

The PA Writing & Literature Project Newsletter



Volume 37, Number 1

Fall 2017

Summer Writing Institute 2017

Revision is the Party! Billy Collins

by Mary Buckelew

Eleven amazing educators joined Brenda, Mary, Janice and Pauline for the annual Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project's (PAWLP) Invitational Writing Institute. While the Institute is an annual occurrence, each Institute is unique, bringing teachers of all grade levels from PAWLP's five county service area together to read, write, think, discuss, and write some more in a retreat-like atmosphere. We couldn't have asked for a more thoughtful and lively group to learn from this year! From theory to laughter, the 2017 Institute participants' synergy was scintillating and spirited!

While forming a supportive and dynamic community of writers, this year's participants also explored a variety of topics centered around writing and the teaching of writing in 21st Century classrooms.

2017 Institute participant Catherine Gehman shares part of her journey here: *I am a teacher. I envision a classroom in which my students are not only adept at writing but who write joyfully. To realize this vision, I needed the support of peers and experts in order that I might share, be challenged, and grow. This is why I applied to the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project (PAWLP) at West Chester University, PA, where I*

was accepted into the Invitational Writing Institute.

My experience has been nothing less than life-changing. Other graduate work has not come close to the rigor and learning I experienced in my weeks at PAWLP. The keen desire to learn and grow as a writer upon entering the program has been sated with new perspectives in writing instruction, and the limits of my personal writing were pushed well beyond my comfort. I have flourished both professionally and personally in my ability to write and teach writing.

Catherine echoes the reflections of the other Institute participants who started in the Spring of 2017 as strangers and ended the summer with new professional and personal friendships.

The quotation in *Fearless Writing* from poet Billy Collins will resonate throughout the year for all of us: ***"Students think revision is cleaning up after the party. They have it wrong.***

Revision is the party" (p.87). Much discussion ensued regarding this quotation and led to further inquiry on how and why "Revision" can become a party and not the drudgery it is often thought to be. We noted when Choice and Authentic Writing walk through the door— then Revision too can join in the revelry!



Join us in 2018!

The Invitational Institute includes three spring meetings, three weeks in the summer, and one fall date. Participants earn six graduate credits from WCU, and become Fellows of the PA Writing and Literature Project as well as the National Writing Project. Applications are accepted on a rolling admissions basis. The final deadline to apply is April 16, 2018. See page 2 for specific dates and times as well as application information.



PAWLP Community, Connections, & Collaboration

A Note from Pauline

Dear Fellows & Friends, Salutations!

It is my great honor to serve as the Associate Director of the robust and energetic Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project! I spent my summer traveling to and fro among the various graduate courses, the Invitational Institute, the Advanced Institute, and the summer youth programs and I just have to say how impressed I am with everyone's commitment to engaged, sustained, learning.

Beyond what I saw face-to-face, I also observed several PAWLP Fellows engage in Twitter chats and other 'virtual' professional development opportunities. I attended the International Literacy Association Conference in Orlando and saw PAWLP Fellows and other educators engaged in reflective, honest discussion about social justice in our world.

Let's face it, we are living in troubled times and the children we will teach this year will have questions and concerns. As the sands of the summer drip through the hourglass, I am thinking about the start of the school year; I know that some of us are anxious about what we will say or do if faced with injustice. Honestly, I don't know. But, what I do know is that our Fellows are committed to diversity and inclusion and will not stop learning about ways to engage our students with civil, informed discourse.

In the following pages, you will hear from passionate PAWLP teachers who are dedicated to inspiring life-long learning, civic awareness and action in their students and who demand nothing less of themselves. Should you be looking for materials that will help you address social justice in your classroom, the National Council of Teachers of English posted this to their blog: <http://blogs.ncte.org/index.php/2017/08/there-is-no-apolitical-classroom-resources-for-teaching-in-these-times/#comment-119695>

Wishing you a productive and energizing school year,

Pauline Schmidt, Ph.D.
Associate Director, PAWLP

Writing Institute Class of 2017

Amy Ahart
Unionville-Chadds Ford School District

Kristin Allegretto
Downingtown Area School District

Michelle Ambrosini
Central Bucks School District

Molly Aron
Bensalem Township School District

Christine Cuzzo
West Chester University

Lauren Foley
Central Bucks School District

Catherine Gehman
Boyertown Area School District

Kristine Herron
Ridley School District

Warren Kulp
Abington School District

Molly Rickert
Central Bucks School District

Peter Suanlarm
Abington School District

2018 Invitational Institute

Dates

Spring: May 5 & 19; June 2, 8am-1pm

Summer: June 25-29, July 2 & 3, July 9-13, 8am-3pm

Fall: September 29, 9am-1pm

- Attendance required at all dates listed above
- For an application form go to www.pawlp.org or email Cyndy Pilla at cpilla@wcupa.edu
- Applicants who apply by **December 1, 2017** may be eligible for a stipend or books to help defer costs.
- Final application deadline: **April 16, 2018**

International Literacy Association

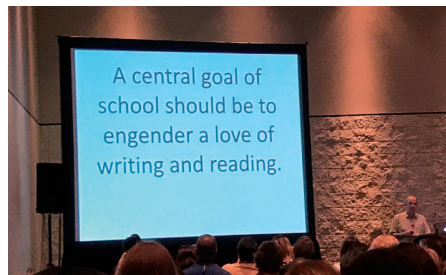
ILA Magic by Jen Greene, '15, jengreene8@gmail.com

It is a myth that teachers have the summers 'off'. Summer, for many of us, is our busiest time. It is our learning time. It is our growing time. It is our global connecting and networking time. Summer is the time when teachers reimagine the possibilities for the new school year.

Every summer the International Literacy Association (ILA) hosts a conference. Held in the summer months when teachers are free from burdens of sub plans and missing valuable time with students, the conference beckons educators like moths to a flame. The 2017 ILA conference was held in mid-July at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL.

The conference offerings are plentiful- from preconference institutes, to workshop sessions, to book signings with inspirational authors, there is something for every type of educator. So many sessions happen con-

currently that it becomes a Sophie's choice situation as teachers attempt



to choose the presentations they most want to see. While it is impossible to attend every noteworthy session, it is also impossible not to learn from those in which you do attend.

For a first-time attendee, the conference was magical. And not just because it was held within a stone's throw of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter! The magical feeling came from the overwhelming sense of optimism. The feeling that even with the institutional imperfections and the horrifying new events dominating headlines, there is still hope.

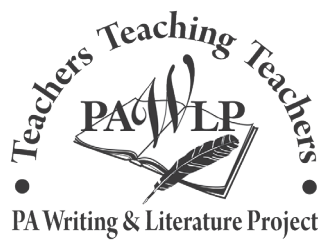
There still *must* be hope. Kicking off the conference with inspiring stories from Enrique Feldman and Carmen Agra Deedy, sitting and listening to the wise words of Kylene Beers and Robert Probst, or looking at student writing samples presented by Ralph Fletcher brought about that magical feeling that what we do matters. It matters to kids and it matters to the world. We do know best, and we work hard. Our students need us to keep believing in them. To encourage them. To help them learn and grow into the kind of humans this world needs.

No, teachers do not have the summers off. We cherish the "free time" that accompanies summer days to enrich our lives so that we may in turn enrich our students' lives. It is our time to recharge the batteries and remind ourselves why we do what we do. Conferences such as ILA are magical opportunities to do just that.

The Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project (PAWLP) is one of the oldest sites of the National Writing Project (NWP).

PAWLP follows NWP's guiding principles and provides professional development, develops resources, generates research, and acts on knowledge to improve the teaching of writing and learning in schools and communities.

PAWLP believes that access to high-quality educational experiences is a basic right of all learners and a cornerstone of equity. We work in partnership



What is
PAWLP?

with institutions, organizations, and communities to develop and support leadership for educational improvement.

PAWLP offers summer and school-year courses and workshops in teaching writing, teaching literature, writing-reading connections, authentic assessment, and special topics of interest to educators. For information on how to bring a course or professional development program to your district email Director Mary Buckelew (mbuckelew@wcupa.edu) or Associate Director Pauline Schmidt (pschmidt@wcupa.edu)



College, Career, and Community Writers Program (C3WP)

by Kelly Virgin, '10 Writing, kellyvirgin@gmail.com

Late this past March I spent two beautiful spring days holed up in a conference room in D.C. feeling both overwhelmed and excited by four letters: CRWP (now known as C3WP). The College, Career, and Community Writers Program is a National Writing Project initiative aimed at providing teachers across the nation with resources needed to help their students critically read and analyze multiple points of view in an attempt to responsibly enter the civic dialogue. As their website explains, the program “answers the contemporary call for respectful argumentative discourse.” In an attempt to reach this lofty, yet vital goal, NWP has gathered and created an impressive stockpile of mini-units complete with suggested text-sets, graphic organizers, audio and visual materials, formative and summative assessments, and suggested extension activities.



In the months following my brief introduction to this program, I spent numerous hours mining the provided resources in an attempt to meaningfully pass the information along to fourteen teacher-leaders through PAWLP's Advanced Institute. While I still feel slightly overwhelmed by all the possibilities of the program, the three intensive days I spent locked away this summer with a group of thoughtful and inquisitive teachers helped me boil it down to three essential elements: **time**, **access to multiple perspectives**, and the **freedom to choose**. With these three key elements in mind, any teacher can start to meaningfully engage his or her students in thoughtful, thought-provoking, and responsible argument writing.

Time:

Midway through our second day of training at the AI this summer, a teacher commented on how much time was needed to fully engage in thinking through the arguments we were forming. This was a lightbulb moment for me. In the past, I typically spent a class peri-

od or two engaging my students in thinking about one topic or issue before hastily moving onto the next. In an effort to cover the curriculum, my students and I often fell victim to the curse of breadth over depth. However, through engagement in the mini-units, it quickly becomes obvious that this is not enough time to fully think through and take a stance on a topic. C3WP encourages teachers and students to spend no fewer than five to six days and sometimes as long as a marking period thinking about, researching, and rethinking about one topic. This time enables students to assess their own knowledge, form opinions, research and reflect on new knowledge, form new opinions, and revise their stance (sometimes several times).

While each of these steps is key to the process of argument writing, many teachers may feel they cannot spare this much time. However, not every minute of this extended process needs to be spent in the classroom. Sometimes the most valuable time is spent walking away from an issue in order to independently ruminate before revisiting a day or two later. This leads to the second key element – students need access to multiple perspectives about one topic.

Access to Multiple Perspectives:

An essential step to the argument writing process is the opportunity to explore multiple points of view before taking a stand. Every mini-unit designed and communicated by C3WP includes this step and suggests specific text-sets for teachers to use with their students. However, teachers need to be able to create their own text-sets in order to meet the demands of their curriculums and match the varied needs of their students. Teacher-leaders suggested the following valuable resources:

- *The New York Times: Room for Debate*
- *NewsELA*
- *The New York Times Upfront Magazine*
- *ProCon.org*

While teachers can easily navigate each of these sites to search for articles to share with their students, they can also teach their students how to access and use the resources for themselves. This independent research possibility leads to the final key element – providing students

with the freedom to pursue researching and writing about issues that interest them.

Freedom and Choice:

Part way through day one of the AI, we paused our discussion of C₃WP to reflect on who our perspective students might be this upcoming school year. We considered their

key characteristics, what might be bothering them, interesting to them, challenging or easy for them, etc. While it is important to model key steps along the process towards argument writing together as a class, it is equally important to give students opportunities to pursue what interests them. We cannot expect our students to thoughtfully and authentically enter into civic discussion if

we do not allow them to enter in on their own terms. With this realization fresh in mind, I plan to use the C₃WP resources as a guide that my students and I can follow on our own personal journeys towards researching and rethinking issues that matter to us – both locally and globally.

PAWLP Before You Read the Book Club – Wednesday, November 8, 2017

by Rina Vassalo, '94 Writing, rinav818@gmail.com

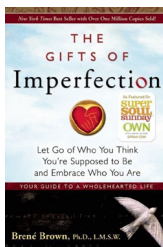


On Wednesday, March 9th, 12 attendees came together at the PAWLP office to hear and share their thoughts about the book *The Gifts of Imperfection*, written by Brene Brown. This best-selling and buzzed about book shares Brown's 10

Guideposts for Wholehearted Living. Brown, a sociologist and researcher, defines Wholeheartedness in her book by the following – “Wholehearted living is about engaging with our lives from a place of worthiness. It means cultivating the courage, compassion and connection to wake up in the morning and think, ‘No matter what gets done and how much is left undone, I am enough.’ It’s going to bed at night thinking, ‘Yes, I am imperfect and vulnerable and sometimes afraid, but that doesn’t change the truth that I am also brave and worthy of love and belonging.’”

During the 2 hour session, the facilitators Kelly Virgin and Rina Vassallo, shared a video clip of Brown discussing the book, had the group write to respond to Brown’s discussion, assisted the group in exploring the guideposts with a matching concepts activity, and did assorted other activities that keyed into Brown’s guideposts on worthiness, play and creativity. It was a great evening with multiple opportunities to learn, reflect on and apply Brown’s insights.

Participants were very positive about the evening. Kathy White, PAWLP Fellow and a second- time book club participant, said, “PAWLP’s moving discussion of Brene Brown’s *The Gifts of Imperfection* was a perfect gift to those of us who attended the book club meeting. The well-planned discussion, using Brown’s engaging “voice” as a springboard served as a perfect vehicle for introspection, reflection and sharing. I definitely now plan to read *The Gifts of Imperfection*.



PAWLP schedules these discussions twice a year in the spring and the fall. There is no need to read the books discussed in advance. Our goal as facilitators is to lead you through activities designed to introduce you to the topics and as a result make a decision to read the book- or not!

Upcoming **Before You Read the Book Club** book:

Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy

by Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant

by Rina Vassalo, '94 Writing, rinav818@gmail.com & Kelly Virgin, '10 Writing, kellyavirgin@gmail.com

Option B was written as a result of the sudden death of Sandberg's husband Dave Goldberg (founder of LAUNCH Media and the CEO of SurveyMonkey) in 2015 which left her a bewildered widow of two young children. In the vein of Joan Didion and Joyce Carol Oates, I expected a memoir of a marriage and insights on grief, but like her groundbreaking book, *Lean In*, Sandberg delivers so much more. Her reflections on the aftermath of grief (her own and those of her children) and the experience of others have predictably moved her to action not only delivering expert and practical advice on how to be there for others but using her experience to change Facebook's policies and procedures.

Her writing style is so accessible and she exposes her life and her journey with remarkable candor.

This book is for anyone who has dealt with grief and anyone who wants assistance on how to support others.

Rebecca Mead of *The New Yorker* said, “Like her debut volume, Sandberg's *Option B* is an optimistic book, even if one riven with sorrow. She argues that after adversity and loss, there is an opportunity for ‘post-traumatic growth.’ Thus the book is in part a moving memoir.”

We hope you can join us at 5-7 pm on Wednesday, November 8th at the PAWLP office.

Young Writers and Readers at West Chester University

Young Writers Camp 2017: Loads of Fun!

by Kathy Garrison, '94 Writing, kathygarrison@icloud.com and Melissa Elison, '05 Writing, elisonms@yahoo.com

For two weeks this summer, children adorned in bright yellow t-shirts, the color of a Dixon Ticonderoga No. 2 pencil, skipped down the second floor hallway of Anderson Hall to their classrooms for our 33rd annual Young Writers/Young Readers Program at West Chester University. From the hallway, one could hear poetry to the beat of drums in our Reading and Writing with the Arts class, a mentor text by J. R. R. Tolkien read aloud in the Science Fiction/ Fantasy Writing class and children's laughter while sharing their versions of, "If I Were in Charge of the World" in a YW/YR class. The camp took place with the support of PAWLP Director Mary Buckelew, Associate Director Pauline Schmidt, Summer Youth Director Kathy Garrison, Summer Youth Co-Director Melissa Elison and Program Administrator Cyndy Pilla.

Twelve classes of children ages six to sixteen participated in the camp that included a specialty class in College Essay writing. Campers delighted in reading and writing creatively and compiling their prose and poetry for classroom anthologies. Additionally, Dr. Jolene Borgese's Teen Writing class piloted an online version of the anthology, allowing students' work to reach far beyond the walls of the classroom.

The results of their hard work and ingenuity can be viewed online at <https://sites.google.com/view/yryw17>.

Students in all classes shared plays, poetry and short stories with their families at the Open House on the last day.

The program also included sites at Central Bucks SD, Upper Dublin SD, Lower Merion SD, Longwood Gardens, and Valley Forge National Historic Park. The camp at Valley Forge is unique in that it weaves together history, nature, and writing, and it is taught by PAWLP teachers working together with park rangers. A trolley tour gave participants historical background of various locations in Valley Forge, and the many experiences in the two-week course provided inspiration and material for the children to incorporate into their writing.

PAWLP fellows teach the campers at all sites and enjoy the energizing atmosphere of this program. One first time teacher said, "This experience was above and beyond anything I imagined." Another added, Young Writers/Young Readers is "rewarding, refreshing, exciting and joyful." The students and teachers stretch their creative writing muscles by experimenting with different genres. One student summed up writing camp this way: "I could write about anything I wanted and feel comfortable about it....Definitely a good use of your time and very fun to attend." Here are some samples of student poetry from this summer:

Bailey Dog

The important thing about Bailey
Dog is he loves me.

You can pet him.

He sniffs me.

He runs to the window.

But the important thing about
Bailey Dog is he loves me.

- 1st grader

The Yellow Basket

The yellow basket

Was filled

With apples, red and green

It was shining like the sun.

The sun was

Giving me

Lots of warmth.

The light shined

In my eyes

And my eyes saw

The apples in the yellow basket.

- 3rd grader

Autumn Leaves

Crimson, gold, chocolate

Graceful fragments of autumn

Gently drifting down

-6th grader

Lost.

I never really knew what that meant
until today.

Lost doesn't mean losing your mom
in the grocery store,

or forgetting your way back home.

My lost has rich, dark eyes,
and messy, black hair.

My lost has a Vans sweatshirt that
smells like Calvin Klein cologne,
that I would bury my face in, any-
time I wanted to feel safe.

My lost used to make me feel safe,
and protected.

Hopefully, I can find my lost again,
or perhaps a new lost,
whatever it may be

-8th grader



The Softness Inside: Inspiring Writers Through Partnership

by Patty Koller; '92 Literature, pkoller55@gmail.com

It is July 24, 2017 and the Writing Adventures Young Readers/Young Writers Camp at Longwood Gardens is in full swing. Today's destination is the tropical rain forest. It is a perfect location to practice looking closely using our perspectives as both scientists and poets.

Caitlin has zoomed in on the giant palm, sketching it in her writer's notebook while gathering descriptive and poetic words, as was modeled in this morning's mini-lesson. After returning to the classroom, we share various mentor texts and Mrs. Ries models the use of word choice and line breaks.



Caitlin crafts her observations into the following poem:
The great, old giant palm.

A mouth of dark, streaked bamboo teeth.

Rotting out and painted with cavities.

Long, spindly fingers reaching out to uproot little saplings.

Tall and gangly with glowering eyes.

An endless straw-like beard of a true giant.

He is the grouchy man that lives up on the hill of the rainforest neighborhood.

Despite his hard heart and bones, pointy emerald fingers and flaring evil eyes, everyone has a softness inside.

Even him.

After 10 years of partnership, the gardens at Longwood have once again reached out with pointy emerald fingers to provide us with endless inspiration as writers.

Young Readers Contribute to Laundromat Library League

by Pat Bove, '07 Writing; '13 Literature, pmbove@aol.com

PAWLP's 33rd summer of Young Writers/Young Readers completed their sessions at the end of July. Many children were involved in writing and reading to brighten their minds.

At WCU, we started a service project this year. Our students and teachers collected books for the Laundromat Library League. This is a wonderful volunteer organization located in West Chester. Their mission is to place library boxes of children's books in Laundromats as a way of getting books into homes that may have a few or none at all.

Donating the books has made a difference in children's lives. Not only learning different ways of writing and reading various genres in our summer program,

we have given of ourselves by donating books to children, who can benefit by our love of reading and writing.



National Parks as Classrooms

by Nicole Coppola, '16, valleyforgeteacher@gmail.com

The Young Writers/ Young Readers at Valley Forge National Historic Park drew artifacts, caught crayfish, chopped weeds, and mapped defenses for the Continental Army. For two weeks this summer, the students participated in daily activities to learn about the history and science of Valley Forge in the past and present. The class met at five different locations within the park including the Visitor Center, Washington's Headquarters, Valley Creek near the covered bridge, Varnum's Picnic Area and the Washington Memorial Chapel. The students wrote about the experiences and created poems, letters, graphic stories, and narratives, which were included in a class anthology. Ranger Jenn Bourque and I co-taught the class with the help of volunteers, interns, and the National Park Service. It was an amazing experience to use Valley Forge as a classroom.



PAWLP's Three Credit Graduate Courses

Spring 2018

PWP 520 Strategies for Teaching Literature, Grades 4-12

Wednesdays 4:25 – 7:10

Location PAWLP classroom, West Chester University

The experience of reading literature is central to designing experiences for teaching literature. To this end, teachers will read a variety of current and canonical literature and explore pertinent theory and pedagogy in light of these texts and their own teaching. In this course participants will explore their own processes as readers, share lessons in literary elements, apply PA Standards and Assessments to curriculum discuss and apply current theory as it applies to their classrooms, and design and experience writing activities about and inspired by literature.

Summer 2018

PWP 503 Strategies for Teaching Writing, Grades 4-12

Do you want to learn new, fresh, practical strategies for teaching writing? You are invited to spend a week participating in writing activities, exploring your own writing style, and sharing strategies for writing instruction with your peers. In this course you will experience community building, pre-writing techniques, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing activities which you can take directly into your classroom for your students to experience. You will also work with a response group to polish your writing and to take on the role of student as writer-teacher.

PWP 513 Writing and Children's Literature: Creating Successful Writers with Mentor Texts, Grades K-8

Welcome to the world of picture books – hundreds of texts in one room for you to examine and enjoy. The course facilitators share their love of children's literature and passion for writing in a relaxed, highly motivating setting. Learn how to connect story elements and literary devices to specific activities, use scaffolds to develop students' writing, and create strategic mini-lessons that link rich literature to the teaching of writing. Expand your knowledge of mentor texts for models of exemplary writing and reader-response activities designed for various purposes, audiences, and genres. Opportunities to meet Common Core Standards for reading, writing, speaking, and listening wherever applicable.

PWP 599 Literacy in Bloom: Botanical Inspirations for Reading, Writing, and Learning, Grades K-12

Spend five days at beautiful Longwood Gardens. Engage in literacy activities inspired by the natural surroundings, participate in behind-the-scenes tours by the Longwood Gardens professional staff, research a topic of personal interest, and collaborate with other teachers to create nature-inspired learning experiences for your students.

PWP 599 Teach Shift: Passion-Driven Teaching for the 21st Century, Grades K-12

During this course, we'll unpack what it means to be a teacher today and how to be a dynamic teacher for tomorrow. We'll flip the traditional model of professional development upside down by exploring the ways in which teacher can drive their own growth. Topics studied will include, but are not limited to: growing our professional learning communities (PLCs); practicing the art of classroom inquiry and action research; identifying our core strengths as teachers to push us toward growth; reading the latest research on topics such as creativity, innovation, collaboration, advocacy, and teacher-leadership; and creating a concrete plan to engage, learn, support, and measure our short and long-term practices.

PWP 599 What's Your Stance? Reading and Writing Persuasive/Argumentative Texts, Grades 3-10

"Our job as readers of nonfiction is to enter into a text recognizing that the author is not offering the truth, but one vision of the truth." (Beers & Probst) Strategies for deeper thinking/reasoning about topics that students encounter in their lives will be provided. Participants will interact as readers with opinion/argumentative texts as they learn what writers of this type of nonfiction need to strengthen their stance and reason with an audience. Reading to interpret and writing to argue one's claim about a topic/subject will be the focus of this course.

Using Mentor Texts to Imagine Ourselves as Writers

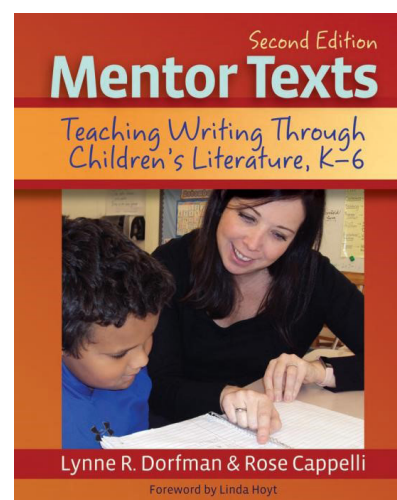
PAWL P Day

Save the date! ► March 3, 2018

by Rose Cappelli, '96, ryc1011@hotmail.com
& Lynne R. Dorfman, '89, lynnedorfman@comcast.net

How do we get students excited about writing? Lynne and Rose have been busy reimagining the work of their first book in a 2017 edition. This interactive session will explore what's new in this volume of *Mentor Texts* including some current children's literature favorites, which they will highlight during their presentation. The role of mentor texts in writing workshop and how they can help students and teachers view themselves as confident writers will be examined. Teachers will discover how they, as well as their students, can study mentor texts to make informed decisions throughout the writing process. Join us to learn how to help your students read like writers and use mentor texts to imagine the possibilities for their own writing.

<https://www.stenhouse.com/content/mentor-texts-second-edition>



Lynne Dorfman is a Co-director for the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project where she serves on the blog team. She has been an adjunct professor for Arcadia University for the past fourteen years. Lynne enjoys her work as a co-editor of

PA Reads for Keystone State Reading Association, a board member of Chester County Reading Association, and president of Eta, a chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa. She is a co-author of *Grammar Matters: Lessons, Tips, and Conversations Using Mentor Texts, K-6* and *A Closer Look: Learning More About Our Students with Formative Assessment, K-6*. Currently, she is writing a book about writing workshop with Stacey Shubitz.



Rose Cappelli was a K-2 Reading Specialist in the West Chester Area School District. Rose holds an undergraduate degree in Teaching of the Hearing Impaired from the Pennsylvania State University, a graduate degree in Reading from West

Chester University, and has completed additional post-graduate work at West Chester University and Immaculata University. She is Past-President of Keystone State Reading Association and President of Chester County Reading Association. She serves KSRA as Co-chair of the Keystone Children's Choice Book Awards for preschool and elementary divisions. In her spare time, Rose volunteers at Longwood Gardens.

Rose and Lynne are co-authors of *Mentor Texts: Teaching Writing Through Children's Literature* (2017 2nd ed), *Nonfiction Mentor Texts: Teaching Informational Writing Through Children's Literature*, and *Poetry Mentor Texts: Making Reading and Writing Connections*. They have conducted in-service workshops in many surrounding Pennsylvania counties and districts and presented at KSRA, NCTE, RCCNA, CCIRA, Michigan State Reading Conference, CARR, Wisconsin State Reading Conference, and ILA Conferences.

Advocacy: Telling Your Story

by Frank Murphy, '03, fmurphy@crsd.org



NWP's spring meeting is always preceded with a day of advocacy on Capitol Hill. Teachers from across the country meet with their local Congressional delegation to educate them about the impact of NWP on their writing instruction. This past spring 2017, Mary Buckelew, Judy Jester, Frank Murphy, and Pauline Schmidt met with four representatives' offices, in addition to staff members for our U.S. Senators. We asked each office to sign a Dear Colleague Letter, urging their colleagues to vote to support the SEED program. SEED helps to support each site's local work. We're glad to report that Senator Casey, and Congressmen Costello and Fitzpatrick support our efforts.).

As this was Frank's first foray into national advocacy, we're delighted to include his reflections here.

Mary Buckelew and Pauline Schmidt and Judy Jester. These are my three most important "takeaways" from my very first experience representing PAWLP at the NWP National Spring Meeting back in March in Washington D.C. Sure, there were meetings with staff members of U.S. Senators, informational presentations by some talented people, and there was the historical presence of the U.S. Capitol. But getting to better know these three humans was my greatest takeaway. And, really, as I reflect on every single thing I have ever experienced via PAWLP, I believe the best things I have gotten out of it all, over the years, are the many relationships. PAWLP is filled with great people.



So...here's a streaming peek at "snapshots" into my two days - in no chronological order - on "The Hill," Capitol Hill with Mary, Pauline, and Judy. As the longggg days wore on we didn't have any time at all to stop and eat lunch. Meeting after "turnstiled" meeting with the staffs of senators and congress people left us with limited options of snagging snack offerings that (thankfully!!!) appeared in some of the front lounges of offices. Whether it was a bag of Herr's chips or an offering of a can of Coke from a staffer, these rations served as one-third of the fuel that kept us going. I remember literally jogging down long and large hallways in a race against the clock to make it to our next scheduled meeting. Deep underground, in the guts of the Capitol Building, taking our seats on a historic trolley that led us from one section to another section, we recouped our energy.

The second third of our fuel was the adrenaline we all experienced in having the opportunity to brag about what PAWLP and NWP have accomplished and continue to accomplish. One of the most striking points that we stressed was this fact: that 50% of teachers leave their careers after just six years; while 98% of NWP teachers stay dedicated. Impressive! I remember that

point sticking with many of the staffers! The pride I felt in listening to Judy, Mary, and Pauline share stories of our success in PAWLP and NWP increased that adrenaline. Pride will do that!

Finally, the third source of fuel was the camaraderie we built with each other. The laughing and whispering and ability to piggyback off of each other's thoughts and words was refreshing. Seeing Pauline go "fangirl" upon seeing Andrew Aydin (co-author of National Book Award winner *March*) outside Senator John Lewis' office was priceless!

I thought I was going to be most inspired by all the accoutrements that come with Washington D.C. and the U.S. Capitol and meeting with members of Congress.



But I was most inspired by my time with my team. This being my first trip with NWP to Capitol Hill, I was learning on my feet as we shared about PAWLP's efforts. As we spoke with staffers, I realized how fortunate I am to be a part of a team at PAWLP.

So...I was inspired by being on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. - the granite statues, the history, the entire vibe. But I was most inspired by these three musketeers of teaching literacy. Knowing that this trio is out there fighting for our next generation of learners, getting in the ears of policy makers, AND teaching educators and young learners provides for a lot of hope amidst... well, I don't want to get political with this writing, but amidst a...nevermind - you can fill in the blank. The bottom line is this: PAWLP has three leaders fighting to ensure that things will get better for Writing Project teachers and for our young writers. Their names are: Mary Buckelew and Pauline Schmidt and Judy Jester.

Continuity: There's Room at the Table

by Kim Kraf Beatty, '07, kraf.kimberly@gmail.com, Janice Ewing, '04, janice.ewing@gmail.com and Liz Mathews, '16, lzmathews81@gmail.com

All are welcome to attend our Saturday Continuity sessions. These collegial gatherings are an opportunity to meet for a variety of purposes. Overall, Continuity is a time and space for Fellows and friends to share ideas about writing, elicit feedback about works in progress, problem-solve, and learn from each other.

More specifically, this year we will be expanding upon a theme that has always been at the core of NWP and PAWLP, that of advocacy. Last year, we spent some of our time together exploring the idea of advocacy in many forms – how we advocate for individual or groups of students, for our own agency as teachers, for literacy in our communities, or in countless other ways.

Building on the energy that arose from that reflection, writing, discussion, and book sharing, our theme for this year is Advocacy into Action. Our vision is that we will spend some of our time together brainstorming areas of interest, connecting with others with similar interests or goals, and planning steps to turn advocacy into actionable steps. As always, the needs and interests of the group will guide us.

We will be meeting on September 16th, November 4th, and December 2nd, from 10:00-11:30 a.m. You are welcome to join us for any or all sessions. In addition, Dana Kramaroff facilitates a very lively children's book writing group from 9:00 to 9:45 on those same days, so you may choose to come early for that as well.

We hope to see many of you at the table at 210 East Rosedale. There's always room. ☞

Children's Book Writing

This past year, I was fortunate to lead a group of teacher-writers on Saturdays before continuity on the topic of writing for children.

I am not a published author, yet, but I was happy to share my own on-going journey into the world of writing for children.

Each of us came with different experiences, hopes, dreams, and knowledge. We wrote, we shared, we learned about the children's book market and grew.

This year, Matt Bloome and I will facilitate these sessions, and we can't wait to impart the tidbits of information we have learned and to hopefully continue to grow as a community of teacher-writers.

Please reach out if you have any questions or if you would like to be added to the email list: dkramaroff.depd@gmail.com



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<https://pawlpblog.org/>



The Pennsylvania Council of
Teachers of English and Language
Arts (PCTELA) Conference

October 20 and 21
DoubleTree by
Hilton Pittsburgh
Green Tree, PA

Theme:
Acquiring Advocacy



The Keystone State Reading
Association (KSRA)
Conference

October 9 - 11
Hershey Lodge
Hershey, PA

Theme:
**Celebrating 50 Years of
Literacy Leadership**



NWP/NCTE Meetings
in St. Louis, MO
November 15 - 19



THE PA WRITING & LITERATURE PROJECT

Leadership Team

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Mary Buckelew

Associate Director

Pauline Schmidt

Program Coordinator

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Jolene Borgese

Lynne Dorfman

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Patty Koller

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Dana Kramaroff

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Master's Degree and Certificate Programs

The Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project (PAWLP) helps K-16 teaching professionals improve their writing, reading, and literature instruction while enabling them to earn graduate credit. PAWLP serves the English M.A. program primarily through a cluster of PWP courses offered in the Writing, Teaching, and Criticism Track, including the required PWP 502: Teachers as Writers. Various other PWP courses are available as electives to students in all three tracks. PAWLP also offers certificates in Writing Instruction and Strategies for Teaching Writing and Literature for elementary and secondary instructors.

Professional Development

PAWLP offers cost effective on-site professional development. We have consultants who specialize in all aspects of teaching writing and reading across the content areas.

- Consulting Opportunities
- Professional Development Seminars
- On-site courses and workshops
- Graduate Certificates

Does your district have achievement gap concerns? Learn how ***RATE*** (Reach And Teach Everyone) can help address those concerns in ways tailored to your particular needs.

Contact Mary Buckelew (mbuckelew@wcupa.edu) or Pauline Schmidt (pschmidt@wcupa.edu) for details. Office phone: 610-436-2998.

Important Dates in 2017-18

November 8, 2017 - Before You Read the Book Club, 5 - 7 p.m. in the PAWLP Office

September 16, November 4, December 2, 2017 - Continuity Saturdays in the PAWLP Office

November 15 - 19, 2017 - NWP/NCTE in St. Louis

March 3, 2018 - Spring Saturday Seminar: Using Mentor Texts to Imagine Ourselves as Writers,
8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the West Chester University Graduate Center