



schools, and six years ago my classroom began to go through some drastic changes. For one thing, I gave ownership back to my students. They learned to conduct peer conferences and came to a conference prepared to talk about their pieces, not just to vocalize them. I built in time for them to do lots of self-evaluation and reflection, write across the curriculum, respond in journals and learning logs, and share, share, share! I have had the good fortune to assume an active role in the Writing Project. I continue to learn, change, and grow through discussions with extraordinary educators such as Jim MacCall, Sue Mowery, Diane Dougherty, Mary Lou Kuhns, and Cynthia Muse, to name a few. Much guidance and support comes from our director, Robert Weiss, who has had the Herculean task of orchestrating all Project affairs since 1980. I have met so many fine teachers from various districts at every grade level who continue to be excited about their changing roles as educators of young writers and readers and facilitators of writing/reading workshops.

Since 1989, I have been a teacher-trainer in our staff development program in "Writing Across the Curriculum" at Upper Moreland SD, providing a three-year workshop approach for K-12 teachers. Many of them have taken PAWP courses offered on-site or at West Chester University during the summer. Several of them have become "Fellows." Another teacher will be added to that list by the end of this summer! I have coordinated many courses about the teaching of writing for the Pennsylvania Writing Project and continue to take courses, attend PAWPDAYS and other PAWP events whenever possible. All this has caused me to reflect on what it really means to be a writer.

As a teacher of writing, I urge my students to continue to write, regardless of career choice, regardless of where life may lead them. Even though we may not all be published authors, poets, journalists, or teachers of writing, we can discover that writing is a powerful tool we have for learning about ourselves, about others, and about our world. Writing can help us to explore thoughts and feelings about new information and make it part of our own thinking, linking prior knowledge with newly acquired knowledge so that we may learn it.

The powers of writing are endless. I use writing as memory jogs for supermarket excursions and jobs I need to accomplish at home and in school. Sometimes my writing is an emotional catharsis--a chance to work out my anger in a letter that will never be mailed, or as a way to express my sympathy, grief, joy, or love. My best friends asked me to help them compose their wedding vows, and to hear them solemnly spoken at a Quaker wedding ceremony was a thrill I will never forget. I used writing to create a brochure for a summer riding camp. And recently, when I stood before many

familiar faces at a memorial service, delivering a eulogy for a dear friend who had lost her fight with cancer, again I found the power in the written word, to give the mourners the essence of who our friend was and what she meant to us--to speak of her courage, her dignity, and her strength--to speak with loving words and watch people smile, then cry, then nod their heads as they, too, remembered. Most recently my writing has served as entertainment for retirement dinners at Upper Moreland, written in rhyming verse and sung to the tunes of such favorites as "I've Been Working on the Railroad" and "On Top of Old Smokey." I never realized I could also write humorous material, but the echoing laughter of the audiences has assured me that I can! Last spring I was the keynote speaker at an awards assembly for excellence in writing sponsored by AAUW at North Penn SD. At first I struggled to write a speech for an audience that would consist of teachers, parents, and high school students. Then it came to me. I would speak about what it means to be a lifelong writer.

I continue to write stories and poems to realize my dream of becoming a published author, but I now know that this is not going to make me a writer. I already am one. You see, each new day we write another page in the story of our lives. As writers, perhaps we need to redefine our successes. Just as we cannot define greatness in one singular act but in the culmination of a lifetime of accomplishments and efforts, we cannot define our success in writing as the publication of the great American novel. Successes in writing are about the things we do every day to capture, relive, and rethink the exciting things that are going on in our world. It's spring. The earth will awaken and dress in her finest colors. Mother's Day will be celebrated, baseball games will be played, and sons and daughters will soon graduate and embark on new adventures. Writing can help us savor these precious moments in our lives. Even if they do not last forever, they can be recorded and celebrated again and again.

All of life serves as one big prewriting experience. Each writing experience helps us make connections with our past and with our future. When we write about things that happen to us, as we try to discover the meaning of our lives and of our impact on others, we raise ourselves to the conscious level of "I am a writer and what I have to say is important." People will read, rejoice about, and reflect on what I have to say. Perhaps it will cause someone to reexamine his thinking or change his way of doing something. Perhaps not. But it will always be a reaffirmation of "I am a writer."

*Lynne Dorfman is an Assistant Director of PAWP, and a 1989 Fellow. She teaches 3rd grade at the Round Meadow School in the Upper Moreland SD.*

**A REVIEW OF DONALD GRAVES' NEW BOOK:  
A FRESH LOOK AT WRITING**

Fifteen years ago I read Donald Graves' first book, *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work* (1983), soaking up all that I could about how to teach writing. Unlike any other book I had read about teaching, this book became the framework of how I taught and viewed writing. Graves emphasized the importance of giving children opportunities to tell their stories and to celebrate their writing. He modeled the idea that teachers of writing need to be writers too, to share their processes as well as their successes and failures. He turned on the light showing how to teach writing. He gave me as well as all teachers the hope that all of our students were writers, and all we needed to do was give them time to write and help them find their voice.

With the same enthusiasm and insight, Graves has revised his thinking in a new book, *A Fresh Look at Writing* (1994). In the preface Graves explains, "*A Fresh Look* is filled with *actions* intended to help teachers learn right along with the students. The *actions* are experiments in learning. As with any experiment, some work and some don't. In this sense, learning is an inexact but joyful journey. My hope is that readers will use what works, adjust what doesn't, and most of all, take time to do what lasts." He acknowledges many colleagues and teachers who have helped him on his journey but dedicates the book to another "father of the process approach to writing," Donald Murray. He states that "When Murray asks, 'What's new?' he really wants to know. It is the 'what's new?' of living and learning that has contributed so much to the life of this writer."

The age-old question teachers of writing often ask is **I don't have time to write every day! What should I do?** Graves responds to this question soundly and honestly: "...Don't teach it at all. You will encourage poor habits in your students and they will only learn to dislike writing. Think of something you enjoy doing well; chances are you involve yourself in it far more than one or two times a week" (104). Writing teachers everywhere applaud Graves for finally stating the truth without sugarcoating it!

Graves discovers his own thinking through his writing and remarks that, "I've often been asked, 'What is your method for teaching writing?' I think in my earlier books I tried to respond to the question by giving specific instructions--first this, then that. Granted, there are some systematic and highly structured elements to teaching writing, but I didn't realize until I wrote the introduction to Nancie Atwell's *In the Middle* that good writing doesn't result from any particular methodology.

Rather, the remarkable work of her students was a result of the conditions for learning she created in her classroom" (103).

Graves' *A Fresh Look at Writing* echoes some of his past premises: the need for daily time to write, the need for a variety of writing strategies, and the idea that "writing is a studio subject" (47). He sees the classroom as a studio where children can write and work at their own pace, on their own stories, and in their own form. He also believes, "Responsibility is the key to classroom organization. Children need to have clear sense of what is expected of them during writing time. There should be no question in their minds about what they are to do when they write (Easy words to say, I know)" (115).

Like all of Graves' books, articles and workshops, this book gives us great techniques and strategies, and the hope that our students can be their best when we allow them time and space to learn and write. The book is geared to elementary teachers, although I found many of his actions to work with my high school students. *A Fresh Look at Writing* moves from looking at Graves' own writing experiences, to classroom experiences, to working with other colleagues and parents. This book is a "must read" for teaching writing and will replace Calkins' *The Art of Teaching Writing* as the required text in the PAWP Strategies for Teaching Writing course.

Graves instructs, encourages, and coaches his reader to try his *actions* and inspires us with these words: "When I conducted the Ford Foundation study, I found that if students had one good teacher of writing in their entire career, irrespective of grade level, they could be successful writers. Be that one teacher" (14). Take the challenge!

*Jolene A. Borgese ('80) teaches English at East High School in the West Chester Area SD.*

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**PAWP ACHIEVEMENTS RECOGNIZED**

Mary Lou Kuhns' article "Using Multiple Intelligences: Portfolios to Understand Shakespeare" will run as the lead article in the Spring issue of *Portfolio News*. It discusses methods for encouraging students to use not only their verbal/linguistic skills but also their strengths in other intelligence areas to approach Shakespeare's plays. The article also discusses the advantages of including the student products in a portfolio.

She will also be recognized in the Acknowledgments section of Lynn Canady's new book on intensive scheduling for her feedback on his early draft.

# PAWP'S THREE-CREDIT SUMMER PROGRAMS

For information about registering for any of these classes, please call the PAWP office at (610) 436-2297.

## Writing Assessment/Portfolio Assessment

June 24 - July 12

8:30 AM - Noon

Berks County Intermediate Unit

(graduate credit only)

## Strategies For Teaching Writing I

June 24 - July 12

8:30 AM - Noon

West Chester University

(graduate or inservice credit)

How well are students doing in our classrooms? Because the nature of assessment is dynamic and changing, this course emphasizes portfolio applications: rich collections, selections, and organizations, including self-evaluations and reflections. The practical design of this course attracts teachers from all subject areas and grade levels. Kindergarten and content area teachers all find direct application for their classrooms.

Teachers work in peer response groups to create portfolio systems to accommodate individual student needs and find ways to make their systems manageable and comfortable. Authentic assessment requires student involvement and ownership. Many resources will be on hand for review and research, including samples of portfolio designs from previous classes.

In addition, the course covers holistic scoring, analytic scoring, checklists, and rubric design. PAWP teacher-consultants will demonstrate methods they use to evaluate children's writing in their own classrooms, often sharing student samples and/or other portfolios. The last session is a "celebration" where teachers share a portfolio design and receive feedback.

This course was offered at WCU in the Summer of 1995, and is current running in Manheim Township. Participants commented favorably:

*"Having taken a course that I can implement in the classroom with some confidence is quite meaningful."*

*"I have enjoyed learning about the subject area and I feel that I am becoming a better classroom manager (more positive) because of this. Thank you."*

*"It gave me confidence...parents could see actual evidence of what I was telling them as I went through the writing sections of the language arts report card."*

**Steve Heffner** ('92), the coordinator of this course, is chairman of his English Department at Conrad Weiser Area High School. He currently chairs his district's Portfolio Development Committee.

The most popular of all PAWP courses is available on campus at WCU. Offered over 200 times since 1980, "Strategies" includes presentations by nine teacher-consultants as well as the coordinator, who is also a classroom teacher. This puts teachers' voices at the center of the course and focuses on what really works in current classrooms.

Statistics tell the tale. In 24 Strategies courses offered between 1988 and 1991, 320 participants noted that their students now:

- spend a longer time writing (86.0%)
- do more writing of various kinds (83.8%)
- do more self-sponsored writing (85.6%)
- do more pre-writing (81.6%) and re-writing (68.4%)
- do more reading and writing activities in class (86.0%)
- find more pleasure in their written products (86.9%)

This course was offered most recently in the Fall of 1995, with participants commenting favorably:

*"One of the most enjoyable classes I've taken!"*

*"This course was a great influence on me and my classroom."*

*"After 20 years of teaching, I gained a wealth of knowledge."*

**Jolene Borgese** ('80), PAWP Co-Director, is the coordinator for this course. She teaches English in the West Chester Area SD and is working on a new book containing strategies for using picture books at the secondary level. For the past two years, Jolene has presented to large groups at NCTE conventions.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

*Every style that is not boring is a good one.*

**Voltaire**

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

# PAWP'S THREE-CREDIT SUMMER PROGRAMS

For information about registering for any of these classes, please call the PAWP office at (610) 436-2297.

## Teachers as Writers

June 24 - July 3

8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

West Chester University  
(graduate credit only)

What do teachers want to write? How can they get it published? What is it really like to be part of a K-12 community of writers? Answers are in this course for all teachers who want to grow as writers.

The first part of each class session is a reading/writing workshop. PAWP teacher-consultants and published authors instruct in different genres including fiction, poetry, personal essays, and professional articles. We promise strategies and opportunities for developing your skills and seeking a market for your work.

*"Inspiring in creating the writer in all of us."*

*"So exciting that it made me consider writing in ways I had never dreamed of before."*

*"I am a far better writer and a teacher of writing because of this class."*

## PRESENTERS:

**Pat Carney-Dalton** ('88), currently an elementary principal in the Souderton Area SD, Pat has published poetry, feature pieces in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and professional articles in national journals. She developed this course for PAWP and currently participates in a writing group with children's authors and educators.

**Richard Whiteford**, environmental activist and writer, recently got a call from the White House as a result of a *Philadelphia Inquirer* commentary piece. He regularly writes the "Endangered Species" short column that appears in the *Inquirer's* Sunday comic section and frequently contributes to the Chester County *Daily Local News*. Whiteford is working on an environmental education curriculum with the Downingtown Area SD.

**Mary Lou Kuhns**, who teaches at Conestoga High School in the Tredyffrin-Easttown SD, is the chief editor of PAWP's publication, *Strategies for Teaching Writing*. Her most recent professional article on Shakespeare and multiple intelligences will appear in *Portfolio News*.

**Bob McCann**, who teaches at East High School in West Chester, has previously served as co-director of our writing institutes and will coordinate this course.

## Whole Language, K-8

July 8 - July 25

8:00 - 11:45 AM

West Chester University  
(graduate or inservice credit)

What does it mean to be a "whole language teacher"? How do you integrate language, literacy, and learning? And what about skills? The change from traditional teaching to whole language can be daunting. Developing and mastering whole language approaches takes time. This course helps participants at all stages of professional growth. Reading/writing workshop formats, mini-lessons, interdisciplinary units, and authentic approaches to assessment are all addressed by the PAWP and PennLit teacher-consultants who share what works in their classrooms as part of this course. For teachers in elementary or middle school settings.

This course was offered in the Summer of 1995 and most recently in the Lower Moreland SD and the Montgomery County IU. Teachers commented favorably:

*"Every day I felt wonderful and energized when I left with my head filled with many ideas and thoughts."*

*"This course gave me the opportunity to grow professionally to a degree I never thought it would."*

*"Dynamic speakers who blended their ideas into a cohesive whole."*

*"The course validated some of the activities I'd been using and gave me a lot of food for thought. It also gave me a lot more confidence in my ability to integrate and begin to implement a whole language philosophy."*

**Judy Gehman**, ('82) Fellow and past president of KSRA, is a consultant for school districts in reading/writing programs. She presents at PAWPDAYS and has coordinated many other project courses.

## This just in!

We are pleased to announce the addition of **Craig Czury** to our list of presenters for our Teachers as Writers program. Craig has been conducting poetry writing workshops for over 10 years. His work has been focused on creating a community voice through poetry, and he has been published in a variety of literary magazines. He is also the author of nine collections of poems.



## MEET OUR SUMMER YOUTH SITE COORDINATORS



**Diane Barrie** ('95) will be coordinating the Methacton site at Arcola Intermediate School, where she teaches seventh grade. She is involved in her district's writing process training and is very busy integrating her PAWP knowledge into her curriculum.

**Johanna Berman** ('95) is in her fourth year teaching sixth grade English at Sandy Run Middle School in the Upper Dublin SD. She will be co-coordinating the Fort Washington Elementary site in the same district this summer.

**Bernadette Cant** ('95), will be coordinating our Interboro SD site at Prospect Park Elementary this summer. She is currently teaching a multi-age class of 8 and 9 year olds at the Norwood School. This multi-age program is in its first year, with Bernadette and six other teachers at the helm.

**Betty Esris** ('93) is in her second year coordinating our Central Bucks site at the Unami Middle School, where she is a 9th grade English teacher.

**Jamie Fiermonte** ('95) is in her fifth year as a fourth grade teacher at Thomas Fitzwater Elementary School in the Upper Dublin SD. She will be co-coordinating the Fort Washington site, also in Upper Dublin. She is currently the curriculum leader of writing for her building.

**Sue Fitzgerald** ('94) is a first grade teacher at Rainbow Elementary in the Coatesville Area SD and will be coordinating our site this summer at Reeceville Elementary. Sue recently received two instructional improvement grants from her district.

**Jerry Hartle** ('94 & Lit'95) teaches sixth grade at Kutztown Elementary School in the Kutztown SD where he is team-teaching a self-contained language arts program. This summer, he will coordinate our Kutztown High School site. Jerry is currently implementing reading and writing workshops in his classroom and is helping to write the district-wide curriculum in language arts and reading.

**Kathy Hurst** ('93), a second grade teacher at Simmons Elementary School in the Hatboro-Horsham SD, will be coordinating the youth program there this summer. Kathy team teaches with '94 PAWP'er Bonnie Brown doing literature circles and reader response. She taught in the Young Writers/Young Readers program last summer.

**Judy Jester** ('93 & Lit'94) is in her second year as a site coordinator, shouldering the West Chester University responsibility this year, and is looking forward to a busy summer. Judy is an eighth grade

teacher at the Kennett Middle School in the Kennett Consolidated SD. She is currently preparing to teach a one-credit course on persuasive writing and is also serving as a trainer for the PAWP-PDE state writing assessment project.

**Mary O'Gorman** ('93) teaches reading and writing in a computer-assisted writing center to grades six through eight at the Upper Moreland Middle School. She is in her third year coordinating our YW/YR site at that location.

**Sylvia Pennypacker** ('91) is in her second year coordinating our Neshaminy site at the Maple Point Middle School. She led our Young Writers/Young Readers pilot program there in 1994. Sylvia teaches the PAWP course "Emergent Writers & Readers" in Montgomery County and is also an annotator for the PAWP-PDE state writing assessment project.

**Barb Reznick** ('90) teaches pre-first at Twin Valley Elementary Center and will be coordinating our Twin Valley Middle School site this summer. She taught in the youth program at WCU in 1994, is teaching for PAWP, and her piece on writing in science appeared in the PAWP publication *Strategies for Teaching Writing*.

**Carol Townsend** ('94) is a fourth and fifth grade learning support teacher at Indian Lane Elementary in the Rose Tree Media SD, and will be coordinating the Springton Lake Middle School site in the same district this summer. She taught 3 sessions of our youth program last year. Carol is currently working on inclusion with learning support students in the regular classroom.

**Karen Venuto** ('92) will be coordinating our Young Writers/Young Readers programs at West Chester University this summer. A fifth grade teacher at Indian Lane Elementary School in the Rose Tree Media SD Karen is involved in the second year of a unique sharing opportunity with a local retirement community; her class will share their reading list with the retirement community, and the result will be one big literature circle.

**Cheryl Weisenfels** ('90) will be our site coordinator at the Kennett Square site at the Kennett Middle School this summer. She is currently teaching a wide range of grades and ability levels at Kennett High School and is employing writing process methods for all of her classes. She is extremely excited about the expository writing class in which her students are using computers, peer conferences, and extensive draft revision. The results have been fantastic!

LOVE TAKES A WHOLE BOX OF CRAYONS

A rainy Saturday was transformed into a colorful learning session for attendees to January's PAWP Day by John Flynn, musician, lyricist, and teacher. John Flynn, who hails from Ridley Park and graduated from Temple University as a political science major, comes to us via a stint in Nashville composing music for the likes of Kris Kristofferson. His latest CD, *Love Takes a Whole Box of Crayons*, won an award from the American Library Journal and is popular among listener to WXPN's Kid's Corner. It is a collection of children's songs that he composed for and with his own children.

Though John's musical compositions have reached the top forty, he left Nashville after hearing that his lyrics were too poetic. Is there a difference between poetry and song lyrics? John doesn't have the vaguest idea. One thing he does know, is that composing lyrics is a most highly structured process of writing, requiring an entire story to be told in about three minutes. His poetic talent and song writing ability has led him to a greater appreciation of poets such as Emily Dickinson, who inspired his composition "Nobody's Perfect."

What can a lyricist teach a teacher? Lots, we all agreed. Children show an interest in making up songs at an early age. John says his children join him in writing music around the dining room table. He says, "All children are actors, authors, and painters. We haven't taught them not to be yet." Teachers should encourage their students to compose lyrics. Writing new words to known melodies is a tried and true way to begin.

A performer since high school, John is accustomed to appearing before vast audiences. But recently, because of his expansion into children's music, he has led workshops for school audiences, composing songs on the spot with students as young as second grade. John says, "Elementary kids are open to the magic of music." With his vibrant voice and guitar, John employs familiar brainstorming techniques as he works with groups of youngsters to create music. A collaboration with a second grade class at Oakmont Elementary inspired "My Brother Ricky's for Sale."

John's advice to the young person interested in a musical career is to write the songs. Song writers earn the money. The singer begins an album already "in the hole," having to pay all expenses up front. The writer gets six cents from each album sold. Perhaps one of us will look back, knowing that we encouraged one of our students to become a successful lyricist.

*Judy Fisher, an 1982 PAWP Fellow, teaches in the Philadelphia SD.*

In the next few months, teachers who gather to score 6th and 9th grade writing samples for the Pennsylvania Writing Assessment will also participate in 9 hours of workshops designed by the Pennsylvania Writing Project. Under a recently negotiated formal arrangement with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, West Chester University will receive funding to enable PAWP and five other NWP sites in our state to develop and conduct these training sessions. Their main purpose is to marry the state's writing assessment to instruction by emphasizing classroom use of the assessment "tools": prompts, modes, the characteristics of effective writing, the scoring guide, and holistic scoring.

A team of eight PAWP teacher-consultants will annotate 150 writing samples from last year's assessment and will select sets of anchor papers to be used in the training. Team members include Kathleen Frick, Barbara Heisler, Joan Kilpatrick, Lynn Marta, Becky Miller, Joanne Morris, Sylvia Pennypacker, and Roseann Uhrig.

Using these annotated samples and anchors as well as additional materials, another team of twelve teacher-consultants will lead the training sessions at three locations in April and May. The PAWP team includes teacher-consultants Brenda Hurley, Judy Jester, Barb Reznick, and Peggy Walsh.

Also included in the work is the development of prompts (topics) for local use. The entire program is being led by Bob Weiss and Andy Fishman.



PAWPER PUBLISHED IN  
EDUCATION JOURNAL

Andrea Fishman's article "Worlds Together, Worlds Apart - The Multiple Realities of American Schools" appeared in the January 1996 issue of *Phi Delta Kappan*, the monthly publication of Phi Delta Kappa, the professional fraternity in education.

In this piece Andrea compares two seemingly opposite educational environments, an Amish one-room school and a suburban middle school, and discovers numerous unexpected similarities. As a result, she abandons her preconceived notions and focuses on the parallels between the two.

Andrea is the associate director of PAWP and the Director of PennLit.

# TOP SIXTEEN REASONS TO ATTEND THE PAWP BANQUET

by Lynne R. Dorfman

On the evening of May 22nd, the Pennsylvania Writing Project will celebrate 16 years of successful teacher education programs to improve student writing and the teaching of writing in today's classrooms. The banquet will be a reunion for many graduates of our Summer Writing Institutes and Penn-Lit Institutes and will honor area educators who have supported our various programs. Formal invitations will be mailed to all Fellows; others may use the invitation form included in this issue of our newsletter. If you aren't sure whether this affair is for you, perhaps the "Top Sixteen Reasons" will help you decide. We hope to see you there!



## "Top 16 Reasons to Attend the PAWP Banquet"

16. You are an aspiring author and would like our keynote speaker, Jerry Spinelli, to read your unpublished novel and offer helpful suggestions and/or get you an agent.
15. You want to increase your classroom library by winning some free books as a door prize.
14. You don't like to cook dinner and take every opportunity to leave that chore to your spouse so you can enjoy fine dining in the company of friends.
13. Your administrator is being honored at this banquet and you want to show your support, since next year you would like to receive permission to attend the NCTE or IRA International Convention--all expenses paid.
12. You want to take home half the "loot" in our 50/50 raffle and use the money to register for more PAWP courses.
11. You are about to use *Maniac Magee* in your classroom and want to impress your kids by telling them you talked with the author and received your very own autographed copy.
10. This is by far a cheaper way to catch up with all your PAWP friends than by e-mail or by calling them on the phone, especially if you have friends like Lynne Dorfman!
9. You just can't wait to spend your money and buy more children's books from Children's Book World who will be represented with two full display tables.
8. You only have twenty-eight days filled with after-school activities and meetings for the month of May and are trying to break your record by filling all thirty-one days.
7. You have previously scheduled a visit to your dentist for a tooth extraction or root canal on this date, and would gladly welcome the opportunity to postpone this trip indefinitely.
6. Your picture has never appeared anywhere, and you are hoping you'll be photographed with Spinnelli and featured in our next newsletter.
5. Your husband informed you that Howard Stern will be coming to your house for dinner on May 22nd dressed in drag.
4. You have just had optional cosmetic surgery and can't wait to hear all your PAWP friends tell you that you look 16 years younger!
3. You want to see if Judy Fisher, Cynthia Muse, and Nancy McElwee can really attend a PAWP event without spending any money on kids' books.
2. You are dying to ask Jim MacCall if "spel" is really a four letter word.
1. You would like to see what Bob Weiss looks like when he's not wearing jeans, a flannel shirt, and a pair of sneakers.

All kidding aside, we look forward to your company on the evening of May 22nd at "Traditions" in Lawrence Center on the West Chester University campus. We guarantee a good time will be had by all!

**Don't forget to RSVP for the Banquet by May 1, 1996!**



*You are invited to the 1996 Banquet  
Celebrating Sixteen Years of the  
Pennsylvania Writing Project*

*May 22, 1996*



**Featured Speaker, Author and Humorist  
Jerry Spinelli**

**Sponsored by Scholastic, Inc.**

**Celebrate the achievements of the Writing Project**

- ◆ the quarterly Newsletter ◆
- ◆ the PAWP publication - Strategies for Teaching Writing ◆
- ◆ the Youth Programs (formerly the Youth Writing Project) ◆
- ◆ the Pennsylvania Literature Project ◆



**Book Exhibits by**

Children's  
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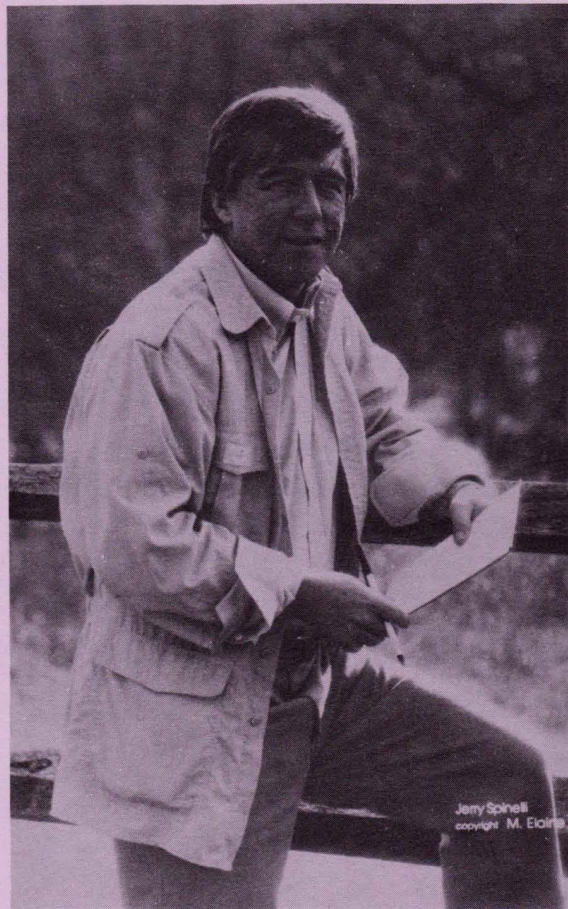
# Meet Jerry Spinelli

Jerry Spinelli began writing when he wasn't much older than Jeffrey Lionel Magee in *Maniac Magee* or Jason in *Jason and Marceline*. When Spinelli was sixteen years old, his high school football team won the big game, and the whole town was celebrating their victory. While his classmates raced through the streets cheering, Jerry raced home to mark the occasion in his own way. He wrote a poem that was published in the town paper.

Having had a house full of children, six to be exact, Jerry Spinelli has had many real life characters to draw upon for story ideas. He also has the wonderful ability to look back on his own childhood and turn some of those experiences into marvelous books for young readers. Jerry Spinelli reflects on the power of childhood memories and their effect on his work. "Isn't it a magical, wonderful thing that our childhoods are not irretrievably lost to us, like the juice squeezed forever from an orange, and that without moving so much as an

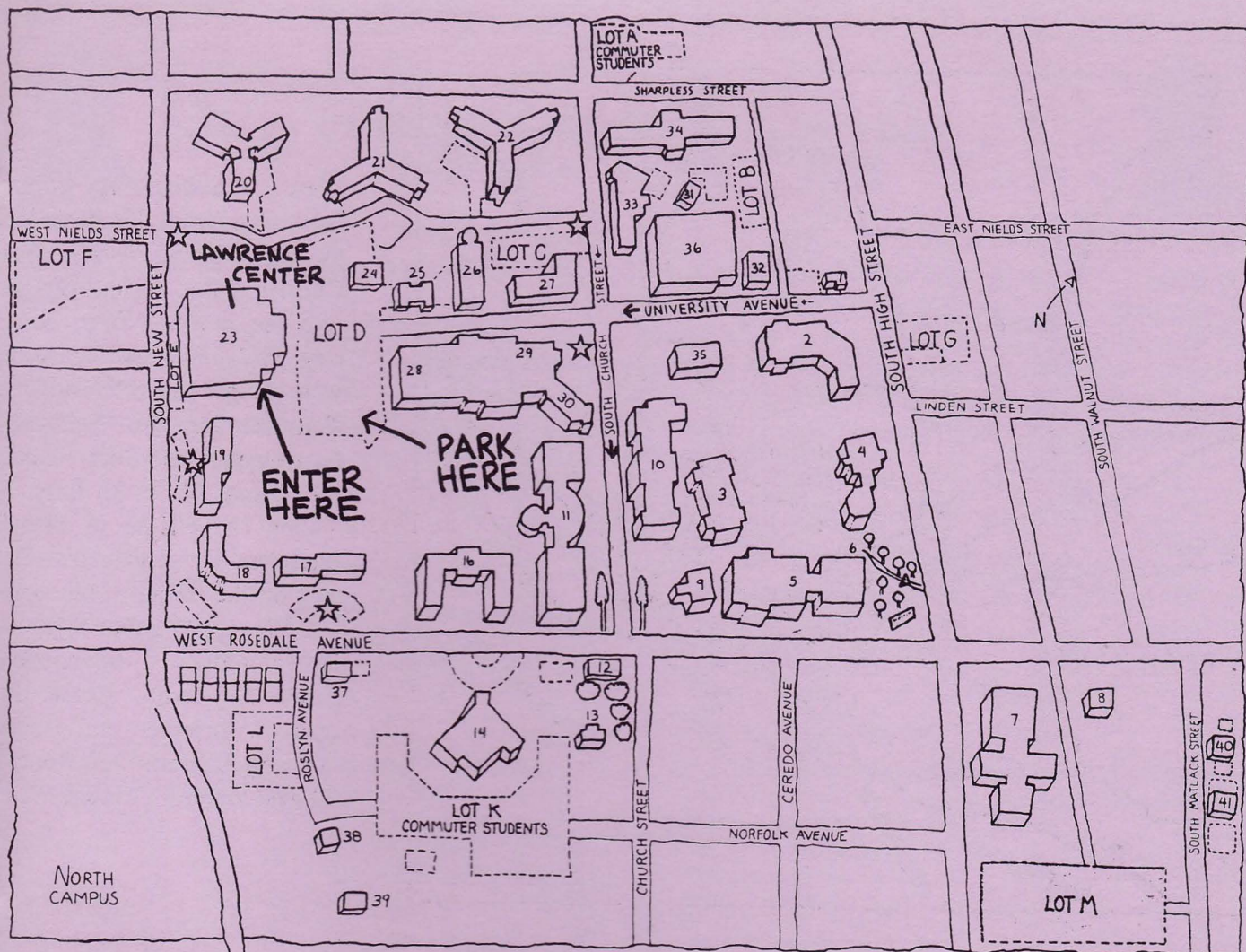
eyelash we can call back Buddy Brathwaite's bare, rat-proof feet, or Ginny Sukoloski's dungaree nipping pet duck, or Joey Lapella's green teeth?

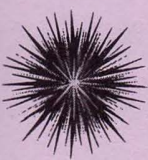
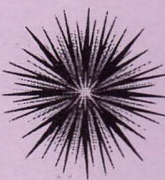
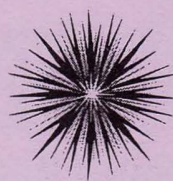
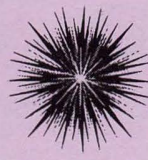
Each of us, in our kidhood, was a Huckleberry Finn, drifting on a current that seemed tortuously slow at times, poling for the shore to check out the slightest glimmer in the trees, the taste of brussels spouts, your first forward roll, cruising the local mall without your parents, overnighting it, the joy of making your own grilled cheese sandwich, the weird way you felt when Sally Duffy scrunched next to you in the mob coming out of the movie theatre, the thousand landfalls of our adolescence. The current flows faster and faster, the

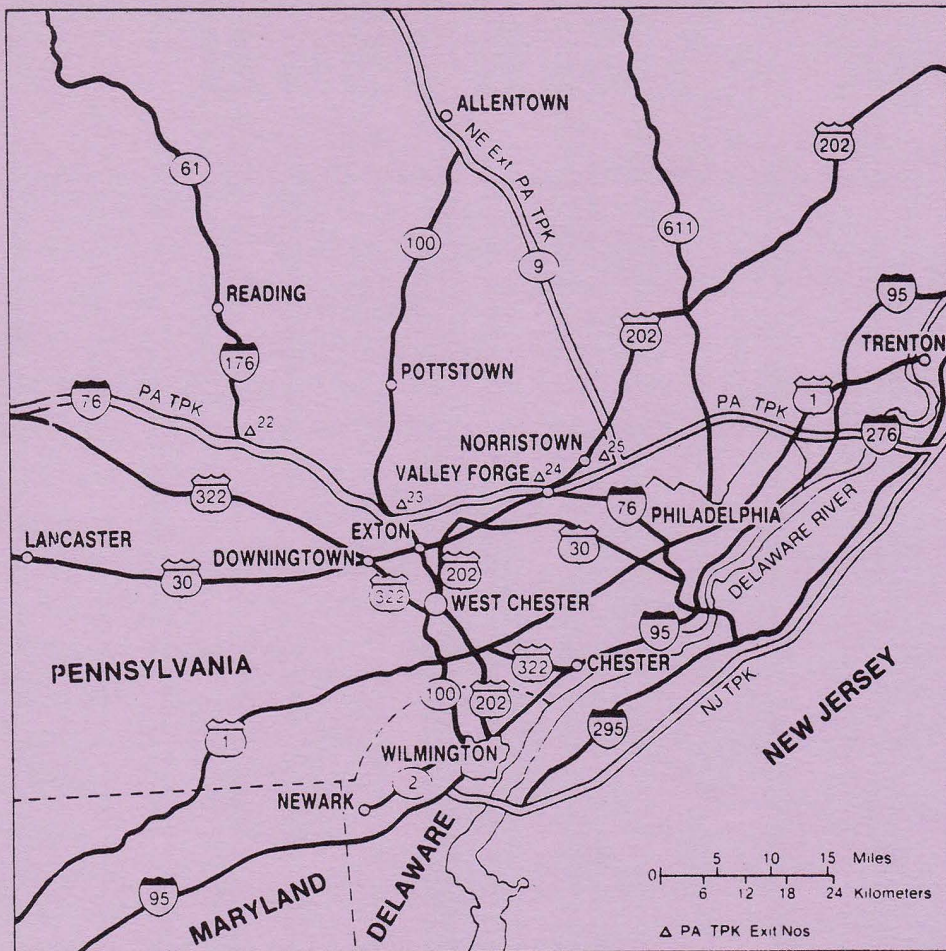


delta of adulthood looms, and one day we get our bearings and find that we are out to sea. Now we know what we did not know then: What an adventure it was!"

Jerry Spinelli lives with his wife Eileen and two sons, Sean and Ben, not too far away from here in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.







  
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Yes, I would like to attend the May 22, 1996 Banquet Celebrating Sixteen Years of the Pennsylvania Writing Project. I have enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations.

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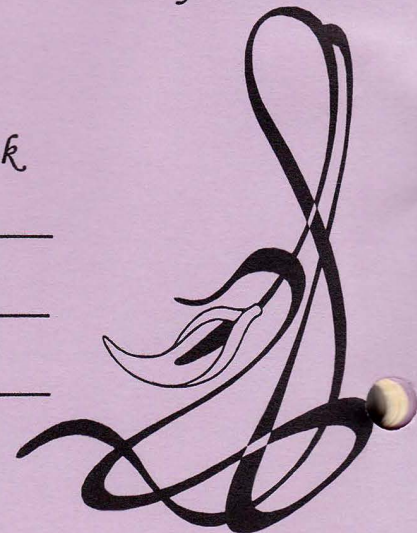
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Please remove this invitation and return to:

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West Chester University  
West Chester, PA 19383





## PAWP RECOGNIZES SPECIAL SUPPORT FROM AREA ADMINISTRATORS

Since 1980, the Writing Project has enjoyed the support of far-sighted school administrators in southeastern Pennsylvania. Some years ago, we took the opportunity to recognize the region's Intermediate Units for their excellent work in linking the Project to individual districts. This year, we intend to recognize and honor some of the individual school district administrators who have brought the Project into their districts or have encouraged teachers to join its staff or Fellows or sign up for one of its programs. Without the spirit, acumen, and skills of these people, our Project could not have had its solid 16-year history as a leader in professional development in our region. Their faith in our work merits our singling them out for recognition. Their names are recognized by county.

### BERKS

Al Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent, Twin Valley SD  
Judith Funk, Superintendent, Twin Valley SD

Linda Baer, Teacher and former English Department Head, Conrad Weiser SD  
Ruby Pannoni, Supervisor of Language Arts, Boyertown Area SD  
Nancy Allmon, Superintendent, Fleetwood Area SD

William Harst, Superintendent, Exeter Township SD  
William Lupini, Superintendent, Kutztown Area SD

### BUCKS

Ann Marie Daley, Language Arts Coordinator, Neshaminy SD  
Regina Cesario, Assistant Superintendent, Bristol Township SD

Hilde McGeehan, Staff Development Specialist, Council Rock SD  
Patricia Johnston, Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, Centennial SD  
Suzanne Harrington, Reading Specialist, Quakertown Community SD

Jim Scanlon, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Neshaminy SD  
Sheryl Royer, Supervisor of Language Arts, Central Bucks SD

### CHESTER

Paul Bentley, Assistant Superintendent, Coatesville Area SD

Tonya Hutchinson, Director of Education, West Chester Area SD  
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Karen Brofee, Director of Instruction and Educational Programs, Downingtown Area SD  
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James Lee, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Haverford Township SD  
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Richard Luoma, Assistant Superintendent, Hatboro-Horsham SD  
Rita Klein, Principal and Coordinator of Elementary Education (retired), Hatboro-Horsham SD  
Marion Dugan, Director of Curriculum and Staff Development, Souderton Area SD

Virginia Modla, Director of Curriculum, Upper Dublin SD  
Sharon Richardson, Superintendent, Pottsgrove SD  
Carol Turoczi, Supervisor of Language Arts, North Penn SD

### PHILADELPHIA

Audrey Badger, Teacher Development Trainer (retired)  
Mary Ellen Costello, Supervisor R/ELA (retired)

Cecelia Evans, Regional Supervisor R/ELA (retired)  
Catherine Hatala, Curriculum Coordinator R/ELA (retired)

# NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT INFORMATION

## THE QUARTERLY SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

*The Quarterly*, a joint publication of the National Writing Project and the National Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy, is a journal devoted to concerns surrounding the teaching and learning of writing. Each issue of *The Quarterly* offers a wealth of resources and ideas for professionals, including articles, interviews with prominent members of the field, book reviews, and brief updates on Center research and Writing Project activities. Recent issues have included articles focusing on historical writing, portfolio assessment, writing in the multicultural classroom, and the writing process.

Several articles by PAWP Fellows have appeared in *The Quarterly*: a write-up by Pat Carney-Dalton ('88) of the popular Teachers as Poets program she developed, and an article by Conne Broderick ('84) on her unique spelling process.

Subscriptions are available and are \$15.00 per year (\$21.00 outside the USA). *The Quarterly* is published four times per year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). Please detach the subscription card below and return it to the address indicated.

## BECOME A NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT ASSOCIATE

A new and exciting opportunity is being offered by the National Writing Project based on the ideas and input from writing project site directors throughout the country. It is now possible to become an Associate of the National Writing Project. As an Associate, you will become a member of both the National Writing Project and your local writing project (PAWP).

For the low cost of \$20.00 a year, and in addition to the publications and services you already receive as a member of the PAWP mailing list, you will receive an Associate card that entitles you to a discount on NWP books, a wonderful collection of practical ideas and applications for the classroom, a subscription to the NWP journal *The Quarterly*, and a subscription to the soon-to-be released NWP newsletter, the *NWP Insider*. An added incentive is that part of your membership fee will be returned to PAWP, so we may further the services we are able to provide.

If you are interested in becoming a NWP Associate, please call the PAWP office at (610) 436-2202, and we will be glad to mail you the appropriate information.



### Subscribe to *The Quarterly* of the National Writing Project

The Quarterly is published four times per year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). A subscription is \$15.00 per year (\$21.00 outside the USA). Please direct subscription requests to: National Writing Project, 615 University Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA, 94720 (make check payable to "National Writing Project").

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## "PREWRITING IDEAS FOR SONGS AND POETRY" A PAWPDAY 3 WORKSHOP

January 27, 1996

by Anne Murdock

Barbara Resnick, PAWP Fellow and pre-first grade teacher in the Twin Valley SD, demonstrated how her students benefit from grade appropriate writing strategies.

At the top of the class, a delightful publication was shown and read. The book, *Hush, Baby, Hush* was written and illustrated by her class. The success of this effort was due to the cooperative efforts of children and teachers. The skills employed to create this book were rhyming words and beginning consonant sounds. In music class, the teacher played beginning strains of the familiar *Hush Little Baby* while students were encouraged to compose their own lyrics together. The following is a part of the result:

Hush little baby don't try to talk  
Papa's gonna take you on a walk

If on that walk you should fall down  
Papa's gonna buy you a lacy pink gown (etc.)

A video of Barbara Resnick's class performing their works further enabled those present to appreciate the success of the strategy.

The children applied their prewriting activities across the curriculum. In conjunction with a science senses unit, they wrote original verses about things they see, hear, feel, smell, and taste. An example is as follows:

### *Sweet Things of Nature* by Jessica

I walk through the woods and I hear  
Birds chirping and leaves moving against each other.  
I walk through the meadow and I hear  
The wind moving the flowers gracefully.  
I walk in my house and I smell  
The sweet smell of my family's supper.

Barbara Resnick's approach to her students fits in with the awareness of multiple intelligences and how children learn in many ways, as cited in Howard Gardner's *Multiple Intelligences*. Each year offers a different challenge to her, but her ability to reach the very young is enhanced with her lessons in poetry writing and the ongoing rewards of writing.

Anne Murdock is a first grade teacher at Devon Elementary School in the Tredyffrin/Easttown SD.

## POSITION PAPER

by Gail Garber

There I sat, the sole administrator among a classful of teachers. Week after week, I read, I listened, I pondered. I repeatedly asked myself, "What is the role of the *principal* in the creation of a whole language environment for learning?" Finally, in the fifteenth week, it dawned on me. Why, the very same principles and practices that apply to student learning would apply to *teacher* learning as well!

As a change agent, the principal sets direction and promotes ongoing professional growth among faculty members, much as the whole language classroom teacher assesses students' needs and thoughtfully plans instruction to meet those needs. The common principles and practices which define whole language could be translated into a set of beliefs that would drive staff supervision and staff development as well. Here then, adapted from Constance Weaver's work in *Understanding Whole Language* (1990), is every administrator's guide to change.

### WHAT STAFF SUPERVISION AND DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE: COMMON PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

1. Staff supervision and development should be based upon the observation that teachers grow and learn most readily when they actively pursue their own learning.
2. To foster change, school principals should attempt to replicate the strategies parents used early on in each teacher's life to stimulate the acquisition of language; that is, to reward the teacher's successive approximations toward the desired change.
3. Staff supervision and development should be based upon the observation that much of what teachers learn is learned with little, if any, direct instruction.
4. Recognizing teachers, incredible abilities to learn complex processes by engaging in those processes, any direct instruction by school principals, or their designees, should occur in response to a teacher's demonstrated readiness and need.
5. Change, and the facilitating efforts that stimulate it, proceeds more from whole-to-part than from part-to-whole.
6. Knowing that change is best achieved through functional use, school principals should engage teachers in adopting new philosophies and methods for *authentic* purposes.
7. Staff supervision and development should be based upon the assertion that in order to grow and learn, teachers must be learners, risk-takers, and decision-makers.

8. In effective staff supervision and development programs, change should be fostered through social interaction: teachers discussing, sharing ideas, and working together to solve problems and undertake projects.

9. In effective staff supervision and development programs, teachers should be treated as capable and developing, not as incapable and deficient.

10. In effective staff supervision and development programs, typically there should be no "behavior problems," not only because teachers are more actively involved in learning, but because they are given the opportunity to control their own destinies.

11. In effective staff supervision and development programs, evaluation should be intertwined with learning and change; though periodic observation and evaluation may be preplanned and structured, daily contacts and experiences should also provide opportunities for evaluation.

12. Teachers in effective staff supervision and development programs should gain attitudes and behaviors that yield self-confidence and competence.

This twelve-point belief system is quite compelling in its simple and direct translation from whole language philosophy. The implication is clear. If a whole language learning environment is to be created for the *students* of Pine Road School, then a whole-language-like program of supervision and staff development must be developed for the *teachers* of Pine Road School. We all have our work cut out for us.

*Gail Garber, a principal in the Lower Moreland SD, was a participant in PAWP's Fall 1995 course, Whole Language Strategies for Connecting Writing, Reading, and Learning, led by Nancy McElwee.*

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**PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF  
ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE ARTS STATE  
CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED**

The theme for the 1996 PCTELA state conference will be *Teaching Students to be Lifelong Learners*. The conference will be held at the Avalon Hotel in Erie on October 18, 1996.

Registration fees are \$40 per member, \$45 for non-members, and \$50 for on-site registrations. Hotel rates at the newly remodeled Avalon are quite a bargain, at \$55 per night plus 6% for singles, doubles, triples, and quads.

Convention Chair Jane Blystone, a North West PA Writing Project Fellow, is available for questions and suggestions, and can be reached at (814) 725-9187.

## HOLDING STONE

by Barbara Brady

I've no idea when I lost that stone.  
I carried it for years in pockets,  
slipping it out to feel its cool, smooth curves  
in the palm of my hand.  
I'd picked it up from a lakebed  
somewhere in the Cascade Mountains outside Seattle.  
I remember marveling at the black amulet  
and its perfect fit in my hand,  
as if made to measure, polished  
by the sure fingers of rushing waters.

It's all I had to hold  
from that first summer with my husband,  
and somehow It always held the promise  
of a perfect fit.

It was a Hallmark summer.  
We took pictures of each other  
in the wildflowers on Mt. Rainier,  
I made my first attempts at cooking  
(Hotdogs Hawaiian style),  
we went to anything free  
(concerts, poetry readings, campus demonstrations),  
we ate bacon and eggs as we watched  
the first man set foot on the moon.  
Seattle was perfectly cool and sunfilled  
that summer.  
Even when it drizzled,  
the sun filtered through  
and made little rainbows.  
It was the first time I'd seen a sunshower.  
The stone held that summer within it.  
I called it my Holding Stone.

But it's rare that two people fit so well forever.  
Without even noticing,  
we changed shape and drifted apart.  
One day, one year, I realized  
I hadn't seen the stone in ages;  
I couldn't even remember  
quite when I'd had it last.

Now, I find myself picking up rocks again  
and letting them rest in the palm of my hand,  
turning them over in my fingers,  
examining the colors.  
You just never know  
when you'll find  
a holding stone.

*Barbara Brady teaches 5th grade at the Valley Forge Middle School in the Tredyffrin/Easttown SD and wrote this piece in "Strategies for Teaching Writing."*



## NICOLE

By *Caren Gisburne*

I heard about Nicole in August of 1994. I was at school preparing my room (and myself) for my first full year of teaching. My vice principal came in and handed me my class list. She gave me some background information on one particular student, Nicole. She informed me that Nicole, 11 years old, lived at Silver Springs, a school for children who are unable to live at home. She had resided there since the age of 6. Her background was filled with negativity and abuse: verbal, emotional, and sexual. As my eyes welled up with tears, my vice principal informed me that Nicole was a selective mute. (A selective mute is a person who is able to talk but chooses not to for one reason or another.) Obviously Nicole chose to shut out the abuse she endured by not talking to anyone with the exception of a social worker and one or two friends. Though occasionally she spoke with some of the staff at Silver Springs, Nicole had never been verbal in a school setting.

I decided to learn everything I possibly could about Nicole. Her fourth grade teacher told me that Nicole communicated by way of notes and letters. This worked, however it was difficult to assess academic levels. Though Nicole always received a low mark in class participation, she generally did well in most subject areas. On more than one occasion, Nicole had requested to meet with her previous teacher alone, to communicate orally. However, when the time came, Nicole either refused to speak or did not show up at all. This frustrated her teacher, who felt she was being manipulated by Nicole. I could feel my hopes shrinking. Why would Nicole speak to some people and not others? Why did she refuse to speak in school?

As most first year teachers do, I began a journal of my goals, my successes, my failures, my ups and downs, etc., however, this soon turned into my 'Nicole journal.' I observed Nicole in the classroom and at lunch. I was amazed at her stubbornness. No matter what, she was not going to say a word. In the lunch line she pointed to her selection. The lunch aide had difficulty understanding and often dished out something different. Nicole would become frustrated and shake her head furiously and point to another selection. She was not about to speak, even if she was starving. I observed her on the playground. She played and had fun with a lot of other children on the playground, but if she got upset or cried, tears came, but no sound. If she thought something was funny, she appeared to laugh, but no sound came out her mouth.

I soon learned that Nicole did talk to another fifth grader, Kene, who also resided at Silver Springs. I

discovered that Nicole communicated with the other children on the playground through Kene. She whispered to Kene and Kene told the others what Nicole had said. In the classroom, I would call on Nicole, hoping that she just might answer one day. Typically, the person next to her answered for her. Nicole would write the answer down or point to it in her book and someone was always willing to talk for her. Nicole seemed to be using her classmates. I began to feel that I too was being used. We knew that Nicole was perfectly able to speak, but why should she?

Well, that arrangement would soon come to an end. One day, I called on Nicole to answer a question. She in turn looked to her neighbor and pointed to her answer. Her neighbor then read the answer out loud. I could feel my blood pressure rising. She was getting away with murder again and it was not fair! While the class was reading independently, I asked Nicole to come into the hallway. I don't remember exactly what I said but it went something like this, "From now on, either you answer the question yourself or you do not answer it at all. It is not fair that others should speak for you when you are perfectly able to speak for yourself!"

The next morning, after an evening of wondering if I had done the right thing or had totally pushed Nicole away, I found a note from her on my desk, stating that she would like to meet with me to "TALK". The word 'talk' was capitalized and underlined. I asked her if today during lunch would be okay with her. She nodded "Yes". Then, I remembered her fourth grade teacher's unsuccessful attempts to meet with Nicole to 'talk'. I could not let that happen, not now. I was determined to get Nicole to speak to me!!

We met in the stairwell near the doors to the playground. I was nervous. I could feel my heart pounding. Kene was with Nicole, of course. Ten minutes went by and I was getting frustrated. Then I heard myself saying, "Nicole, I am very busy. I am taking time out of my schedule to meet with you. If you decide that this is not what you want, that's it. This is your only chance." I couldn't believe I said that. I prayed that I did not just blow all chances I had of getting her to speak to me. I continued by telling Nicole that if she couldn't think of anything to say, she could just tell me what a wonderful teacher I was. I hoped that some humor would lighten the mood.


"You're a great teacher, Miss Gisburne," Nicole whispered. I swallowed the lump in my throat. I couldn't believe it. It had worked! Granted, Nicole did not speak very loudly or clearly, nor did she look me in the eye, but it was a start.

Nicole and I began a verbal relationship and often met for lunch and just chatted. Eventually, Nicole began speaking with a few classmates and even another

teacher. Nicole began to realize how important it was for her to speak in order to communicate. However, she still had a bad day here and there when she would refuse to talk to anyone. We formed a special student/teacher relationship that included respect and friendship. Nicole taught me something very special: anything is possible. I only hope that she realizes that too.

*Caren Gisburne is a 1995 PAWP Fellow who teaches in the Colonial SD.*

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**THE PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT ,  
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS PAWP**

*by Carolyn Garverich*

Many of my colleagues talk about nothing else. There is a part of me, a small part, that would really like to participate in this experience, but I am petrified. After all, I am not a writer. I have never kept a journal and no one has ever required me to write everyday. And, it is unthinkable to think that someone would actually ask me to share my writing with the class. If I had my wishes I would teach nothing but math. It has always been my first love. But, I have to say that I do envy people who like to write and who seem to be able to teach children how to improve their writing.

Another year has gone by and I am still listening to teachers proclaim all that they learned through "The Project." As usual, I came up with another excuse for not being able to participate this summer. After all, I had to have an operation on my foot. Is it beginning to seem to you that I will go to any extreme not to enroll in this course?

At a meeting with the language arts coordinator in the fall, the subject of "PAWP" was discussed again. There were several "Fellows" at the meeting who were sharing ideas and experiences from their classrooms. At that point, I was beginning to get the bug, but I did not have the nerve to say it out loud. After all, that might be considered a commitment on my part.

So I went back to my classroom and started to grade some papers. At this point, I was very frustrated. There did not seem to be any methods that I could use to help my students improve their writing. I am not the kind of teacher who enjoys mediocrity, but I seemed to be ready to let my students experience this feeling. What is wrong with me!!!!??? Am I becoming one of those "veteran" teachers who is not interested in anything new? Am I willing to let new techniques pass me by? Am I ready to come to work day after day and not improve? I am glad to say that my answer to all the above was a resounding NO! That was the turning point of my attitude toward teaching writing. The next day I

called the language arts coordinator and told her I was interested in becoming a "Fellow".

For the next few months, I worried a lot. Whenever any of my friends heard that I had made the plunge and enrolled in PAWP they gave me a sympathetic smile and patted me on the back. "You'll live through it even if you don't think you will," they said with a smile. I really did think they were exaggerating. After all, how hard could it really be? I am sure it could not be any harder than my college courses, even if I had graduated thirty years ago.

Unfortunately, that thought did not stay with me for a very long period of time. There was an introductory meeting scheduled six weeks before the class was to begin and I was completely overwhelmed. We immediately were given a schedule of the assignments that were due and all the material that we were responsible for during the six weeks of the course. The day the class began, there was a book review and a rough copy of a personal paper due. As you might expect, I came home wondering if I had made the right decision. But I continued to tell myself that once I got started everything would work out much better than I anticipated.

The big day arrived. I got lost and arrived ten minutes late. No big deal. I am sure everyone will be late. However, when I walked into the room, everyone was already writing in their journals. With sixteen students and two facilitators, it is impossible to be late and not be noticed. It became very clear to me, that I could not walk into the class late anymore. After everyone finished with their journals, we were given the chance to share. For the second time in less than twenty minutes, I was ready to bolt out of the room and never return. Sharing was quite a shock to me because I have never shared my writing with anyone. Not only do I not like to write, I do not value my writing. After hearing some of the entries, I was sure I would not be saying anything during this period each day. After hearing a few more selections, I realized that not everyone's writings were professional and that my ideas could add something to the class. After I finished I did not hear or see anyone laughing. I was the one that was insecure and would just have to get over it if I was going to learn anything from this class. After I took the first step, it became easier and easier to share.

The next day, I was ten minutes early and felt much calmer about the rest of the day. It became evident, at the very beginning of class, that we were going to become dependent on each other in order to make it through this course. I thought that there might be competition between us, but it was just the opposite. Everyone was very supportive which was conducive to a nurturing atmosphere. That does not mean that people

were not honest, but they genuinely cared that you were successful and felt good about yourself. I have to say that this is the first class that I have ever taken where everyone was pulling for you to do well.

As the days went by, I was totally overwhelmed. Even though we worked hard in class each day, there was ten times as much to do each night. I never went to bed with the feeling that I was caught up for the day. At one point, I was sure that I would not be able to finish all of the assignments. The funny thing about it was that everyone felt the same. I realized that this was the feeling that all of my friends had been talking about when they were sharing their feelings about the course.

But the most important aspect that my well meaning friends forgot to talk about was the importance of the group dynamics. At the end of the five weeks, I felt like I had a new family. These were colleagues that I knew I could depend on at any time. I would not hesitate to ask them to help out if I was ever in need. On the other hand, I also knew that they would feel comfortable in seeking my help in any situation. These were people that I respected, because I had seen their work ethic and knew that all of them would do what it takes to be successful. As we were working together to accomplish our tasks and prepare our group and individual works, many great ideas were being shared everyday. I have tucked those suggestions away to be used with my class.

At the end of the five weeks, everyone was totally exhausted. However, there were many other feelings that permeated my being as I drove out of the parking lot that last day. I was sad to be leaving my new friends behind. For the last five weeks I saw much more of them than I did my family. Another part of me was ready for a vacation. After all, the class started one week after school was over. I really needed a break. But the overwhelming feeling was one of accomplishment. This course gave me so many new ideas and the ability to be able to carry them out in my classroom in September.

As September came closer and closer, I found myself planning for the coming year. I was excited! Thank goodness the computer did not need a vacation. After all, it worked as hard as I did during the summer and I was now asking it to work overtime without much of a rest. I wrote letters to my new students informing them how excited I was to be teaching this year. Next I prepared new lessons for writing and reading with an emphasis on workshops.

As the first day of school arrived, I was ready with the many ideas that I planned to put into action. First, there would be daily journal writing. Not only was I going to write with my students everyday, but I would also have the courage to share with them. Next, there

were going to be reading and writing groups. This would help each student to be able to share their work with a small group and to receive positive feedback. One of the many treasures that I came away with from the summer was a picture bulletin board. I am still amazed that after fifteen years of teaching I did not have a picture file. Now, every time I go someplace I make it a point to buy unique cards, postcards, pictures for this purpose. Last, but certainly not least, is the reading response journal. This is going to be used to add meaning to our silent reading program. With all of this in mind, I was ready to embark on a new journey.

As I am writing this, I get a warm fuzzy feeling about everything that has been going on in my classroom this year. Do not let any one tell you that you can not teach an old dog new tricks. I am an example of how exciting change can be. Many of my Fellow teachers are constantly remarking about how my attitude has changed. I am willing to try anything at this point. The *Pennsylvania Writing Project* has been a real motivator for me. I only hope that I can encourage others to take the first step to becoming an informed and involved teacher of writing.

*Carolyn Garverich, a 1995 PAWP Fellow, teaches sixth grade at the Springton Lake Middle School in the Rose Tree Media SD.*

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**FELLOW FEATURED IN  
DELAWARE COUNTY TIMES**

Pictured on page 5 of the December 25, 1995 Delaware County Times is 1994 PAWP Fellow Rina Vassallo, a sixth grade teacher at E. T. Richardson Middle School in the Springfield SD. Rina and some of her students are part of Kids Around Town, a state-wide action-oriented civics program sponsored by the League of Women Voters and directed by WCU professor Sharon Kletzien. Participating students might be writing about such topics as bicycle safety, vandalism, and curfews. Rina, who coordinated the 1995 Young Writers/Young Readers program in her building last summer, was one of the original steering members of the Kids Around Town program.

**Writing, like life itself, is  
a voyage of discovery.**

**Henry Miller**

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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 communications to Judy Fisher, Editor, *Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter*, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

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