

## Minutes of Annual Meeting

### Call to Order--Bill Connington

The Annual Meeting of The American Center for the Alexander Technique, Inc. was held on March 11, 1990 at the Hebrew Arts School, New York, NY. The meeting was called to order at 3:13 p.m. by Chairman Bill Connington. A quorum of twenty-two members in person and fourteen by proxy was present.

By general consent, the published order of business was changed to allow Sarnie Ogas to make the brief announcement that she is the NASTAT representative on the Policy Steering Committee for the Third International Congress, and that she welcomes suggestions from the membership regarding the Congress.

### Reading of Minutes--Ron Dennis

The minutes of the regular March Board of Directors meeting were approved as read.

### Treasurer's Report--Ron Dennis

A change was announced in the usual procedure: rather than submitting copies of budget, accountant's review, etc. to members present at the meeting, such information will be available to members on request. This will relieve the meeting from considerations of detail better left to individuals or the Board, and also help avoid unnecessary copying expense. Current account balances are: Savings, \$15,454; Checking, \$1,331; Petty Cash, \$27; Operating Reserve (separate savings account), \$22,758; Judith Leibowitz Fund, \$5,987; Barbara Kent Fund, \$3,904. The accountant's review for the fiscal year ended 8-31-89 showed a change in fund balance of (2,334) (parentheses around figure indicate a negative amount). This figure had

*(Continued on p. 2)*

## A9's to Graduate

By Jane Tomkiewicz

The graduating class of June 1990 is happy to announce that the graduation ceremonies/festivities will be held at the home of one of their members, Sam Reiser. Sam and his wife Debora live in Dobbs Ferry, a 30-minute ride from Manhattan. Our decision may be unusual in that this will (probably) be the first ACAT graduation to be held out-of-town. Although we realize that this makes things more complicated logistically, we feel that this setting will be most pleasing to all. Sam & Debora's home is beautiful and spacious, allowing us to invite all the ACAT members, faculty, trainees, and their guests. Hopefully we will also move out onto the garden/patio to enjoy a lovely June evening after the ceremony. We want to make sure that no one is discouraged from attending the graduation because of transportation. We are presently looking into bus rentals and will most likely have a bus leaving from the Center, to which it would return at the end of the evening. There is also a train that runs to Dobbs Ferry, where we could arrange for a shuttle to meet people. We're looking forward to the evening and would love to see all ACAT members and guests there. Let us know what we can do to help make that possible. If you know 1) you want to attend and have access to a car and would be willing to give a lift to others, or 2) you want to attend and will be needing a ride, please contact Kathy Moeller at 201-224-9167, who will be organizing rides and transportation.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Karla - Kathy - Sam - Jane

BEST WISHES!

## The ACAT News

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been previously estimated in error at about (9,000) (see *ACAT News*, Fall 89, "Executive Director's Report"). For the current fiscal year, the same figure is projected at 4,972.

### Executive Director's Report--Ron Dennis

1. Current membership stands at 57, compared with 72 at the end of 1989.
2. The Board has implemented a new requirement of our accrediting agency, namely, that member institutions must provide job placement assistance as well as maintain statistics on job placement and follow-up. Placement assistance will be implemented by including all graduates' names on the Member-Teacher list for six months after graduation, regardless of whether the individual joins the Center. For ACAT purposes, a job "placement" will consist of an average of ten lessons given per month for the first three months after leaving the program. Follow-up data will be collected three months later.
3. Candidates are taking advantage of federally-funded student financial aid programs to the tune of \$63,170 in guaranteed loans at present.
4. Efforts are being made to insure continuity in Center administration in the event of foreseen or unforeseen changes in personnel. Ron Dennis, Executive Director, has been conducting regular training sessions with Melanie Nevis, Administrative Assistant, in the crucial aspects of his job. Next year, the New York Alexander community will be surveyed to identify potential candidates for ACAT administrative positions should they become available.

### TCP Director's Report--Pamela Anderson

1. The TCP has completed the transition to the mixed-level format begun three years ago.
2. In order to qualify for graduate-school privileges in Student Financial Aid programs, a bachelor's degree is now required for admission to the TCP.
3. Prospective candidates lacking a bachelor's degree may work for life-experience equivalency credits at Empire State College.
4. A grading procedure has been implemented in the TCP in order to comply with the requirement of a published policy for documenting satisfactory progress.
5. The list of required readings has been expanded by joint faculty action.
6. Regular sessions of hands-on time for candidates without teachers present have been instituted.
7. A faculty committee is working on a supervision procedures policy.
8. Regular meetings with volunteer faculty have been

instituted.

9. A procedure is in place to allow faculty members to audit Judy Trobe's Anatomy class.
10. Plans are under consideration to publish candidates' final papers for distribution to the faculty.

### Chairman's Report--Bill Connington

Bill introduced the current Board members--Pamela Anderson, Ron Dennis, Rebecca Flannery, Kim Jessor, Marta Friedland, Carolyn Serota--and thanked them for their work during the past year. He pointed out that the Board is the actual governing body of the Center, and is concerned mainly with finances and long-range planning. The Executive Committee, consisting of the TCP Director and the Executive Director, is concerned with day-to-day operational decisions. Over the past year, major Board involvements have been: 1) establishing a graduation policy; 2) working on a new logo as mandated at last year's AGM; and 3) conducting, beginning last Fall, an ongoing search for a new space for the Center. Budget has been allocated to develop Center fund-raising, which is expected to begin yet this year.

### Election of Directors

The Board nominees were Jaye Miller, for the two-year term being finished by Kim Jessor, and Lori Schiff, as the replacement nominee for the three-year term being finished by Carolyn Serota. Carolyn, the original Board nominee to succeed herself, had withdrawn for personal reasons. There being no further nominations from the floor, both candidates were elected by general consent. Chairman Connington extended thanks to departing Board members Kim Jessor and Carolyn Serota.

### New Business from the Floor

Suggestions and announcements were offered by several members: 1) Meredith Stead re space in her building; 2) Judy Trobe re the notion of a separate board for fund-raising; 3) Meredith Stead re the series of hands-on exchanges at hers and John Knapp's loft; 4) Michele Arsenault re a non-profit organization for fund-raising; 5) Brooke Lieb re providing notices of lecture-demonstrations given by members and other teachers. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Dennis, Secretary

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## Food for Thought

"Low-Back Pain," reprinted from the Bulletin of Support Services Alliance, Jan-Feb 1990.

They say low-back pain is a vicious cycle in which injury can cause muscle spasm, the spasm can cause pain and the pain can cause additional muscle spasm. Therapy can disrupt this cycle. Some people have found that the laying-on of hands by a chiropractor has done the trick after a single visit. A danger sign, however, is when the relief is only temporary.

There can be many causes of low back pain besides injury or strain. Don't diagnose yourself and stick with physical therapy or chiropractic manipulation when the pain or discomfort persists. Get a medical second opinion. An injury or strain can trigger the low-back-pain syndrome when the underlying cause is something more serious.

Because muscular problems normally take time to be resolved and allow healing to occur, it is easy to assume that the persistence of your low-back pain is normal. Thus, it is easy to continue with treatment that gives temporary relief. The danger is that recurring pain can also indicate kidney problems, circulatory problems or cancer, among other ailments.

Personal and work pressures can lead us to ignore symptoms to which we should give heed. Work pressure once led me to ignore symptoms of a ruptured appendix for 24 hours. I was lucky. Our [SSA] member's friend [who died of cancer because it was diagnosed too late] was not lucky.

### FORMING

My face feels new.  
It's as if the humble of a bee  
whizzed through and lifted veil  
After veil of tense, tired muscle.  
The relaxation feels like a wave  
on the ocean.  
Wave upon wave - rolling on and on.  
The weight of my head lifting--  
Feeling as free as a bird in flight.  
My tongue flapping in the breeze  
like a worn-out flag;  
My teeth like stones resting on  
the ground.  
Peace within my face.  
I must tell Alexander.

Courtesy of Sarnie Ogus, by a former student.

## Around the Center

John H. M. Austin, M.D., Associate Professor of Clinical Radiology at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, New York City, and Pearl Ansubel will give a presentation entitled "Increased respiratory pressures after lessons in the Alexander Technique of musculoskeletal education" on May 23, 1990, at the World Conference on Lung Health in Boston, Massachusetts, sponsored by the American Lung Association and the International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

Deborah Caplan's book, *Back Trouble*, was just published in Australia by Compass Publishing. This is the first foreign edition. Congratulations, Deborah!

Judith Leibowitz and Bill Connington have co-authored a book on the Alexander Technique for Harper & Row to be published in August 1990. The title is *The Alexander Technique: The World-Famous Method for Enhancing Posture, Stamina, Health and Well-Being, and for Relieving Pain and Tension!*

On February 1st, Joan Frost taught a two-hour introductory workshop to eight students and two teachers from the Dance Department of Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. They came to New York City for a week of taking classes, viewing rehearsals, and seeing performances, and had called ACAT requesting a session in the Alexander Technique, about which they knew little but thought might be helpful. They were an interested and eager group and left wanting to know more.

Joan Arnold acted as consultant for a series of profiles on women in alternative medicine, writing a full-page profile on Judith Leibowitz as well as a short paragraph on Sarnie Ogus which appeared in the April issue of *New York Woman*.

### Recent Press

Several articles on the Alexander Technique have appeared in recent publications: (1) "Balancing the Body in Everyday Movement: The Alexander Technique," Susan Ince, *Women's Health and Fitness News*, Feb 1990; (2) "Alexander's Great Discovery," Madeline Drexler, *The Walking Magazine*, Jan/Feb 1990; (3) "Posture Perfect," Alex Finley, *New Woman*, Jan 1990; (4) "The Basics of the Alexander Technique," Ellen Pearlman, *To Your Health*, Dec 1989. Members wishing copies please contact the office by June 1.

## London Studio Flat For Rent

June 18 - August 18, 1990

Our flat is self-contained, with own front entrance and back door which leads into the garden. It accommodates two comfortably and it is ideal for working with clients. The rent per week is approximately \$190 (115 Pounds) inclusive, excepting telephone which will require a separate billing as all local calls are chargeable. We are situated two minutes walk from Crouch End Broadway. The local buses link with Finsbury Park and Archway tube (subway) stations. These stations connect with the Victoria, Piccadilly, and Northern Line trains, as well as with British Rail. Travel time to the West End, Oxford Street, Regents Street, is twenty minutes. The area features excellent shopping facilities and a variety of fine restaurants, also in neighbouring areas Muswell Hill, Highgate, and Wood Green. The area is close to spacious parkland, e.g., Alexandra Park and Hampstead Heath. If you would be interested in this please contact Jane Vogel-Riley, Flat 1, 30 Crouch Hall Road, London N8 8HJ, England (Tel: 01-341-0044).

## Brave New Computerized World

An advertisement from a computer magazine came to the office addressed as follows:

Mr. Alexander Technique  
American Center For the  
Ronald Dennis  
[address]

The favor of a reply  
is requested, Mr. Technique

American Center for  
the Alexander Technique, Inc.<sup>R</sup>  
129 West 67 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10023

## Announcements

Michele Arsenault and Ann Mathews are currently planning the spring meeting for members of the Alexander community interested in working with children. Topics at the December meeting included: infant physical development and mis-use, funding difficulties, problems encountered within the public school environment, the dynamics of group work, and parent/teacher involvement. Suggestions and/or presentations for the spring agenda are welcome. Topics under consideration include the development of relevant curriculum topics in science/anatomy to supplement hands-on, assessing the physical environment of the school and its negative impact on good use, discussing the realities of working with 28 children in a group setting, and "how-to" begin funding/proposal development. Persons interested in participating should contact Michele (212) 874-2530, 123 W. 77 St #5A, NY 10024 or Ann (212) 473-3247, 74 MacDougal St, NY 10012.

From Samie Ogus: The Third International Congress will be held in Ingleberg, Switzerland, just outside of Lucerne. The tentative dates are August 6-11, 1991. The theme of the Congress will be "Furthering Our Profession." As a member of the Policy Steering Committee, and the NASTAT representative of the Northeast region, I am asking ACAT members to give some thought as to what they would like to see happen at this Congress. Who would you like to see do a presentation, and who particularly would you like to see give a workshop or address. Should there be more free time, more hands-on time, what are your thoughts and ideas? Jot your ideas down on paper, and submit them by mailing to me in care of ACAT, or at my home address: 50 East 72 St #4A, NY, NY 10021.

N. Brooke Lieb  
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New York NY 10025