

Newsletter



Volume 18, Number 1 Summer 1997

From the Director

-18 years and growing

With our 1997 Summer Institutes, PAWP entered its 18th year. Almost 600 teachers are now Project teacher-consultants and hundreds, perhaps thousands, more have attended Project courses and pro-



grams. The number of Pennsylvania students whose learning has been enhanced is even greater. All under the leadership of retired Director, Bob Weiss.

In 1990, I came to the Project as Associate Director. As a 1988 fellow of the neighboring Capital Area Writing Project, I knew the power of a Summer Institute, so I was excited by the prospect of working with Bob to help spread the word and share the experience. That first summer I coordinated a *Strategies* course in the morning and spent afternoons in the Institute in West Chester. That first school year, I coordinated Framework courses, led writing assessment workshops, gave more presentations than I can count, and got to meet so many wonderful PAWPers. I knew why Bob had wanted an Associate Director: the Project was really growing.

One day in September, 1991, on the way to a meeting in the Interboro SD where we were planning an in-service series, Bob and I got an idea. We had heard that Sheridan Blau, Director of the South Coast Writing Project, had run a Literature Institute the previous summer. Why couldn't we have a Literature Institute too? In fact, why couldn't we have a whole

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Introducing Dr. Andrea Fishman

-Director, PA Writing & Literature Projects

The first time I saw Andy Fishman she was "Dr. Fishman" to me, and she was standing in front of a group of teachers in a PAWP course titled "Pennsylvania Framework." She was making a presentation on assessment,

Linda Baer

(PAWP '84, PennLit '92)
Conrad Weiser Area SD

and I remember thinking, "God, this woman is amazing. She knows so much." She was also a bit intimidating from the cheap seats, so to speak, and I raised my hand oh-so-tentatively to answer a question she had posed. She smiled at me and gently qualified my answer, but I didn't feel censored or stupid. In fact, I felt good. I had said something that met with her approval. The next time we met I was one of the twenty-five teachers enrolled in the first ever Summer Institute of the Pennsylvania Literature Project, which started in 1992 under her leadership. I was less daunted by her presence, but her intelligence and drive still impressed me. I remember working as hard as I ever had in any course—graduate or otherwise—but I also remember enjoying myself and feeling exhilarated by the demands she made on all of us. I remember having fun, too. There was a lot of laughter in Andy's classroom and a lot of joy in the learning. We all had a very good time.

Since that time Andy has become my mentor and my friend. When I was on sabbatical, she served as the professor of record for my independent study on selecting texts to be used in the high school English classroom, and she was always willing

to listen when I had a problem or yet another brainstorm. She was infinitely patient and encouraging, and she made me want to do my best.

What I have appreciated most about Andy, though, is her implicit and explicit faith in me. She has always treated me like a professional who knows what she is doing and who deserves to be respected and heard. She treats my opinion as if it matters, and she treats me as if I do too. She prods me about my writing, and she cares enough to send me cards to raise my spirits and a book to remind me that I have something to say. She has been the best of mentors and advocates.

What Andy brings to the position of PAWP director is both important and special: she brings intelligence, wit, integrity, warmth, generosity, ambition, and a desire for excellence. Succeeding Bob Weiss is no easy task, but I believe Andy Fishman is up to it.

I needed a one-credit course to reach my Masters-plus-60 salary step. Naturally, I turned to my PAWP mailing to see what I could find, knowing that there would certainly be something beneficial there. And what I found was the Literature Institute one-credit work-

Diane Dougherty
(PAWP '89, PennLit '94)
Coatesville Area SD

shop—a two day series of presentations and keynote speakers, a chance to reflect on my own teaching practices, and an opportunity to discover strategies for teaching literature. It was here that I first met Andy Fishman.

The Pennsylvania Literature

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Under Construction!

- Newsletter gets a face lift

You might have already noticed that a change in leadership is not the only thing that has changed around here! We've chosen a new format for the Project's *Newsletter* and have added many new features. Please let us know what you think and make sure to contribute something of your own!

From the Director

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Literature Project if we wanted one? "Okay, create one," Bob said to me as he parked the Explorer in front of Interboro High School. The rest, as they say, is history.

With our 1997 Summer Institute, PennLit was six years old. We now have almost 100 Literature teacher-consultants. They do literature presentations, courses, and programs, and they run (around in) Literature Circles—more than 30 Circles in the past three years, with nine more on the schedule for 1997-98.

Add to that our extensive one-credit course menu, our new *Ethics* course, our under-construction website, and a Youth Program that employed nearly 50 teacher-consultants and reached over 1,300 kids this past summer, and you see a Project that is not only healthy but growing stronger every year.

Now PAWP and PennLit have the same Director and we officially become the Writing and Literature Projects, a.k.a. PAWLP (which sounds like PAWP but brings Literature in from outside). People have been offering me both congratulations and condolences all summer. What a wonderful opportunity this is! How will I manage alone—and without Bob? I know. And I don't know. But one thing is certain: the Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Projects are healthy and growing and belong to neither me nor to Bob. The Projects belong to the teacher-consultants. *They* are what make these Projects the wonderful networks they are. I know how much working with them has enriched my life. I want the Projects to continue enriching theirs—and their students'—for a long long time.

Best Practice: *immediate ideas for teachers*

In each newsletter, we will feature a teaching strategy developed by one of our teacher-consultants. Submissions are always welcome and can be mailed directly to the Project office.

Hot Spots was developed by Carol Schmitt (PAWP '93, PennLit '97) for her Summer Literature Institute presentation. "This idea came to me so easily that I began to wonder if I had unconsciously 'borrowed' it from someone else's repertoire. When it seemed to work so well for most people, I was pleased. (Raise that a notch to excited, maybe even delighted!)" she wrote. Carol teaches in the Rose Tree Media School District.

HOT SPOTS!

Want to become a better reader? Here's an easy technique that might help called HOT SPOTS. You will be given a card of color coded labels that can be peeled off and placed in the margin adjacent to a specific line in a book or article you might be reading. The only thing you need to do is to pay attention to what the color represents so you will know when it is appropriate to use one:

COLOR

POSSIBLE INTERNAL CONVERSATION



Wow, that was interesting!
I liked that.
That makes me feel good.
That's funny!

You can see that red spots are for positive thoughts and feelings.



I don't like that.
That makes me mad.
I feel like crying.
That's not fair!

Now you know that blue spots are for negative thoughts and feelings.



I never knew that.
I wonder what that means?
How can that happen?
Why did he say that?

Green spots are used when you are really thinking about something you've just learned or something you don't quite understand. Use them when you ask yourself questions even if you don't know the answers.



I act like that sometimes.
That reminds me of yesterday.
He sounds like my dad.
I was thinking that would happen!

And Yellow spots are great when you connect what you are reading to something else you've experienced or know about. You could also use them when you make a prediction. The yellow in your HOT SPOT is like the yellow in the light bulb that goes on in your head when you make reading connections.

Now try reading with your HOT SPOTS card handy. Good readers usually use lots of SPOTS because they are always thinking, feeling, and reacting when they read.

Make the World your Bulletin Board!

Chances are you teach writing as a process. Perhaps you teach the process as an ordered hierarchy of steps all writers go through to produce a final draft. Or maybe you teach the writing process as a much more individual and elusive collection of idiosyncrasies to be uncovered by each young writer. In either case, you've probably become better and better at helping students find and refine topics, discover what they want to say, put ideas onto paper, organize, revise and refine, edit and eliminate. But what do you do with the final papers?

In *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* (1968), the late James Moffett described writing as a "de-centering process" in which a student first learns

to reflect, then to converse, then to correspond, and finally to publish. As a writer moves from reflecting to publishing, the distance between the writer and the audience increases, forcing the writer to create an image of just who this larger audience will be.

If you're like me, you've often struggled with the task of publishing your students work. I know it's extremely important to give my students a larger and more distant audience. I know that when students believe they have a legitimate purpose and a genuine audience to write for, they take on a greater sense of ownership of their writing, and with ownership comes better quality.

Often, we teachers toss around the word "community" when we talk about readers and writers, but our communities are often limited to the students in room 104, period two. In an effort to publish, I've had my students submit to contests and magazines and even

create classroom anthologies. Most likely, your classes have done these things and more. But have you ever taken a piece of student writing and hung it up? In Australia? In Mexico? In Korea? All at the same time? This is exactly what teachers and students do when they publish on the Internet.

One guaranteed way to get your students' writing published on the Internet is to set up a classroom web site. Lots of classes, elementary and secondary, have done it. Publishing this way requires access to the Internet and some web space. Most Internet service providers (ISP) and on-line services such as America Online and Prodigy include a small amount of personal web space that you and your students can use to show off work (Yes, teachers can publish on the web, too!).

If you have access to the Internet (such as from a library or a friend's or student's house) but don't have web

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Do Kids Really Care? a search for the answer

by Diane Barrie

Seventh grade students never cease to amaze me. They seem to change their best friends, moods, and attitudes as often as they change their socks. So when I was given the chance to create an original project for PAWLP's new course, *Ethics and the Teaching of English*, I jumped at the opportunity to study these fascinating creatures and find out what they really care about that is *not* affected by the daily variations in their lives.

My project began as a survey of ten questions asking students what they care about in school, what they think their teachers care about, and how they show they care. I had expected the survey to show that students care about friends, family, and material possessions and that they show their caring by talking with those they care about and keeping what they own in good condition. I discovered that although they don't always show caring in ways I'd expect, they do care about others as much as about themselves. I was surprised to read their

worries about the environment, the homeless, and the poor. I was touched by the ways they took action to make their community better. But mostly I learned that actions don't always speak louder than words, especially for adolescents caught between doing what they know is right and doing what is popular.

My *Ethics* classmates suggested I go back to my students and have them react to the survey results. Somehow what evolved was a writing project that worked directly into my curriculum.

This became an opportunity to learn newspaper writing. My team of 100 students became reporters, editorialists, advertisers, and even comic strip creators. Each of my five classes reacted to a section of the survey. Stories about inspirational teachers, friendships, sports heroes, and lost pets began to emerge from pairs of writers. Along the way, we discussed effective writing, inverted pyramid style, and newspaper layout, but my students repeatedly returned to

the original subject of the survey—caring. They talked about what they value, what their homes and schools value, and what society values. The end result was a newspaper of four sections including features, sports, comics, and classifieds, each piece related to caring.

What began as my project for the *Ethics* course became a collaborative project for my students and me. They reflected on caring as I reflected on what I knew and what I thought I knew about students. Like many of the topics we read and discussed in *Ethics*, I began to see more clearly how it is not possible to teach without ethics cropping up—in curriculum and interactions with students. *Ethics and the Teaching of English* gave me a chance to understand my students more deeply while defining and refining where I stand on issues that affect me as an educator.

Diane Barrie ('95 PAWP) teaches in the Methacton SD and coordinates our youth program there.

TALES OUT OF SCHOOL

by Andy Fishman

"This may be telling tales out of school..."

"I probably shouldn't be telling you this but..."

"Just between you and me..."

These and similar conspiratorial almost-whispers often preface the stories we tell. The stories may involve people or events from our in- or out-of-school lives, but often we feel we shouldn't be telling them. Not because they're mean or spiteful or untrue, but because we've learned our cultural lessons well.

When I was a child in the 1950s, I often heard adults say, "Don't tell tales out of school." I learned that meant "Don't air your dirty linen in public," or "It's nobody's business but your own," or "Keep it to yourself/in the family," or even "Loose lips sink ships." On the playground we turned those grownup words into "Promise you won't tell," and "Cross your heart and hope to die," and "SWEAR." Once we got those assurances, however, we told—even though we knew we shouldn't.

As my generation and I grew up, we retained the sense that we shouldn't "tell." We may not use the word "tattle" any more, but we don't want to feel like tattlers for lots of reasons. We worry that our stories might get us in trouble; we worry they might get others in trouble. We worry that our stories might embarrass us because they're "too personal"—because they reveal mistakes in judgment or action, or because they suggest we lack important knowledge or skills. And, too, we worry that our stories might sound like bragging. All these worries affect the telling we do, especially in our writing.

Consider the stories we may be most willing to tell. They seem to share many of these features: they are (1) impersonal; (2) instructive; (3) by others; (4) validated and warranted by the culture; (5) old, ie., about people who are dead; (6) about people we or the audience doesn't know. They are

also appropriate, mannerly, short, clear, uncomplicated (unless they're literary), funny in an appreciative way ("don't kids say the darndest things?"), and—in this Politically Correct age—as inoffensive as possible. Unfortunately, however, these are not the stories most of us learn from nor are they the stories most of us live.

Life and learning are messy experiences. They often are neither clear nor uncomplicated. Rather they are often contradictory and complex, ambiguous and ambivalent, and embarrassingly instructive. For example, here's a very brief version of a tale out of school—out of Carlisle High School, room 23. My room until 1990.

My class of eleventh and twelfth graders, enrolled in *Reading the Short Story*, had read *Roselily* by Alice Walker. This very short story is the present-tense account of a wedding during which the bride, Roselily, reflects on the life that has brought her to this day. My students had shared their response journals in literature circles. Then each small group had reported out the most interesting aspects of their conversations. Though this whole class discussion was lively and wide-ranging, nowhere had anyone mentioned the two sentences I considered the true crux of the story. With just a few minutes remaining in the period, I said something like "I can't believe that nowhere in all this great talk has anyone mentioned the real center of gravity of this story as I see it."

Having all had their say, these students were ready to hear what I thought was so important, and I was ready to conclude the class period with my brilliant insight.

"What do you think it is?" Jason asked me.

"Page 1045," I told them, "about halfway through the second paragraph."

When pages stopped turning and everyone seemed to have found the place, I read of Roselily: "She wants to live for once. But doesn't quite know what that means. Wonders if she has ever done it. Wonders if she ever will."

I looked up, fully expecting bright-

eyed nods acknowledging my special interpretive power. Instead, I was greeted by what seemed an unnaturally prolonged silence, as students considered my words. Finally, Emily raised her hand.

"I have to tell you something, Doc," she began slowly.

"Okay. Go ahead."

"I think you think that's the most important part because you're 40," she ventured with appropriate timidity. "We're only 16."

Now it was my turn to be silent. "Would you like to explain that?" I responded, buying time.

"I mean," Emily leaned forward earnestly, "you might think that about your life, but we don't think we might not have a life. We all think we will." She leaned back, waiting.

I hesitated, meeting Emily's unblinking blue eyes with my own. And as though it were scripted, the bell rang.

Emily had been more accurate than she knew. I had just turned 40 that year. But not only was I newly 40, I was also newly separated from my husband of 19 years, facing the prospect of divorce and of finding, somehow, a new life. I had been thinking for months about "living for once." I actually did "wonder if [I] had ever done it. Wonder if [I] ever would." Of course, Emily did not know that, but she did not have to.

What Emily did know was that in her sixteenth year, Roselily's questions—and mine—were not necessarily her own or her high school classmates. Despite all my intellectual, academic, theoretical awareness, I needed a courageous student to point out the true extent to which the reader response of a middle-aged, middle-class, about-to-be-divorced, white, female English major was not universal. I had read *Roselily* reflexively, as a member of a particular culture bounded by my own parameters, and I had expected 27 high school students to identify the lines that carried the "real meaning" of Walker's story as I understood it.

I've told this story before and that, of course, makes it easier to tell again

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re: ACTION

Identifying issues & suggesting solutions.

The best offense is a good defense!" This sports metaphor has many possible applications but few of greater concern to teachers than dealing with prospective book censors. Though not many districts in Southeastern Pennsylvania have confronted serious challenges, those that have received enough bad publicity to make the rest of us worry that our districts might be next.

"Teachers of English, librarians, and school administrators can best serve students, literature, and the profession today if they prepare now to face [censorship] pressures sensibly," suggests the NCTE statement *The Students' Right to Read*, included in a "sensible" approach is not only a procedure for book selection, but a procedure for book challenges. Legitimate challenges deserve such respectful treatment; nuisance challenges are often forestalled by a procedure that seems too much trouble to pursue.

NCTE offers the form to the right as a template for schools' consideration. It can be reproduced in any manner.

A limited number of copies of the current edition of *The Students' Right to Read* are available through our office. Larger quantities are available through NCTE Order Dept., Stock #48174, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801 for \$7 per 100, prepaid only.

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work

Paperback _____
Hardcover _____
Author _____
Title _____
Publisher(if known) _____
Request initiated by _____
Telephone _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Complainant represents:

____ Himself/Herself
____ (Name organization) _____
____ (Identify other group) _____

1. Have you been able to discuss this work with the teacher or librarian who ordered it or who used it?
____ Yes ____ No
2. What do you understand to be the general purpose for using this work?
 - a. Provide support for a unit in the curriculum?
____ Yes ____ No
 - b. Provide a learning experience for the reader in one kind of literature?
____ Yes ____ No
 - c. Other _____
3. Did the general purpose for the use of the work, as described by the teacher or librarian, seem a suitable one to you? ____ Yes ____ No
If not, please explain. _____
4. What do you think is the general purpose of the author in this book? _____
5. In what ways do you think a work of this nature is not suitable for the use the teacher or librarian wishes to carry out? _____
6. Have you been able to learn what is the students' response to this work? ____ Yes ____ No
7. What response did the students make? _____
8. Have you been able to learn from your school library what book reviewers or other students of literature have written about this work?
____ Yes ____ No
9. Would you like the teacher or librarian to give you a written summary of what book reviewers and other students have written about this book or film?
____ Yes ____ No
10. Do you have negative reviews of the book?
____ Yes ____ No
11. Where were they published? _____
12. Would you be willing to provide summaries of the reviews you have collected?
____ Yes ____ No
13. What would you like your library/school to do about this work?
____ Do not assign/lend it to my child.
____ Return it to the staff selection committee/department for reevaluation.
____ Other - please explain. _____
14. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject treated? _____

Signature _____

e-Literacy

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provide free space for your classroom site. Advertising pays for the space you use, much as commercials pay for the television programs you watch.

Right now, you're probably thinking that you don't know a thing about creating web pages, and after that time when your hard disk crashed and ate your Master's thesis, you're not about to learn. That's okay, because there really is a much easier way to get your students' work on the Internet for free.

KidPub (<http://www.kidpub.org/kidpub>) currently hosts more than 13,000 stories written by kids from all over the planet. Here classes and students can publish their stories and poems. Currently, three Pennsylvania schools (Audubon Elementary, Audubon, E.H. Markle Intermediate School, Hanover; and Upper Perkiomen Middle School, East Greenville) participate in KidPub's school project.

KidPub was started by a parent who wanted to encourage his 9-year-old daughter, a prolific writer with no place to share her creativity with others. After only one week on the World Wide Web, the site became so popular that its creator decided it could become a way for him to give back something to the global Internet community.

Stories, poems, and even pictures can be submitted to KidPub either through e-mail or through the site's interactive web page and are usually posted within 24 hours. Once a story is published, its author can read it online where a counter tells how many times the story has been read by others from around the world.

KidPub is a friendly, colorful place where the imaginations of children from around the globe are set free. It's a great place to give students that more distant, larger audience that teachers need when teaching the writing process. But most of all, it doesn't require an Internet account, web space, or a whole lot of computer expertise.

Steve Heffner ('92) is the PAWLP Assistant Director for Technology and teaches in the Conrad Weiser Area SD.

Meet the Director

...continued from the front page

Project was her “baby,” and those two days provided an excellent introduction to the project and its mission. I was impressed, and though I could not enroll in the Summer Institute that year, I made it a point to schedule time for it as soon as I could, even though I no longer needed to take any more graduate credits.

I have benefited enormously from my association with PennLit and with Andy Fishman. During the past year I have had the opportunity to work with Andy in my twelfth grade English classroom where we guided students in reading and writing about issues of concern to them. Andy offered continual support to us in our endeavors.

We are fortunate to have Andy assuming the role of director of the Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Projects. Working with her will be a privilege and a joy.

When I told my friend Kim that Bob was retiring, she was crestfallen. When told that Andy was going to be the new director, she asked, “Will I like her?”

I first met Andy at a PAWPDAY at the Oakbourne Mansion in Westtown. In those days PAWPDAY presentations

Judy Fisher

(PAWP '83)
Philadelphia City SD

were cozy occasions with those attending sitting in a circle.

It must have been Fall, because on the way I'd spun my van around on wet leaves and banged into another car. After calling George so he could calm down before I got home, I tried to block out the disaster and listen to Andy as she revealed her study of the Amish in her doctoral dissertation. We learned about their literacy—about letters that circulate among the family with each household adding on and passing it on until it returns to the originating family. But mostly we learned about Andy, a person with a warm spirit of honesty who could be accepted as a friend in the Amish community.

Like Bob, Andy has a genuine smile that is never far from the surface.

Perhaps we PAWPers are not as uncomplicated and straight forward as the Amish, but Andy is already accepted as a friend in our community.

“Yes, Kim, you'll like her.”

To fawn or not to fawn, that is the question. Actually, it's more of a dilemma than a question because it is nearly impossible to avoid when describing Andy Fishman.

I first heard of Andy Fishman through a mutual friend and fellow PAWPer, Priscilla Maughn (PAWP '90). She was sure that Andy could walk on water, and as so often is the case, Priscilla was right. They began working on a research project at my school.

Judy Jester

(PAWP '93, PennLit '94)
Kennett Consolidated SD

Andy impressed me from the start. I

had never met a professor who was so approachable. No doubt this stems in part from her years in a high school classroom. The rest was pure Andy.

After completing the Writing Institute I had regular contact with Andy through my student teachers, whom she supervised. The trip these girls were taking into the profession was a thrill to be a part of under Andy's leadership. In addition to working as a true partner in helping these girls, Andy helped me to refine my own beliefs and practices.

Up until this point, I was sure that the Writing Institute was the most beneficial educational experience I ever had. The Literature Institute equaled it. I experienced Andy's teaching firsthand, as she and Patty Koller made us all reflect on what it meant to “teach” literature.

Never one to sit on her laurels, Andy invented a course that was at the heart of what we do everyday and something she was very curious about as a teacher and a researcher. *Ethics and the Teaching of English* was an I-search course for all involved. Together (Andy included) we argued our way to personal understandings of ethical issues in our English classrooms.

Though Andy's just taken the helm, I'm sure we're in for a fantastic ride.

When I think of Andy I think of the Pennsylvania Literature Institute she created. PAWP courses offer tremendous learning opportunities but a Summer Institute goes beyond that. Spending four weeks together as a true community of learners generates a shared learning experience unlike that which any single course can create.

As a Literature Institute participant in 1992 and co-director the past four years, I've enjoyed five such summers with Andy. Talk about bonding! The Institute has developed its

Patty Koller

(PennLit '92)
Downingtown Area SD

own culture complete with its own set of references and terminology. Some of these references reveal as much about Andy as they do about the Institute itself. “**Doing the Meta**” - You know, the metacognitive aspect of learning! Andy has taught us the value of reflecting on our own learning. We've even been known on occasions to “do the meta” on the meta.

“**Cinder Edna**” - Disney has made his version of Cinderella a shared cultural experience. Those who know Andy meet Cinder Edna along with other picture book characters such as the Paperbag Princess who represent a feminist perspective on fairy tales. She has helped many of us see beyond the perspective of dead white males.

“**Implications/Applications**” - Andy has never forgotten the importance of real-life classroom experience. She shares many insights based upon her own teaching and helps us make connections from our learning to our teaching. Now you're getting the hang of it! This is related to “doing the meta”! “**A List/B List**” - This has to do with a wonderful presentation Andy does on values, attitudes, and beliefs. Her professional research is in this area and she has written articles and books on the topic.

So, if you run into any Lit Institute teacher-consultants, just throw around a few of these phrases and you'll see their eyes light up in recognition of her influence on the Institute. Of course, I didn't tell you everything. You'll have to sign up to discover the rest!

Being powerful is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't." So said Margaret Thatcher.

And she could have been talking about Andy Fishman. In my dealings with the professor I have found her to be a powerful lady... strong of character and conviction, compassionate and caring, diligent and intelligent. A REAL teacher, a teacher's teachers. I always enjoy being in her company.

Andy knows how to dish out constructive criticism... graciously. She knows how to lead discussions...

Tony Rotondo
(PAWP '94, PennLit '93)
West Chester Area SD

diplomatically. She knows when to persist and when to move on. She is one of the most widely read people I know. Mention an author, she knows the title. Mention a title, and she's read it. She's neither boring nor bored.

I look forward to daring challenges with her at the PAWP helm.

Although it seems like only yesterday, it's really almost ten years ago that I first met Andy. I was presenting for the Lancaster area branch of the IRA one Saturday when a woman introduced herself to me, saying she'd been told I was affiliated with PAWP.

She said was thinking of applying for a new job at West Chester

Vicki Steinberg
(PAWP '83, PennLit '92)
Exeter Township SD

and wanted to speak to someone from the Writing Project. Of course, this was Andy. I guess I said the right things and we've been working together ever since.

Just a little while later I was on a travel and study half-year sabbatical (some of you may recall that I broke my foot on my first day of traveling) when Andy called me for advice in designing and presenting a Writing Across the Curriculum/PA Framework workshop for the Oley Valley School District in Berks County. We adapted an activity which Pam Hilbert and I developed. Many of you may know it as the bee activity.

Speaking of Pam, Andy, and me brings up our best travel. Several years ago, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Writing Project, and Department of Defense Schools Overseas (At least, that's who I think it was) planned a series of workshops at Oxford University. I told Andy and Pam we should design a presentation based on the notion that people learn the same way no matter the grade level; we could certainly prove this using Pam as a first grade teacher, me as a secondary teacher and Andy as a middle school and current college instructor. I've always said they designed our presentation just to shut me up but, of course, we were accepted and off to England.

We spent some time in London including visiting the famous street markets on Portobello Road, to look at antiques before heading off to Oxford where our presentation was well received. We did lovely touristy things like having a drink in a pub frequented by C.S. Lewis and his friends and, best of all, renting a car to drive out to Stonehenge. There is an aura we felt as we came up over the small hill and saw Stonehenge in front of us.

While the Projects certainly don't have Stonehenge's aura, they do have one of their own and I'm sure Andy's future travels will only enhance it.

What's in store for the next issue?

Coming up next month, a special issue focusing on the busiest time of the PAWLP year, Summer! We had a wonderfully hectic summer, full of institutes, courses, youth programs, conferences and more!

We will be featuring one of Lynne Dorfman's famous top ten lists, reflections on the summer institutes, and an update on the success of our summer courses and youth programs.

Tales out of School

...continued from page 4

here. I know that no matter how often or where I tell it, some people won't like my story. They will think it is inappropriate or embarrassing or irrelevant. I also know, however, that stories matter. The National Council of Teachers of English acknowledged this at the November, 1996, Chicago conference entitled *Honoring All Our Stories*, and again in Charlotte, 1997, with *Story Matters*. This year in Detroit the conference theme will be *Language as Moral Action*, clearly related.

All our stories matter, and our students' do too. That's why I want this column to become a regular feature of the PAWLP Newsletter. I invite all our readers to send us their tales out of school. They may be about school, from school, or outside of school entirely. As long as they tell us something about who we are as teachers and learners, as readers and writers, they are appropriate for this publication and its audience.

So reflect on your tales. Connect them to other tales. Connect them to research or theory. Tell them in any meaningful way you chose. And send them to us at the Project office.

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NEWSWORTHY NOTES

Phyllis R. Smith, (PAWP '95) a teacher in the New Hope-Solebury School District, has moved to the Middle School level. She will be teaching 6th grade Language Arts and Social Studies, and is looking forward to a challenging and rewarding new school year.

Our 1997 Youth Program Director, **Judy Jester** (PAWP '93, PennLit '94) recently received a letter notifying her

that her piece *Audience and Revision: Middle Schoolers Slam Poetry* that originally appeared in the February, 1997 issue of *Voices from the Middle* has been selected for inclusion in the University of Northern Iowa's publication *Young Adult Literature: A Contemporary Reader*. The book will be published by Simon & Schuster, and Judy (as always) will be keeping good company; many other notables will be featured within, including the late James Moffett.

Next, we have some **CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS** to make:

In our last *Newsletter* (volume 17, number 4) we omitted the fact that one of our Advisory Board members, **Janet Greco**, has a Ph.D. in Human and Organizational Systems from the Fielding Institute. This achievement was omitted from the article on page 17 that featured all of the board members.

Also in the last *Newsletter* we incorrectly attributed the extensive list of publishers of students' work on page 9. It was actually **Wendy Towle** (PAWP '88) who compiled the list, and we'd like to thank her for sharing it with us.

THE PENNSYLVANIA WRITING & LITERATURE PROJECTS

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The Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Projects Newsletter is published four times a year by and for those affiliated with the Projects. Submissions are always welcome and can be mailed to Judy Fisher, Editor, Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Projects, West Chester University, West Chester, PA, 19383.

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