



APPLICATION REVIEW FOR SUMMER INSTITUTES BEGINS JANUARY 15

Last summer, PAWLP enjoyed the largest Institute classes in the 25 year history of the Project. Review of applications for the 2006 Summer Institutes begins January 15. The four-week Institutes meet four days/week from June 26 - July 20 and include the Celebrate Literacy

conference. Writing Institutes will be held at the West Chester University Graduate Business Center (GBC) and at the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. The Literature Institute will meet at the GBC. Master teachers of all grade levels and subject areas as well as librarians and

reading specialists are invited to apply. Participants receive six graduate credits from West Chester University and are eligible for a stipend from the National Writing Project to help offset costs.

See pages 6 and 7 for more information and a nomination form.



PAWLP CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY WITH LUNCHEONS FOR RETIRED FELLOWS AND ADMINISTRATORS, ONE BOOK/ONE PROJECT DINNER



PAWLP Fellows and Director Andrea Fishman discuss *The Tipping Point* at the One Book/One Project Dinner.



Retired Fellows discovered they had a combined total of over 300 years of teaching experience!

SAVE THE DATES:
CELEBRATE LITERACY CONFERENCE JUNE 27 & 28
Keynote Speakers: Linda Rief and James Howe

FROM THE DIRECTOR ANDREA FISHMAN

"I'd often heard other teachers say, 'The Writing Project changed my life,' and I always thought they were just exaggerating. Then this summer I took the Writing Institute, and guess what? It changed my life! It changed my life, my classroom, my teaching. Everything."

When a teacher said this at the end of an inservice workshop in October, she laughed and so did I. The twenty other teachers in the room looked at us – some curiously, some dismissively, some cynically. I saw the same question in all their eyes, though: What is this Writing Project, a cult or something?

I think everyone who's been involved in the Writing Project for any length of time has heard the "cult question" before. No matter where our sites, what our racial, ethnic, gender, age or other descriptors might be, we seem so like-minded in our professional goals and attitudes. So similarly excited about our work, our students, our communities. So consistently optimistic in our belief that, yes, not only can and should you fight city hall but you can and should fight the school board, the state legislature, or even Congress when necessary. We seem so uniformly confident in our beliefs and principles, so closely connected to the network we comprise, it's no wonder the cult question arises.

As someone who has been around National Writing Project sites since 1988 when I became a Fellow, I am tempted to say "Yes, we are a cult," just for the fun of it. But "cult" can

be such an ugly label. Besides, in 2005 we have another, more palatable way to describe ourselves. We are "idealistic [and] guided by moral principles." Writing Project folks "know the problems of [our] own communities and...recognize the dignity of every citizen and the possibilities of every life." These, in the words of President Bush, are not just the features of the NWP but the distinguishing features of faith-based organizations, too.

The President spoke these words in Philadelphia, on December 12, 2002, launching his "Faith-based Initiative." Groups that fit his description "deserve the support of foundations. They deserve the support of corporate America. They deserve the support of individual donors...and they deserve...the support of the federal government." He said that three years ago. But it wasn't until three months ago, this past October, that I realized what I've gotten myself into. What we've all gotten ourselves into: a faith-based organization.

PAWLP, like NWP, *is* a faith-based organization. We have faith in children, in families, in communities. We have faith in teachers and in schools. We have faith in the power of writing and reading to change lives, our own as well as others'. We have faith that we can make a difference – one teacher, one child, one classroom at a time. And here in southeastern Pennsylvania we have faith in our collective future as PAWLP ends its first twenty-five years and begins its second.

I can't wait until April's National Writing Project Day on the Hill. We'll actually be taking President Bush's message to Washington. Won't that be a trip!

KUDOS

Louise Plush, a 7th grade English teacher in the Spring Ford SD and '96 Bucks Writing Fellow, achieved National Certification in the Fall of 2004.

Chad Watters and **Chris Lodwig**, elementary teachers in the Central Bucks SD and '04 Bucks Writing Fellows, will present a session on multigenre research at the ASCD conference in April.

Janice Ewing, a Literacy Coordinator in the William Penn SD and '04 WC Writing Fellow, co-published an article entitled "Building Reading Friendships: A Book Club Approach" in the 2004 Volume V, Number II issue of *Pennsylvania Reads*, the Journal of the Keystone State Reading Association.

Lynne Dorfman, writing extension teacher and literacy coach in the Upper Moreland Township SD, '89 WC Writing Fellow and PAWLPCo-Director and **Rose Cappelli**, Reading Specialist in the West Chester Area SD, '96 WC Writing Fellow, and PAWLP Assistant Director, presented "Reinventing the Writer" and "The Challenges of Reading and Writing Nonfiction" at the KSRA convention in October.

Reading Initiative Grant Update

Be careful what you suggest to Project Director Andrea Fishman. You may just find yourself becoming a site coordinator for a three-year Reading Initiative grant from the National Writing Project. That's what happened when Diane Dougherty and I attended one of the breakout sessions of the 2004 National Writing Project annual convention in San Francisco. The grant, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, focuses on non-fiction reading in grades 4-12 with the long-term goal of delivering high quality professional development in reading comprehension. Sites were selected for participation based upon their prior work in reading and their plan for expanding that work as outlined in their grant proposal.

The first year of our Reading Initiative work involved a self-study where we looked at the strengths and needs of our Project, brainstorming ideas for ways to address our needs within and beyond the scope of the

grant. We formed a traveling team to attend the National Reading Initiative summer institute in Boston where we worked with our thinking partner and other sites to shape our ideas into a plan for the following year.

An advanced institute focusing on non-fiction was the center of our year two Reading Initiative work. Participants, all PAWLP Fellows, represented a range of grade levels from elementary through high school and met throughout the school year to explore and discuss the three strands the institute comprised. Participants read a variety of adult non-fiction texts, making discoveries about themselves as readers of non-fiction. They conducted classroom research to explore their questions surrounding the teaching of non-fiction, meeting in response groups to support one another throughout this process. To further inform their understanding of the teaching on non-fiction, participants

formed partnerships with content area teachers as the third strand of the institute.

Traveling team members Diane Dougherty, Vicki Steinberg, Debbie Dinsmore and Patty Koller returned at the end of July from another week in Boston where we shared our work to date and received input from the eight other Project sites from across the United States also participating in the National Reading Initiative. Our year three proposal more fully expands the idea of content area partnerships.

We look forward to this last year of a grant that has provided us with some very exciting opportunities to explore non-fiction text. Our ongoing grant work represents one of the many ways we strive to make the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project a strong source of professional development for teachers.

- Patty Koller
PAWLP Co-Director

PAWLP FELLOWS: WONDERING WHAT TO DO THIS SUMMER?

consider teaching

YOUNG WRITERS/YOUNG READERS

Small classes designed to encourage
creativity and self-confidence.

Classes are 3 hours/day for two weeks.

Sessions are July 10 - 21, July 17 - 28, and July 24 - August 4

in 18 locations throughout the Delaware Valley area.

For more information please call Mary Buckelew at 610-436-2998 or
Karen Venuto at 610-436-3089.

SPRING COURSES

Strategies for Teaching Literature

PWP 520-01
PAWLP Classroom, West Chester University
Thursdays, 4:15 - 7:00
January 19 - May 11
Coordinators: Mary Buckelew/Diane Dougherty

The Pennsylvania Literacy Framework

PWP 510-01
Conrad Weiser SD
Dates and Times TBD
Coordinator: Steve Heffner

Teacher as Writer

PWP 502-01
Reidenbaugh Elementary Center,
Manheim Township SD
Wednesdays, 4:15 - 7:15
January 18 - May 3, no class 4/12
Coordinator: Vicki Steinberg

The Essentials of a Writing Workshop - 2 sections

PWP 503-01
Colonial Elementary, Colonial SD
3 Mondays/month, 4:15 - 7:00
January 9 - May 1
+ March 18 PAWLP Day at WCU
Coordinator: Lynne Dorfman
and
PWP 599-02
Jamison Elementary, Central Bucks SD
Two weekends, March 3 - 5 and March 17 - 19
Friday 6:00 - 9:00,
Saturday and Sunday 8:00 - 5:30
Coordinators: Lynne Dorfman/Chris Kehan

*For registration information
please call 610-436-2297 or
e-mail cupton@wcupa.edu*

SPRING PAWLP DAYS

A Montage of Reading and Writing Ideas

Keynote speaker:

Jen Bryant

March 11, 2006, 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Mill Creek Elementary, Central Bucks SD

High Quality Writing Instruction:

Helping Our Writers Achieve Their Full Potential

Keynote Speaker:

Frank Murphy

March 18, 2006, 8:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Graduate Business Center, West Chester University

To register for these programs please call 610-436-2202 or e-mail cupton@wcupa.edu.

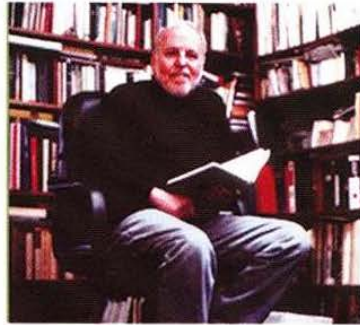
Be sure to indicate which date and location you will attend.

Cost: \$15

First Full-Day PAWLP Day A Hit

The first full-day PAWLP Day in Bucks County on October 22 was a hit with over 100 people in attendance. The weather outside was dreary, but the energy inside was fantastic. J. Patrick Lewis opened the day with wonderful words of wisdom and wit. He quoted poems of old and new ones he has written. Lewis is a true artist of his craft. Following the keynote address, Allison Green, Jen Dostal, Megan McDonald, Sheri Young, and Ellen Mager provided participants with practical strategies in writing, reading, poetry, and children's literature. The afternoon sessions were filled with wonderful strategies on scaffolding talk, the writer's notebook,

improving nonfiction comprehension, and visual literacy by Donna Dougherty, Cheryl Stahle, Suzanne Dailey, Lynne Dorfman, and Maria Banks. The participants shared so many positive comments that the



Fall PAWLP Day Kenote Speaker
J. Patrick Lewis

committee is already planning a full day for next fall in Bucks County.

Mark your spring calendars for a half-day PAWLP Day March 11, 2006 in Bucks County featuring the talented author Jen Bryant. Her keynote is *Writing for Children, or What I Learned from My Slinky*. The author will discuss the journey - from idea to publication - for several of her recent books for children and young adults. The focus will be on the eclectic nature of creative writing, a process which builds a collage of images, makes heavy use of memory, and resists traditional definitions of genre or form. We hope to see you there.

- by Chris Kehan,
PAWLP Co-Director

J. Patrick Lewis Comes to PAWLP

On Saturday, October 29th PAWLP sponsored its fall PAWLP Day at West Chester University's Graduate Business Center. Over 70 teachers, administrators, and professors met a man who communicated his love of reading, zeal for writing, and delight in meeting colleagues who appreciate poetry. His exceptional way of sharing stories and teaching tips kept everyone involved throughout his presentation. J. Patrick Lewis, who holds a Ph.D. in Economics, has published about 45 books of poetry and plans to publish six or seven more over the next two to three years. Prolific? Absolutely. Captivating? YES! Entertaining? You could hear the roars of laughter on main campus!

Pat established a wonderful rapport with his audience, often joking and teasing. He inspired us all to be poets and captivated our imaginations as he shared his poetry. He also shared much more than that - his love for language, the writing pro-

cess, and his love of poetry. When he was finished, we felt as if we spent the morning with a favorite relative who left us glowing!

He told us to remember that "writing isn't done by a few hand-picked wizards, but ordinary folks like you and me." He also cautioned us not to restrict students to rhyming poetry. Basically, Pat told us to have fun with words. Even serious poetry, he told us, can be fun. "The world says 'Open sesame' if you are a reader. Reading opens all doors and closes none."

Some of Pat's teaching tips are:

- ✓ Encourage kids to imitate other poems and poets.
- ✓ Find your own voice!
- ✓ Read a poem every day.
- ✓ Resist rhyming.
- ✓ Write about ordinary things.
- ✓ Encourage kids just to have fun.
- ✓ Emphasize that publication should not be the main objective.
- ✓ Write with strong verbs ("muscle verbs").

✓ Always write with your students.

✓ Emphasize that students are not competing with each other.

✓ Writing is NOT easy! Tell students that.

✓ Nothing succeeds like failure. After failure, you try even harder!

✓ Try writing through a mask.

✓ Write Apostrophe Poems (address inanimate objects).

✓ Write Recipe and Dream Poems.

Some of Pat's books are *The Last Resort*, *Please Bury Me in the Library*, *The Snowflake Sisters*, *Heroes and She-Roes: Poems of Amazing and Everyday Heroes*, *Swan Song: Poems of Extinction*, and *Scientrickery: Riddles in Science*.

Don't miss our next West Chester PAWLP Day on March 18, 2006 featuring Frank Murphy, author, teacher, and PAWLP Fellow.

- by Lynne Dorfman,
PAWLP Co-Director

The Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Project Invitational Summer Institutes

What happens in a Writing Institute?

- Writing of all kinds, some assigned, some self-selected, in a model writing workshop environment, with mini-lessons, response groups, peer and teacher conferences
- Reading current professional literature on the teaching of writing, with opportunity to pursue topics of individual interest
- Experiencing a range of writing and teaching strategies, including individual, small, and whole group activities appropriate K-12 and across the curriculum
- Preparing one presentation to share an effective strategy with other teachers
- Working with visiting scholars and teacher-consultants who present workshops on theory and practice in teaching writing

What happens in a Literature Institute?

- Reading different kinds of literature as a community of readers, some assigned, some self-selected
- Experience in literature circles, grade-level groups, and whole class formats
- Reading current professional literature on the teaching of reading, literature, and literacy, with opportunities to pursue topics of individual interest
- Experiencing a range of reading and teaching strategies, appropriate K-12 and across the curriculum
- Preparing one presentation that shares an effective strategy with other teachers
- Working with visiting scholars and teacher-consultants on issues of theory and practice in the field of literature and literacy

-- What teachers have said about their Institute experiences --

"This course is by far the best I have ever taken. It has changed my entire view of writing."

Sixth grade teacher

"I will never look at literature the same way, in teaching or my personal reading."

Fourth grade teacher

"The mix of ideas from teachers at all levels was invaluable."

Kindergarten teacher

"I appreciated the modeling of techniques and strategies implicit in the daily and weekly schedule of activities."

High School English teacher

"What a wonderful experience! I feel really close to this group, and I have already made plans to get together with several other participants...the learning continues!"

Reading Specialist

"I entered the Institute a reluctant teacher of writing. I am leaving with effective writing strategies I can use in the Physical Education setting."

Physical Education teacher

"Overall, I loved it!"

Eighth grade English teacher



An Experience of a Lifetime

for English, elementary, and content area teachers, librarians, reading specialists
includes Celebrate Literacy Conference: June 27 & 28,
and four-week Institute: June 26 - July 20

PAWLP's Summer Institutes for **MASTER TEACHERS** Teaching Writing or Teaching Literature

Participants

- Earn six graduate credits from West Chester University
- Become Fellows of the National Writing Project, which offers professional opportunities beyond the summer
- May receive stipends (limited availability - apply early)
- Qualify to teach in PAWLP's summer Youth Programs, coordinate courses, and present in-service programs

**Best Practice
Strategies**

**Learn more
--- about ---**

**PSSA
Assessments**

Nomination form for PA Writing & Literature Project Summer Institutes

* * Rolling admission - application review begins January 15 * *

- Please send information about the Summer Institute in Teaching Writing
Location (check one): ___ West Chester ___ Bucks IU
- Please send information about the Summer Institute in Teaching Literature at WCU

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ e-mail: _____

School/
District: Address _____

Grade level/
Content area _____

Nominator/Title _____

Please return this form to:
PA Writing & Literature Project
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

610-436-2202

www.pawlp.org

THE PENNSYLVANIA WRITING & LITERATURE PROJECT NEWSLETTER IS SPONSORED BY

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