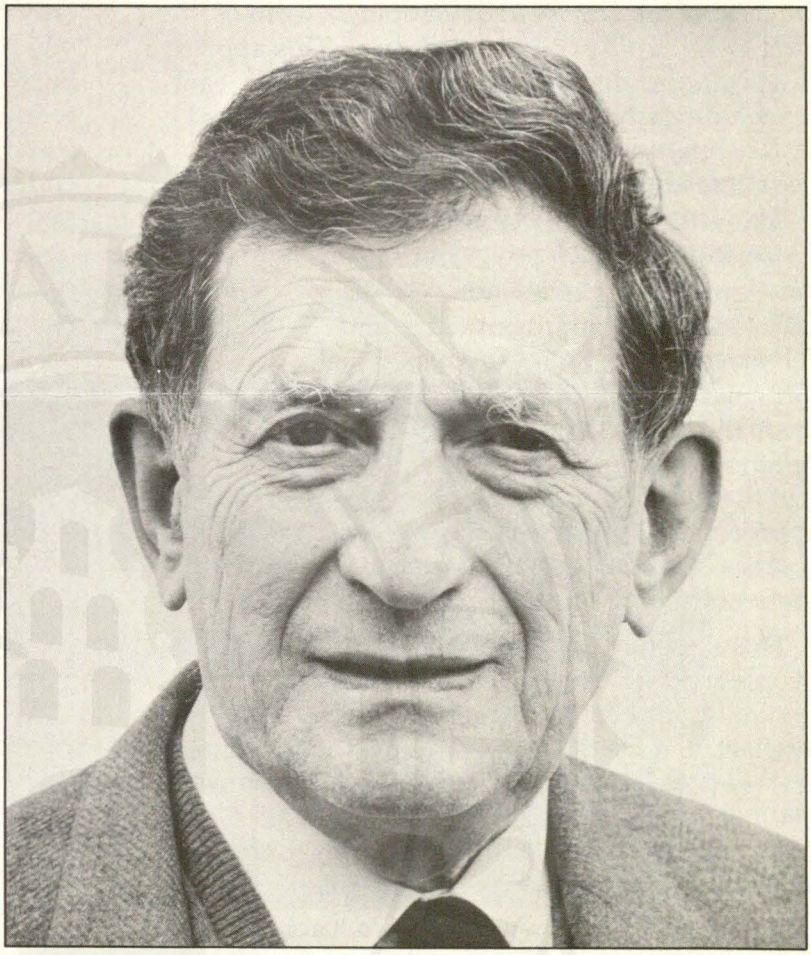
These gifts offer our students an educational opportunity that could not be afforded otherwise. This also brings to life the intent of the scholarship program which is to keep the student body socially and academically diverse to reflect the global community in which we live. Our many thanks to these friends and others who contribute to this program. ■

– Kristi Klein

A Life Fully Lived

On October 27, 1992 Dr. David Bohm died of heart failure in Edgware, England, a London suburb. His wife, Saral, was with him at the time of his passing. As Dr. Bohm's influence in the formation and continuity of the Oak Grove School was very considerable, a few words about his life and work may be of interest to the Newsletter's readers.

Probably most widely known for his work in theoretical physics, Dr. Bohm was a Fellow of the Royal Society of London. He had held teaching positions at Princeton; in Sao Paolo, Brazil; Haifa, Israel; and London. In 1992 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Technion in Haifa. His published works in the field include *Quantum Theory, Causality and Chance in Modern Physics*, and *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*. His doctoral degree from Berkeley was taken under the supervision of J. Robert Oppenheimer. While teaching at Princeton, Bohm was a colleague of Albert Einstein, with whom he conducted an extended series of discussions regarding relativity theory and quantum theory.



DAVID BOHM, 1917-1992

Less well known is a series of events occurring in the early 1950s which was to affect the direction of Dr. Bohm's life from that point forward. Oppenheimer, his college mentor, had become a target of Joseph McCarthy's "Red Scare" Congressional hearings. After having served as director of the Manhattan Project, Oppenheimer had been accused of passing top-secret nuclear technology to the Soviets. Various colleagues, Bohm among them, were called to testify before several federal committees. Dr. Bohm refused to testify, concerned that even the most innocuous statements would be twisted and used against his friend.

Eventually, Oppenheimer was cleared of all charges. But given the political climate of the time, Princeton, and any other prospective employer, made it clear to Bohm that he was *persona non grata*. He was, in effect, forced to emigrate in order to pursue his work in physics.

This inclination to stand for what he thought to be the truth, often at great personal cost, permeated Dr. Bohm's professional work, in which he consistently questioned any form of rigid orthodoxy.

This same inclination contributed to his desire to engage in meetings with Krishnamurti, a man whose "philosophical" leanings placed him well beyond the borderline of typically acceptable science or philosophy. It was the centrality of Krishnamurti's concern with the division between "the observer and the observed" that attracted Bohm, as this same phenomenon was a pivotal issue in quantum physics. Over time, the issues the two men took up ranged from personal suffering to orders of intelligence extending beyond the human race. These conversations are well documented on audiotape, videotape, and in numerous books, including *The Wholeness of Life, Truth and Actuality, The Future of Humanity*, and *The Ending of Time*.* ▶

* These materials and more are available from the Krishnamurti Foundation of America.

The issues that Bohm had explored with Krishnamurti regarding thought and consciousness were not idle speculation. In his last years he devoted the bulk of his energy to developing a form of inquiry he simply called "dialogue." This approach to learning, which in its deepest sense was meant to include any of the psychological issues raised by Krishnamurti, put emphasis on the *social* or *collective* nature of human problems.

Where Krishnamurti consistently stressed the need for the individual to develop a quality of awareness that was sensitive, non-judgemental, and "choiceless," Dr. Bohm suggested that this very awareness could be nurtured in small groups which he called *micro-cultures*. It was his deeply held feeling that the individual and collective approaches to understanding the sources of human conflict were complimentary, and equally necessary.†

> *"You must on occasion tell children how to* **behave**, *but you must never tell them how to* **be**."
>
> *– David Bohm*

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of people whom David Bohm has affected in some seminal way. His compassion, his penetrating intellect, and his disarming humility all served to create an unusual quality of communication with whomever he was addressing, and the Oak Grove staff was fortunate in having the opportunity to meet with him on a yearly basis.

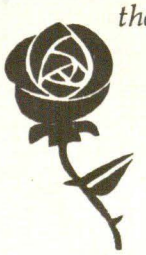
Very early in my own career as a teacher, he said something that was adamantine in its clarity and simplicity: "You must on occasion tell children how to *behave*, but you must never tell them how to *be*." My understanding of this brief dictum runs something like this: As people who (fortunately or unfortunately) live within a highly structured civilization, it is our responsibility to "train" children, up to a point, to follow certain codes of behavior so that (a) they will not compulsively hurt one another, at least physically, and (b) they will not incur such a storm of wrath for their apparently uncivilized behavior (or thinking) that they become embroiled in a cycle of reaction and resistance with the culture at large.

"...but you must not tell them how to *be*." At one level you, as adult, must act as an authority – but only at the relative level of behavior. Behavior at this level may even include some very simplistic ethical sensibilities. But when you, as adult, whether teacher or parent, attempt to fundamentally form the inner life and trajectory of the child, you have begun to engage in dubious activity. Such attempts at formation might include the following: subtly encouraging a particular career; fostering a need to achieve superiority in any endeavor; the overt or subtle imposition of personal values that are somewhat abstract in nature, e.g., "Ronald Reagan is a true American"... "Feelings are more important than intellectualizing things"... "Bill Clinton should be President"... "I am necessarily right because I am older than you"... and so on.

As I understand Dr. Bohm, he was suggesting that such views should actually be areas of inquiry in which the child's emotional, and intellectual capacities are engaged, exercised, and set free, not made hostage to the limitations of significant adults. The distinction drawn here between our tendency to tell children how to *act*, and our tendency to tell them how to *be*, or what to feel, aspire for, and direct themselves toward, has had an enormous influence on my sense of what a teacher or parent could be. For this, like so many others in their own way, I am left with a sense of deep gratitude to a man who committed his life to understanding who, and what we are.

Dr. Bohm's passing, like Krishnamurti's, has left a great void. Hopefully that void will be filled with renewed vigor to more fully understand and apply ourselves to the immediate task at hand – creating an atmosphere in which young human beings, and older ones as well, might establish a sense of dynamic inward freedom, while simultaneously creating a sane and orderly society.

This memorial was written by Lee Nichol, a teacher at the Oak Grove School in Ojai, California.



Saral Bohm requests that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Oak Grove School library in memory of her husband.

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† His work in this area, in audio, video, and book formats, is available from the Bohm Seminars Committee. Please write P.O. Box 1452, Ojai, CA 93023 for a catalogue of materials.

Alumni Letters

This is a letter written to Mary Lou Sorem, (Director of the High School) from Dad Dager, a 1985 Oak Grove graduate, who lives in Venezuela. She writes:

Hola Mary Lou!

You can't imagine how happy I was to receive your letter.

I have many things to tell about how being at Oak Grove School influenced my life. I would say that my life was formed by 50% of my parents' education and the other 50% by Oak Grove School. I am very grateful for having this basis, which makes it easier to change, to move, to understand myself.

I graduated from Berlitz Institute. One of my final exams was from one of Krishnamurti's books. I was congratulated for my translation, and later on I found out that one of the teachers who read it got really interested in Krishnamurti's teachings. That fact was satisfying for me, since I never talk to anybody about the Oak Grove School or Krishnamurti's teachings, unless people are interested.

After Berlitz I started to study acting at the *Taller del Actor*. I was one of two out of 22 students who passed the program. There I did a performance exercise with a passage from Krishnamurti. The exercise consisted of transmitting feelings with different reflections. My final exercise was to interpret Abigail from the work by Arthur Miller, *Las Brujas de Salem*. [The Witches of Salem]

In September I will continue with my acting and with university. I am also designing a ranch house for my husband in San Carlos.

What do I want from life? To be doing what most makes me happy, in the place that most makes me happy, with the people that make me most happy; because when you are happy people around you are too! One of the places and people that make me happy is Ojai and all of Oak Grove School! My family agrees on that and my husband does too. So guess what? We may move over in about 2 years.

I am looking forward to seeing you all.

– Dad Dager ■

Recycled Treasures event coordinators enjoy a "Thank-you" luncheon. Details of this successful parent fundraiser will be in the next newsletter.

IN THE ABSENCE OF THE SACRED

Krishnamurti spoke and wrote often about the need to see and avoid the dangers of our psychological and social habits as clearly as we would see and avoid a poisonous snake in a path we were walking along.

Jerry Manders' newest book, *In the Absence of the Sacred*, explains the dangers of post-industrial technology in a way that should make it look dangerous enough to turn away from psychologically and look for ways to oppose socially.

If you are suspicious of, but feel uninformed about global corporations, computer networking, genetic engineering, satellite communications, and many other marvels of western intellectual achievement, this book will make it clear why you're right to feel apprehensive.

If, on the other hand, you have already been seduced by the glittery fascination and pseudo-convenience of it all, give Manders a chance to show you what the disastrous consequences are. You may find the ideas extreme, but they should give us all reasons to make some changes.

In the Absence of the Sacred is available at the Ojai library. ■

– Janet Asiain, parent of Margarita (in Group G)

After-School Fun

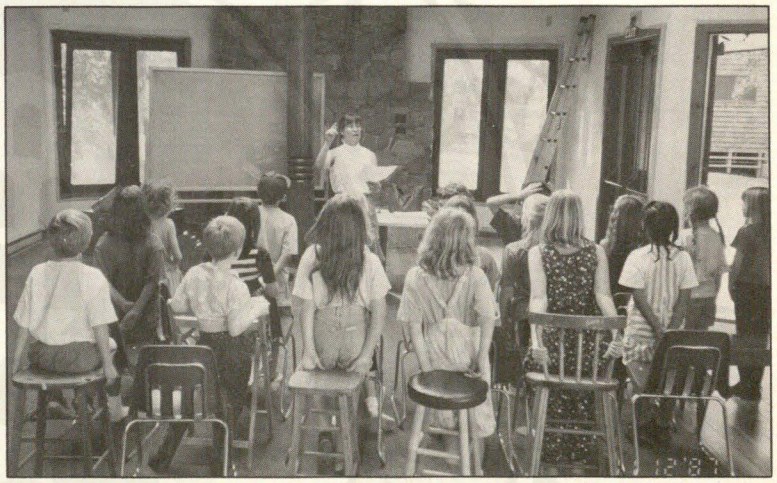
After school activities on campus this year have provided some opportunities both for sounding off and practicing silence. Jon Crosse, Oak Grove's music maestro, has continued with Tuesday afternoon *Band* with children playing wind instruments, guitars and keyboards. Most of the students have their own instruments. However, there are a few instruments available through the school.

Lisa Gordon is leading a Thursday afternoon *Chorus* for all ages of elementary school children. The chorus of 14 students gave us a delightful performance of winter melodies in the Pavilion in December, and repeated a few of them for the Winter Assembly. Both Band and Chorus will continue for the remainder of the school year.

Two new offerings this year were *Paper Pleasures* with parent Holly Mitchem, and *Moonwalk Mime* with Yakov Noy. Holly and a group of ten students experimented with two different kinds of paper marbling: *suminagashi* (from Japan) and *ebru* (from Turkey). They also made book marks, stationary, and bound books from the paper they created.

Yakov Noy, a professional mime and movement performer, offered a series of *Moonwalk* classes using a number of different exercises including "walking the dog:" starting with finding the leash, pulling the dog along, then getting pulled by the dog, stopping for other dogs, etc. Yakov hopes to do a special assembly of his performance work for Oak Grove children and parents.■

– Sara Cloud, Oak Grove Office Manager



Paper marbling with Holly Mitchem (above) *and an a cappella chorus with Lisa Gordon* (below) *are offered after school this spring.*

How to Donate Money to Oak Grove Without Parting With a Penny

scrip, *n.* **1. a writing; a list, receipt, etc. 2. a small piece or scrap, especially of paper. 3. a certificate of a right to receive something; specifically, (A) a temporary paper to be exchanged for money, goods, land, etc.; (B) certificate of indebtedness, issued as currency...**

It works like this: Oak Grove buys scrip at a discount from the grocery stores and then sells it as face value, thereby making 5¢ on every dollar from the sale. Using scrip instead of cash at the grocery store will help to raise thousands of dollars without costing you anything.

Bookkeeper Debbie Varble has been researching scrip information recently, and has found a school with the same enrollment as Oak Grove that made $60,000 last year from scrip sales! If only 40 families bought $400 of scrip every month, the school would make $10,000 a year.

Right now, scrip is available for use at the Vons, Bayless, and Locker Market stores. Soon, Rainbow Bridge and stores such as Penney's, Target, and Trader Joe's will have scrip available.

How to get scrip: Buy it directly from Debbie Varble during school hours, order by mail, or purchase at homeroom meetings.■

This newsletter is published on a quarterly basis by Oak Grove School of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America. Its purpose is to be a vehicle for school/ parent communication, and a source of information about the events and activities of special interest to the school community.

A special Newsletter Box is located in the Main House for your suggestions, submissions, and ideas.

Editorial staff: Mary Lou Sorem and Karen Hesli, Directors

***Production:* The Schneiders**

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