



# PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 14 NUMBER 1 FALL 1993

## PA TOPS CA

Pennsylvania leads the nation in the number of federal legislators committed to supporting the National Writing Project. In the most recent round of legislative vote-gathering to develop a federal policy and appropriation for education, NWP again is emerging as a potent force, with 40 Senators and 89 Representatives already agreeing to co-sponsor our bills, S 70 and HR 521.

Both of Pennsylvania's Senators pledged their support early in the legislative process, and both hold memberships in important committees, Specter on Appropriations and Wofford on Labor and Human Resources (which includes Education).

Even though more populous states have many more representatives than Pennsylvania, our state has the most Congressional co-sponsors of HR 521. Ten of our representatives have signed on to the bill, while California has nine co-sponsors.

The mix of PA support is bi-partisan and covers urban, suburban, and rural districts. Locally, the congressional co-sponsors are

Tim Holden (D-Berks Co)  
Curt Weldon (R-Delaware Co)  
Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky  
(D-Montgomery Co)  
Tom Foglietta (D-Philadelphia)  
Lucien Blackwell (D-Philadelphia)

In other areas of Pennsylvania, co-sponsors include Reps. Coyne (D-Allegheny County), Kanjorski (D-Scranton area), McDade (R-

Northeastern PA), Murphy (D-Southwestern PA), and Murtha (D-Johnstown area).

Several of these co-sponsors hold important committee memberships. Reps. Foglietta, McDade, and Murtha are on the House Appropriations Committee, and Rep. Murphy is on the House Education and Labor Committee.

In a key move to maintain Congressional support for NWP, several of these legislators co-signed an important internal memorandum to request the House Appropriations Committee to retain funding for our current programs.

All of this Congressional interest derives from the support shown by readers of this *Newsletter*, who have signed petitions and written to their legislators to say how much their local writing project site has meant for them and their students. The battle for funding is far from over, and not until September will we know its outcome, but to all who have taken a part in the fight, many thanks.

We have no lobbyist in Washington. We are proof that grassroots programs and politics can be successful. Each year we compete with *all* other education programs and with *all* health and labor programs for funding from one thin pot. We have to campaign when it is least convenient for teachers and directors, with a new Congress and with new staff members.

Legislators were, as one aide put it, "surprised by the uproar you made." A much appreciated uproar, to be sure.



EDITOR'S CORNER:

**OPENING THE DOOR**

When I first started teaching (Yes, Virginia, books were already being printed on paper by then.), a school district hired a teacher, pointed her in the direction of her new classroom, piled her arms with textbooks and a new gradebook, and said a hearty "Good luck." The teacher, usually fresh out of teacher-school and ignorant of all but the basics of how to set up that new gradebook, toddled down the hall and through the classroom door, pulling it shut behind her.

Approximately 40 years later, she opened the door and retired.

Times have changed, thank goodness. As a young teacher of 20, when I couldn't control a class of 30 tenth grade boys who met the last period of the day on Thursday and Friday in the cafeteria for speech class, the first year principal used to tell me that I needed more discipline. I remember that I asked him what I should do and I also remember his reply: Show them who's boss. Well, of course, they were boss.

What brings this terrible memory back is the leave of absence and, now, resignation of a member of my district's senior high English department. This young man was not with us long--three years, I think--but there was a system in place to help him. I want to make it quite clear that his leaving is not connected to problems in the department or district but with his desire to work on a doctorate.

The other incident which brings this terrible memory back is the possible retirement of the most senior member of the English department. The Mellow Bill is causing her to consider retirement while she's still quite young.

These two colleagues have taught me, just as they tell me they have learned from me. How has this mutual growth happened? We opened our doors.

Actually, we opened our doors in several ways.

We decided to meet monthly as a department after school hours to share scheduling/discipline/organizational problems, mail, news from graduates, contests, reports from one-day workshops or conferences, new assignments which had gone well, etc. We even talk philosophy and make mutual decisions about the curriculum.

We also do things in twos or threes. We take courses together: Strategies for Teaching Writing I, Strategies II, Framework, Framework II, Assessment, PENNLIT. We put up a Writer of the Week bulletin board together. We holistically score NCTE and PCTE contest entries. We attend PAWPdays. We mentor new teachers.

Please don't think I never feel isolated. Of course, I do. I'm the only adult in the room with up to 30 teenagers for 43 minutes at a time, seven times a day (including study halls). I forget exactly what the statistic is about how many decisions I make in one class period. Is the number 1,000 or closer to 10,000?

But it does help to know that Audrey, Rosemary, Tera, Julie, and Patty are right there with me.

**PAWP JOINS WHOLE LANGUAGE  
UMBRELLA AND INVITES YOU, TOO**

*by Jim MacCall*

PAWP is pleased to announce the beginning of a network group of the Whole Language Umbrella. A multi-county group of teachers who view whole language as a dynamic philosophy of education, WLU's primary purpose is to provide a network for whole language support groups. PAWP-WLU becomes one of over 450 whole language teacher support groups in the United States and Canada.

PAWP-WLU group meetings will be held on Saturdays throughout the 1993/1994 school year to coincide with the PAWPDAY programs. The topics for those meetings will be determined by the needs of the members. PAWP-WLU will be headed by Nancy McElwee, Cynthia Muse, and Jim MacCall.

PAWP-WLU will work to improve the quality of learning and teaching at all levels of education. We will promote the study of whole language in teacher support groups, teacher education programs, staff development programs and conferences, by encouraging and facilitating collaboration among teachers, researchers, parents, administrators and teacher-educators.

We invite you to become a member of PAWP-WLU and join us on Saturday, September 18, 1993 for the first meeting of the Pennsylvania Writing Project-Whole Language Umbrella Network Group.

*Jim MacCall, a first grade teacher for Lower Merion School District and Co-director of the Exton Summer Writing Institute, is a 1985 PAWP Fellow.*

**WHOLE LANGUAGE UMBRELLA CALENDAR**

<b>NCTE-PITTSBURGH, PA</b>	November 17-22, 1993
<b>Day of Whole Language</b>	November 18, 1993
<b>Advisory Board Meeting</b>	November 20, 1993

**W.L.U. TELECONFERENCE** February 26, 1994

**Curriculum in a New Key: Multiple Ways of Making Meaning** Featuring: Jerome Harste and Dorothy Watson



## RECIPES FOR WRITING

by Michelle Hopkins

**WANTED:** One comprehensive writing strategies book, which is full of easy-to-implement, creative ideas. Text must cover various types of composition, including journal, poetry, and expository writing. Author of this book must also give clues on how teacher can grade, evaluate, and easily publish student writing. Any helpful hints on judging good writing, responding to student writing, and revising as a student-based activity will be greatly appreciated. **PLEASE RESPOND A.S.A.P. to:** One extremely desperate English teacher searching for creative and useful ideas in the teaching of writing. Please call 584-HELP after 8:00 p.m. weeknights.

The want ad printed above could be a plea from any English teacher in need of the ultimate text on the teaching of writing. Hundreds of books today herald themselves to be definitive on writing in the classroom, but the never-ending search for the book on how to teach writing in the classroom has ended. *Inside Out*, written by Dan Kirby and Tom Liner (2nd ed. New Hampshire: Boynton/Cook, 1988), offers no-nonsense strategies in writing, editing, revising, grading, evaluating and publishing high school level creative and expository writing.

In the preface to *Inside Out* Kirby justifies the need for the updated version of the book's first edition written the late '70s. The preface reflects the authors' personalities; they are not at all pretentious in their reasons for tackling a second edition. I sensed the collaboration on the book was truly a labor of love, and their self-effacing attitude puts the reader at ease immediately. Kirby and Liner are English teachers, and they admit "we have learned and grown and changed since the early '80s. Most of that growth is the result of continued work with young writers" (preface 1). English teachers especially can relate to and appreciate the constant struggle in the monumental task of teaching writing.

The reader feels as if he and the writers were carrying on a one-to-one conversation. My colleague Nancy Chapman summed up the text's style "as if someone were talking to you about writing in a very human way. I will use this as a recipe book for ideas." Another teacher praised that the book is based not on theory, but on practical strategies that a teacher can comfortably incorporate in the classroom. Our response group unanimously agreed that Kirby and Liner offer invaluable advice and ideas for the teacher of writing.

Kirby justifies the switching between "I" and "we" saying "most readers find no problem with the shifting persons...the third person impersonal would make a

mockery of our message" (preface 2). *Inside Out's* style is conversational and personal; the first person point of view constantly reminds the reader that the authors have struggled with the same issues in the teaching of writing that most of us high school teachers have. The authors do not stand on a pedestal, spouting dogma about teaching writing. The style suggests a mentor to whom we can turn for ideas and practical advice.

*Inside Out* offers the perfect "recipes" for successful writing activities. Every chapter deals with various aspects of writing; chapter one examines fallacies about how children learn to write and chapter two explains the writing process. One whole chapter is devoted to the student journal; it suggests four distinct types of journals and explains how and why each works.

Any English teacher who fears poetry in the classroom will be comforted by reading the chapter on "Writing Poetry." Here Kirby and Liner personalize the approach by citing actual student poetry in their ten points on teaching poetry writing. They remind teachers to "grade poetry very carefully and very gently, just like all writing in your class" (77). Kirby and Liner also offer "alternative methods to red-pencil grading" (77) of poetry, and the reader knows this idea can work because the authors have tried it first hand in their classes.

The chapters I found exceptionally enlightening were "Responding to Student Writing," "The Student as Editor," and "Grading and Evaluating." I have constantly struggled with the comments and suggestions that I write on my students' papers; Kirby and Liner believe that "the secret of building good writer-responder relationships lies in the "touch" of the responder. Overly harsh, picky, and niggling criticism will spook any writer" (127). I do not want to be an overly critical, red-penned fanatic.

Kirby and Liner are so complete they even include a chapter long bibliography. A paragraph or so summarizes each resource and its usefulness to the teacher. This list serves as an easy reference to valuable books on writing about literature, revision, grammar in writing, conferencing, and personal narrative and fiction.

*Inside Out* addresses mainly junior high and high school teachers; however, middle school teachers could adjust the strategies to lower grade levels. Kirby and Liner present a rich source for teachers to refer to again and again. I embrace their ideas; *Inside Out* fulfills the needs of anyone who wants to be a more creative and, more importantly, confident teacher of writing.

*Michelle Hopkins, a tenth grade English teacher at Montoursville Area SD, read Kirby and Liner for a Strategies for Teaching Writing Course.*



*GLIMPSES FROM THE EXTON PROGRAMS:*

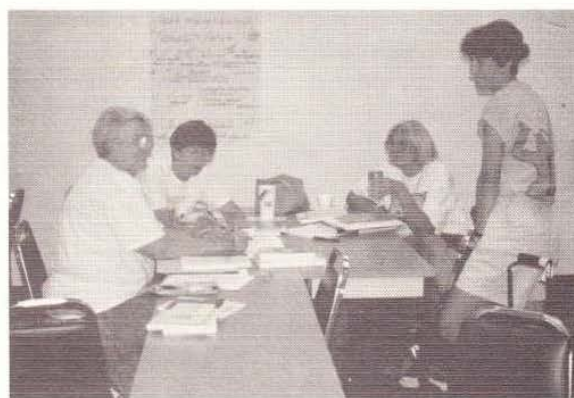
*The Summer Institute  
Strategies for Teaching Writing I  
Advanced Institute  
The Literature Institute*



*Writing Institute co-director Jim MacCall gives directions for the next activity.*



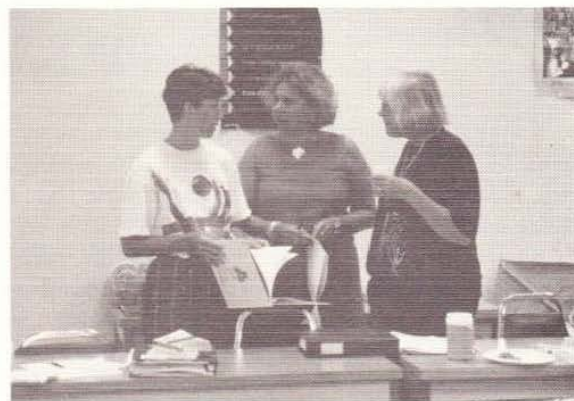
*Diane Dougherty, coordinator for Strategies for Teaching Writing I, leads the group in a writing prompt.*



*In an advanced institute, four teacher-consultants work on what happens to reading and writing in an hour and a half class.*



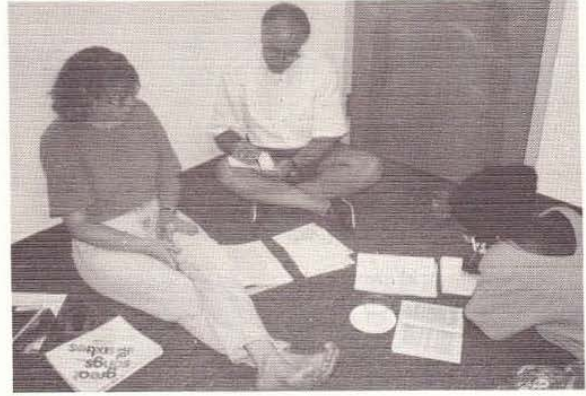
*A corner of the Exton Center lends itself to peer conferences on writing.*



*Jolene Borgese, co-director of PAWP (middle), works with teacher-consultants on varying classroom texts.*



*A response group shares a feminist interpretation of Othello.*



*A middle school learning support teacher, a senior high English teacher, and an elementary reading specialist work together on a tuneful presentation.*



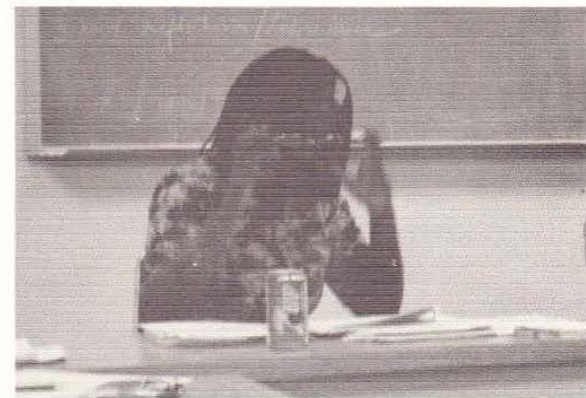
*Geetha Ramanathan of West Chester University does a 90 minute feminist overview to spark thinking about what's read in the classroom.*



*The Strategies for Teaching Writing class starts the day with a presentation.*



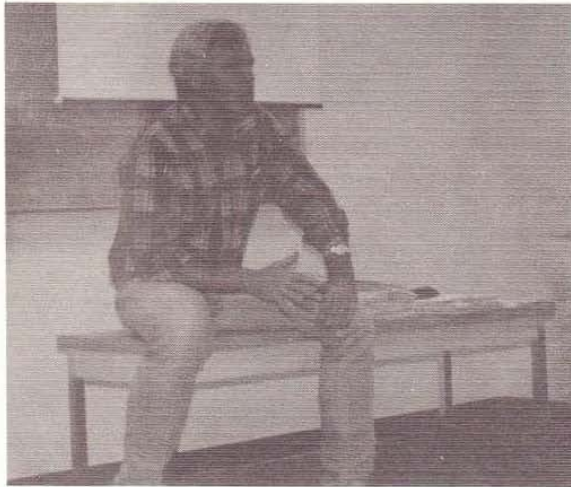
*AWP associate co-director and PENNLIT director Andy Fishman prepares a display of interesting texts.*



*Abby Busia, of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, reads a selection by an Englishman to start a discussion on multi-culturalism*



*Bob Probst, author of Response and Analysis, visited the writing institute and the literature institute to discuss current literacy theory and writing in response to literature.*



*Making himself comfortable, Bob Probst discusses Louise Rosenblatt's efferent/aesthetic theory of reader response.*



*Bob Probst apologizes for not reading as well as elementary teachers.*



*That are many stances for the reader to take between "self" and "text" is an important understanding for teachers to have, according to Bob Probst.*



*A PENNLIT senior high grade level group displays their visual interpretation before an oral presentation.*



*The Exton Summer Writing Institute takes in new reader response theories.*

# PAWP PROGRAMS FALL 1993 PAWP PROGRAMS

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## PAWPDAY #1: September 18, 1993

KEYNOTE: "Changes in Assessing Student Learning," Charlotte Roede, Staff Development Coordinator, Ridley SD.

"News from the International Whole Language Umbrella Convention," Jim MacCall, Cynthia Muse, and Nancy McElwee. An open discussion of Whole Language Issues. Grades K-12

"Exploring Reader Response and the Changing Techniques in Teaching Literature," Fran Hagee, Owen J. Roberts SD. Using writing logs and dialogue journals in teaching literature. Grades 6-12.

"Working with Reluctant Writers," Patti Morgioni, Northern Virginia Writing Project. Patti will illustrate how offering choice, responsibility and time will motivate writers. Grades 5-9.

"Portfolio Assessment," Ted Feldstein, Bucks County IU. Strategies on developing student ability to self-assess/ reflect on their products and processes. Grades K-12.

For information on  
regular PAWPDAYS,  
see pages 8-9

## SPECIAL EVENT

### JOIN PAWP ON OCTOBER 2 AND SEE WHAT DEVELOPS

Take part in a special pilot project linking the National Writing Project and the Polaroid Education Program.

#### TWO WORKSHOPS + LUNCH

**VISUAL LITERACY** Get a free camera, free film, and lots of materials for using instant photography in English/language arts and across the curriculum. This is the basic Polaroid Visual Literacy workshop.

**PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT** Get free film, a portfolio kit, and lots of materials for using instant photography in authentic assessment. This is the new Polaroid Portfolio Assessment workshop. *You need to bring your own Polaroid camera that uses 600 plus film* (the one from the morning will do just fine).

Call in to reserve a spot in this day of workshops!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 15, 1993

**COST:** \$24.00. Payment must accompany registration. Checks should be payable to West Chester University.

**TIMES:** 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

**PLACE:** Schmucker Amphitheatre, WCU

A map will be mailed to registrants indicating the location of the workshops and nearby parking.

**NOTE:** This special PAWP event is not part of the regular PAWPDAY series and may not be used as part of a PAWP course.



# PAWP PROGRAMS FALL 1993 PAWP PROGRAMS

## PAWPDAY #2: November 6, 1993

Two Sets of Concurrent Presentations

"Poetry Across the Curriculum," Roslyn Purnell, Upper Darby SD. Illustrates the importance of using poetry in various activities for writing across the curriculum. Grades K-5.

"That was Then, This is Now: Historical Fiction," Judy Jester, Kennett Consolidated SD. How to incorporate a research unit that fosters true writing and learning. Grades 5-8.

"Cultivating an Eye for Detail in the Reluctant Writer," Carol Schmitt, Rose Tree-Media SD. Techniques for helping reluctant writers recognize and use detail more effectively in their writing. Grades 6-12.

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"Making the Connection: Research and Writing as a Process," Connie Kehs, Hatboro-Horsham SD. How to integrate research strategy with writing as a process. Grades K-5.

"Expanding the Definition of Publishing," Karen Condit, Hatboro-Horsham SD. Quick theory-based strategies for sharing and publishing. Grades 2-8.

"Integrating Literature into Content Curricula," Beth Nanis, Unionville/Chadds Ford SD. Ways to appreciate and learn from literature in the content areas. Grades K-8.

## PAWPDAY #3: December 4, 1993

(Day ends at 12:30 PM due to a charity run which moves through campus at 1:15 PM.)

KEYNOTE: "Reading, Writing and Talking Strategies: An Introduction to Multicultural Literature," Andrea Fishman, Associate Director of PAWP and Director of PENNLIT.

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"Enhancing Students' Reading Through Multi-Cultural Literature," Lorraine DeRosa, Nancy McElwee, and Cynthia Muse. Book titles and whole language strategies to incorporate multi-cultural literature into existing curriculum. Grades K-6.

"Going Beyond 'It was Good': A Look at Talking about Literature," Vicki Steinberg, Exeter Township SD. How to listen to literature response groups, what to listen for, and implications for the classroom. Grades K-12.

"Video Cameras, Writing, and Contests in the Middle School Classroom," Maureen Weaver, Ridley SD. Maureen's seventh graders recently won a writing video contest offered by the The California Writing Project Alliance. Grades 6-12.

"Strategies for Improving Students' Writing: Stop Grading Papers and Start Conferencing with Students," Peggy Walsh, Council Rock SD. Includes a short video of her class. Grades 9-12.

## Information on Regular

PAWP's Saturday seminar is a free service for teachers and other interested participants. The Saturday seminar series may be attended in conjunction with programs earning university credit. School districts may credit participants with a contracted in-service obligation.

Most PAWPDAYS begin with a keynote presentation followed by concurrent presentations by PAWP or PENNLIT teacher-consultants.

Times are usually 9AM-1:30 PM. All 93-94 regular PAWPDAY programs are held in Main Hall, with registration in the lobby from 9:00-9:25 AM.



# PAWP PROGRAMS SPRING 1994 PAWP PROGRAMS

## PAWPDAY #4: January 8, 1994

Snow Date: March 26, 1994

KEYNOTE: "Writing and Reading Non-Fiction," Alan Trussel-Cullen, New Zealand whole language educator and children's author of fiction and non-fiction books, zany poetry, TV scripts for children, TV comedy and drama, and more. His children's book are available from Rigby and Scholastic.

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"Using Picture Books in the Intermediate Grades," Lorraine DeRosa, Philadelphia SD, and Nancy McElwee, Central Bucks SD. Book titles and strategies to to promote reading, writing, and thinking. Grades 3-8.

"Enriching Reading Before, During, and After," Patti Koller, Downingtown SD. Different types of journals to improve reading. Grades K-8.

"Incorporating Literature Across the Curriculum in an Elementary Classroom," Joan Pileggi, Abington SD, and Flossie Barnes, Upper Darby SD. Book titles and strategies developed in the 1993 Advanced Institute. Grades K-3.

"Using Children's Books in a High School Classroom to Promote Different Points of View and Prompts for Student Writing," Jolene Borgese, West Chester Area SD and PAWP Co-director. Literary form and point of view learned through using children's books. Grades 6-12.

## PAWPDAY # 5: February 26, 1994

Snow Date: March 26, 1994

KEYNOTE: "Quick Time," Apple Computers, Inc. Demonstrations of advances in technology and how to use them to help student write, revise, edit, and publish.

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"New Whole Language Book Talks," Nancy McElwee, Central Bucks SD; Cynthia Muse and Lorraine DeRosa, Philadelphia SD. A report on recently published books for teachers. Some titles may be available for examination. Grades K-12.

"Reader Response: Before, During and After," Pat Clark, Ridley SD. How to engage readers in reader response and critical thinking activities. Grades 6-12.

"The Writing Project and the Coalition of Essential Schools," Rosemarie Montgomery, Central Bucks SD and Regional Coordinator for RE: Learning. Connections between writing as a process and developing integrated curriculum. Grades 6-12.

"Using Facts and Fiction to Learn," Tracy A. Houston, Quakertown SD. Strategies for integrating facts from content taught with fiction writing to help students learn. Grades 6-12.

## PAWPDAY Programs

Donations of \$3.00 for coffee and refreshments are collected at the door. Book sales at registration and breaktimes are a regular feature.

CALL (215) 436-2297 TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT. NO OTHER NOTICE WILL BE MAILED.

**Directions:** From the PA Turnpike or Schuylkill Expressway, travel south on Route 202 from the Valley Forge Interchange or south on Route 100 from the Downingtown Interchange. From the south, Route 202 from Wilmington and Routes 100 and 52 from US 1 all lead to West Chester. On-street parking is free on Saturdays at campus lots are unrestricted then and after 4 PM weekdays.



# *SPRING 1994 PAWP PROGRAMS SPRING 1994*

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## **PAWP BANQUET**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 1994**

**Keynote Speaker:**

**TO BE  
ANNOUNCED**

**PAWPDAY SNOW DAY**

**IF NEEDED**

**Saturday March 26, 1994**

**PAWPDAY #6: April 16, 1994**

(Originally Scheduled for April 23, 1994)

PANEL DISCUSSION: "Writing to Learn in the Content Areas," Kim Montano, Ridley SD; Beverly Hanrahan and Brenda Krupp, Souderton SD; Bruce Saybolt, Chester-Upland SD; and Bruce Seidel, Upper Darby SD. Moderator: Jolene Borgese, West Chester Area SD. Emphasis on practical strategies and techniques. Time will be allotted for questions and responses.

"Literacy in the Whole Language Classroom," a joint panel discussion of the Whole Language Umbrella and PENNLIT. Grades K-12

"Low Level Ninth Graders: Does the Learning Environment Effect Change?" Joan Kilpatrick, Upper Moreland HS; Bernadette Fenning, Archbishop Carroll HS. A collaborative project to compare and contrast reading, writing, and thinking skills of low-level ninth grade students in traditional and intensive scheduling. Grades 7-12.

"The Pennsylvania Writing Assessment and its Applications to the Classroom Teacher," Brenda Hurley, Log College MS, Centennial SD. A table leader for the PA Writing Assessment shares the state's criteria for good writing as well as strategies for classroom assessment. Grades K-12.

**For information on  
regular PAWPDAYS,  
see pages 8-9**



## SIMPLE TREASURES

by Leslie K. Smith

Life abounds with simple treasures...pleasures? ...desperate measures? These are those aspects of our lives that give us equal amounts of pleasure and frustration. I have three in my life. They are my children. As I write this, my children are ages 14, 11, and 7. Someday I will share this with them. I'll share with them the happiness they have given me. But not now. They are too much caught up in themselves. They are not ready to appreciate my message to them. But someday they will be.

My oldest son is Kyle--a typical teenager so I'm told. His hormones kicked in before I was ready, and I've been one step behind ever since. After all, I was never an adolescent boy, and I'm having trouble with the concept. He describes himself as a "quiet, interested student." He is an honors student who plays varsity soccer and basketball. He is not very competitive and sometimes requires a loving nudge from his father and me. What does it matter that everyone else in the class got an "A"? What does it matter that with just a bit more hustle he could have been the MVP of the game? I'm thankful that years from now he will not be paying a therapist for his obsessive personality disorder. Most of the time he makes me very proud. However, he does have his trying moments and "moods." On occasion he displays a wise-guy attitude or a look that shows more disrespect than his words ever could. He is the child who needs people around; one who always expected me to make plans for him so that he would not have to play alone. His social life is the center of his universe. He leaves the house Saturday morning, checks in in the afternoon, and calls home for a ride just before his curfew Saturday evening. He is my sensitive child--always a bit fearful of new situations. Throwing up in the curb on Friday mornings because he had to face Ms. Long at school was a character building exercise, right? Of course, he didn't see it that way. He appreciates the family traditions--the Christmas Day meal, special birthdays at home, the Easter egg scavenger hunt (even though he pretends it's silly). Sending him to the neighbor's garage one rainy Easter morning was not "cool." As I watch him grow, I am reminded of how the years speed by too quickly.

My middle child is Jeremy. The middle children are the ones we worry about the most. The ones who perhaps do not get enough of our attention or resent too deeply the hand-me-downs and the lack of privileges due to the older one's mistakes. He is my independent child--very unlike his older brother. I believe I could leave him alone for two weeks, and he would be fine. On an occasion or two I have entertained that notion. He does not have to

be entertained or be with friends. He is my creative child. He loves to build and will spend hours in his room with his Lego sets. His other hobbies include baseball and soccer, and he is successful in both. He is an honors student and quietly goes about the business of doing well. He has a temper and occasionally flies off the handle. At this point in his life he is reluctant to pay heed to the consequences of his actions. He fails to see that calling his mother "woman" or unsolicited physical contact with his sister requires disciplinary action. There is a sensitive side to him as well. On the wonderful but infrequent times I get to spend time with him alone, he will tell me his inner thoughts on any subject I bring up. For an eleven year old, the fear of becoming bald because his grandfather is bald is serious stuff. He makes me laugh. He has always had a knack for trying out his vocabulary whether it fits the situation or not. He still offers unrequested hugs but would never openly admit his affection. I'm holding on to that as long as I can.

Megan is the baby--the little girl I secretly prayed for but never openly talked about. Girls are truly different from boys. She is the "sugar and spice" with the frilly dresses and dolls. She is the one who changes clothes five times a day, who whines more than her brothers ever did, who has been spoiled by the rest of us. She is a pleasing mix of her brothers' personalities. She loves to play and have friends around, yet she'll sit for hours coloring or playing with her doll house. She is a people person, enthusiastic about meeting almost anyone. She has been influenced by her brothers. There are times when she appears wise beyond her years due to the conversations she has had with them. There are times when she has been sent to her room for repeating conversations she has had with them. She openly shows affection anytime, anywhere. She cares about people and often expresses her concern for others. She is at the stage in her life when she still wants her parents around and seeks our approval. She lovingly grabs my hand for no reason or surprises us with thoughtful pictures of our family and the special times we've shared.

I have a list of simple treasures--those things I will cherish forever. These are the events that fade in my memory but come back so clearly with a certain look, a hug, or a spoken word. Here is my list: a smile from the crib upon waking...the 2:00 A.M. nursing and bonding sessions...fake smiles for the camera...harsh words between brother and sister...a protective hug from the other...good night kisses...good morning kisses...the first homerun...Christmas morning, every year...quick rides to the Dairy Queen...laughing at school photos...newspaper clips...fighting for "shotgun"...a glance backward from the sidewalk on the first day of school...the He-Man lunch box...bedtime stories...DisneyWorld...teacher conferences



good news, bad news...Big Bird cake on face and floor...the first varsity soccer goal...Niagara Falls...the first broken heart...arguments over "R" movies...MTV...enforcing "grounding"...the honor roll report cards...struggling to make the honor roll...district choir...shepherds and angels in the church program...locked bedrooms...too much time in the shower...the dance review...lice...a broken leg at second base...Friday night "get-your-own" meals...all-star teams...Easter egg hunts...inside-out clothing! ...Umbros... curling iron stuck in long hair ...homemade Valentines...blanket tents in the basement ...boxes of school artwork...clean clothes in the hamper...dirty clothes beside the hamper...special time with just one...Halloween costumes...holding hands...the special dollhouse...Legos in the sweeper...being a family.

If I could make time stand still and choose just one year in which to remain with my children, I could not do it. It would be every year. Each one enriches my life with simple treasures.

*Leslie Smith teaches seventh and eighth grade English at Lock Haven High School, Keystone Central SD. The reflection was written for a Strategies for Teaching Writing course.*

#### PAWP AND OTHER NWP SITES FORM ALLIANCE WITH POLAROID EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Polaroid Education Program (PEP) has been serving teachers in one form or another for over 20 years and has involved some 400,000 teachers in workshops. The new directors of the PEP have agreed to support a pilot project in connection with PAWP and other NWP affiliates.

Twenty NWP affiliates will each receive over \$1000.00 worth of film and other materials for the purpose of putting on a day-long event that features two workshops: one focusing on basic visual literacy, the other dealing with portfolio assessment. This is *in addition* to a free camera that workshop participants receive. These workshops do not have the feel of "marketing events" for Polaroid. Instead, they focus on how to use instant photography to enhance instructional goals. The support materials and newsletter from PEP are extremely practical and teacherly, having been prepared by and for teachers.

Classroom-based teacher-researcher materials may be prepared to help project teachers enrich, document, and assess the effects of visual literacy on writing skills. Additional curriculum materials that integrate instant photography with the teaching of writing may be

prepared and distributed free to PAWP teacher/consultants who have taken part in workshops.

As an added incentive for agreeing to participate in the PEP pilot project, PAWP will be eligible to receive one of two special Polaroid camera kits, each of which is approximately a \$200.00 value. The PhotoMagic Kit lets you create buttons, keychains, refrigerator magnets, and other artifacts that feature pictures (with specialized backgrounds) of students, project teachers, etc. (They may have a fantastic appeal for our Youth Writing Project.) The Polaroid Instant Press Kit, designed especially for journalism classes, lets you take half-tone pictures that can be incorporated into newspapers, newsletters, and other printed documents. A total of five kits will be available. They will be distributed on the basis of a simple one-page application form.

#### BOOKS LINKS: A REVIEW

*Patty Koller regularly reviews BOOK LINKS for PENNLIT; she is reading specialist in the Downingtown School District.*

Have you ever known just by reading the title of a particular book or article that it would contain something of interest to you? Take a minute or two to skim the following list of titles (from the past three issues of *Book Links*) to see if any catch your eye.

January Issue: *Inauguration Day, Stamps With Spirit: Human Endeavors in Postal Art, Thematic Collections-From Poem to Poem, The Depression Years, Flights of Fancy, Small Is Tall--Children and Self Esteem.* March Issue: *Books Change Lives, The World of Thomas Jefferson, Remember To Never Forget, On The Rails, Latino Books, Dreaming Sweet.* May Issue: *The American Revolution, Endangered Animals, Alphabet Books Grow Up, Libraries Change Lives.*

Another feature of *Book Links* is the enlightening author information found in each issue. January's issue contains insights into the lives and works of author Virginia Hamilton and African American illustrators Brian Pinkney, Donald Crews and Pat Cummings. Harold Keith, Robert McCloskey, George Ella Lyon and Peter Catalanotto are featured in March's issue. The spotlight is on Ann Cameron, Eric Carle, Anne Lindbergh, Walter Dean Myers and Joan Lowery Nixon in an article on connecting with authors found in May's issue. Information about Elizabeth George Speare and Mem Fox is also available in this issue.

Back issues of *Book Links* can be ordered by sending a check for \$3.50 per issue to: Book Links Order Department, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611 or call 708-279-0936.



I grew up in the early 50's, an ideal time for growing up and one that has yet to be repeated. Tree-lined streets, Soverill Park, Nick's candy store, and Mrs. Watson's chestnut trees connoted comfort and security. These landmarks made me feel secure and each one led to my house, a magical house that provided endless hours of pleasure for me and my pals. As soon as school was out, I'd shed my uniform and don my standard play clothes, a polo shirt and dungarees. I'd fly out the door, hop on the porch railing and conjure up a script. Within minutes, the porch would be loaded with kids eager to play a part in my little drama.

I spent the better part of my pre-teen years at 644 Springdale Avenue in East Orange, New Jersey. I shared 644 with my parents, five siblings, and my favorite uncle, Dan. Since my closest sibling was four years my senior, I couldn't rely on her to take part in 644's dramatic productions. Luckily for me, the neighborhood literally teemed with kids and I lived in a house that was designed for pretending.

That gray, three-story clapboard house with the wrap-around porch and wide front door was a friendly place. It enveloped those who recognized its potential for instant theater. The wide railings and tall columns offered an imaginative child untold adventures. In the course of a week, that architectural structure was transformed into a thoroughbred race horse, a speeding boat, or a gray get-away car. If a war party of renegade Apaches threatened to attack, the railing became a lookout. Rowdy pirates who were found guilty of treason were forced to "walk the plank"--my railing. Shakespeare had his Globe; I had 644.

The porch's size and shape, coupled with numerous shrubs and nearby trees, provided an infinite variety of hiding places for my neighborhood troupe. A villain could easily climb a tree and lunge for the spool that connected the railing to a sloping roof. Hand over hand, the villain advanced until he reached his victim. When he secured the ledge, he'd poise himself, scream, and pounce on his enemy. More agile heroes swung themselves on the low roof, cocked their pistols, took aim, and dispatched the treacherous thug below.

When I decided to direct a scene requiring a boy, I could always depend on Linda Baker. Fortunately, Linda was always willing to play the part of the boy. When I told Linda to put on my Superman cape and jump, Linda always landed safely in the shrubs. Linda's most frequent roles, however, included the sheriff, the thief, and the prince. With Linda's help, the princess was always rescued before the evil dragon devoured her. Linda

played her part with gusto! 644's productions were never quite as good when Linda was sick and couldn't perform.

If the weather didn't cooperate, I had another plan. I and my thespians would retreat to the club house, a small lattice shed under 644. It didn't offer a lot of head room, but most of the actors were short and those who took a growth spurt quickly learned to duck. The dirt floor became an Indian village. Warring tribes sat in a circle and smoked the peace pipe, candy cigarettes. Some braves drank too much fire water, Coke, and brought forth resounding burps in the middle of the peace talks. A visit from Tonto or Cochise was assured. When the Indian scenario grew old, the club house became a saloon. The Long Branch had nothing on 644.

As time passed, the actors were unwilling to make believe every day. When change was needed, I provided it. The club house evolved into a meeting place. Used furniture, a worn out rug, and a cracked mirror completed the decor. Each member would bring food; the club had to have officers. Naturally, I elected myself president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. After all, wasn't the proprietor of 644 entitled to something? If the members weren't happy with my decision, I ordered them off my property. Eventually, I became somewhat more democratic. The members were free to elect anyone they wanted for three of the positions, but the presidency was mine. Club meetings were punctuated with weekly battles and truces. Enemies became allies and those alliances were short-lived. When tempers flared, I knew that 644's interior could usually resolve the problem.

The Victorian interior of 644 was enchanting. At the base of a large foyer was a large oak newel post. The freshly waxed banister always inspired me. Mounting the steps quietly, my friends stepped on the landing, straddled the banister, and waited for my command.

"Put out the fire!" "Plunge into the pit!" "Rescue that horse!" At each command, the players would slide to the bottom and dismount. The newel post groaned and creaked until my mother, a saintly woman, ordered them to retreat.

As I grew older and my fantasies diminished, I concentrated on 644's interior. A second set of stairs off the kitchen intrigued me. They held the key to my independence. They led to the second and third floor of the house. When my mom told me to go to bed, I always went willingly because 644 had provided a means of escape if I chose to take advantage of it. I never actually left the house. Instead I tiptoed to the third floor apartment of Uncle Dan. I never went up if he wasn't there. Dan had a fierce looking coconut head he called the "bogey man." I was afraid of that head, but it didn't bother me so much when Dan was there. I loved *Gunsmoke* and Dan agreed to become my accomplice on



one condition. I had to creep down the back stairs, raid the freezer, and return with a super duper banana split. I managed to maneuver the steps and do what was required. I usually returned with two splits, and Dan and I would wolf down our splits while Matt Dillon brought law and order to Dodge City. Just before the episodes concluded, I often heard a creak on the stairs. The rhythmic step was unmistakable; it was my mother. She was pretty sharp. She always managed to find out where I was. She'd scold her brother for allowing me to stay up so late. I promised to mend my ways, but dessert with Dan on the third floor was something of a ritual and old habits were hard to break. My older sister often accompanied me and occasionally a brother or two would join us. They were days I would always remember.

The back steps may have gotten me into plenty of mischief, but, as I grew into adolescence, the steps became a place for exchanging confidences and secrets. My sister Ellen and I would discuss the difficulties of life there and console ourselves with pieces of freshly made cinnamon toast. The back steps brought me good news and bad.

One of my strongest memories was the day my family announced that they would be moving to another state. I would have to leave 644 behind me. It was difficult for

me to digest the news. I declared that I would stay at 644, but this was not to be. Pretending had always worked for me before, but this was reality and from this there was no escape. I watched the movers pack my mother's treasures. I watched my mother cry; I cried too.

The day we left 644, the heavens opened and the rain seemed interminable. I thought that God was crying for me. All the neighbors and my original troupe came out to say good-bye. I kissed my friends, held my sister's hand, and watched the house until it faded from view.

I made new friends; the new house was lovely, but I yearned for those familiar landmarks. In time the pain of leaving the centerpiece of my childhood receded. I considered myself lucky. I had been fortunate enough to grow up at 644 Springdale Avenue. The memories collected in that Victoria jewel sustained me for a lifetime. I've lived in many other houses, but 644 would always be my home. as a very lucky young lady. I grew up at 644, a place I would never forget.

*Isabella O'Neill, a seventh grade English teacher at Jersey Shore Jr. High School, recalled the beginning of her road to becoming a high school musical director for a Strategies for Teaching Writing course.*

### NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT SPONSORSHIP CAMPAIGN

James Gray, Director of the National Writing Project, is inviting all Writing Project participants to become sponsors of the Project. Although the Project now receives some Federal funding, sponsorship funds are still necessary to support many key functions not supported by other funds.

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Please mail this form with check payable to *National Writing Project Corporation* to: **The National Writing Project Corporation, 5627 Tolman Hall, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720**



# America's Smartest Home Videos

## The Event



Mr. Bob Saget (Not!)

This project's purpose is to encourage and reward the use of video technology in the teaching of writing.

Videos should teach, demonstrate, or celebrate the use of writing—in any subject area. They should prompt or document student work.

Ideas and imagination are more important than technical "slickness."

The recommended (but not required) length for an entry is five minutes.



"Show, Don't Tell"

## The Rules

This flyer (or a photocopy) should be submitted with each entry.

- Submit each entry on a separate 1/2-inch VHS tape. Tapes cannot be returned. Keep a copy for yourself.
- Label each tape with your name, address, and phone. Title your tape.
- Tapes must have been made after March 12, 1993 and mailed by March 11, 1994.

Use the (blank) back of this form to:

- Describe the tape's purpose or instructional objective.
- Credit any copyrighted text, music, still images, and video segments.
- Provide your name, address, and phone, along with the tape's title.
- Identify the National Writing Project affiliate serving your area.



### Topic Ideas:

A Traditional Category (Narrative, Expository, Persuasive, etc.). Creative, Poetic, Technical, or Vocational Writing. Multiculturalism. Handwriting. The Rewards of Writing.

Combine images with sounds and voices.

## The Goodies

Selected entries will receive teacher stipends for supporting technology-related teaching of writing. All entries receive certificates suitable for proud display in your classroom.

## The Alliance

The CWP/CTP Alliance was formed to encourage and support the integration of technology into Writing Project activities and inservice.



The California Technology Project is funded by the California State Department of Education.

## Do This.

Send this form with your tape to:  
Stephen Marcus  
Coordinator, CWP/CTP Alliance  
SCWriP, Graduate School of  
Education, University of California,  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106.

Understand that the CWP/CTP Alliance may tape and use all submitted materials.

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature \_\_\_\_\_



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The purpose of the Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter is to link together all teachers of writing in our geographical area of southeastern Pennsylvania. The Newsletter features, but is not limited to, articles that deal with writing and the teaching of writing. We seek manuscripts from all teachers of writing at all grade levels and in all subject areas, and from anyone else interested in writing. All articles and submissions will be considered for publication. Comments, questions, etc. are also welcomed. Please send all communication to Vicki Steinberg, Editor, Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

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