

NAWP Newsletter

Letter From the Director

Greetings from Flagstaff! The Northern Arizona Writing Project has had a wonderful 2007 and we look forward to an even more successful 2008. Along with our magnificent and annual summer institute and the always large number of workshops and in-services we provide around the state, 2007 found us in the second year of collaboration with the Coconino County Superintendent's Office on an ITQ (Improving Teacher Quality) grant, facilitating a young author's camp (YAC) under the direction of Cat Lytle, conducting a teachers' writing retreat under the leadership of Jerry Ellsworth, and working on other empowering and enlightening activities for 2008.

I'm also happy to note that we are in the midst of a number of mentoring in-services with schools around the state; our teacher consultants working on these are Ann

Gardner, Lisa Ashley and Sue Zohar, and they are doing a fabulous job! Brava to them. Further, I would like to share with you that Maya Murray has taken over responsibility for our website.

As always, the website will contain useful information about our summer institutes, writing retreats, young authors' camps, and in-service opportunities, but you'll also find that we've added a special resource section and updated the Young Adult Literature Bibliography, and updated the Young Adult Literature Bibliography.

I look forward to meeting you, whether it's at a summer institute or through an e-mail where you share your interest in some aspect of the project, in becoming a teaching consultant, or volunteering to serve on the executive committee. Please feel free to contact me at jean.boreen@nau.edu.

Jean Boreen
Co-Director, NAWP

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L

Look at the letter-
The base, the foot, roots it
soundly.
The upright extends sky-
ward,
The longer limb, penetrat-
ing, probing.

How does it feel to be 50?
You want to know and
right you should. A guy
who's been around that
long must have some-
thing to offer. Right
again. The L is about la-
tency-unfinished judg-
ment, rooted in experi-
ence, guides me. The life-
long quest for wisdom has
revealed truth, under-
standing. So how does it
feel? It feels good. My
heart and eyes are open.
I'm one with my world.
The L is about latency,
yes, leisure, life and love.

The motor purrs, she's
been runnin' hard, steady.
She doesn't want to idle,
afraid to slow down-might
stall.
Slight pressure on the
pedal, turn the wheel.
Check out the road this
way, and that.
As way leads on to way, I
will go back-
To ages and ages ago
when I looked down to the

bend in the underbrush.
I will go that way, round the
bend-
Live life again.

At 50 I have more time
each day. Some routines
of the past have fallen
away, and some just don't
matter. The greatest wish
is for time and mine came
true-time to live, time to
love. Family is still at the
fore-each encounter offer-
ing opportunity to enjoy
one another. At 50 the
people I love are closer.
The distance narrowed by
absence of judgment, fo-
cused by support, not guid-
ance.

I've still got the stuff-
To be the best.
The best teacher, the best
man, the best son.
I always want to do it one
more time-
Better than last.
I want to hit it right this
once,
Then be ready, move on.

What will I do?
Maybe go off alone one
time.
Then come back home,
Not walk alone.

I want to hike the AT, the

PCT.
I want to ride 10,000
miles,
Explore a million corners
in the Canyon.
I want to fish with a
friend,
Hunt with my Dad,
Write a book, read an-
other.
Build a house, under-
stand God-hope to be
ready.

SO how do you check in
at 50? Look close. Life
is good-I'm strong, I
smile. I respect my son
and daughter and love
my wife. I'm excited for
tomorrow and learning
every day. So how does L
feel? Its prime, its peak.
Godspeed I'll see you
there.

Mark Julien



Clothing Exchange

A clothing exchange helps schools build community, costs little money, strengthens the home – school connection, invites reluctant families through school doors, and provides a relaxed atmosphere for positive interaction.

Families who volunteer during an exchange feel they are a greater part of the school. Volunteers (families, community members, or staff) are empowered to help affect positive change within the school building beyond the limited time of the Clothing Exchange. Students and staff bring clothes they have either outgrown or simply no longer wear, to the school over two to three days. Each day, volunteers sort clothes by size and gender and on the last day of the collection, clothes are displayed so that everyone can “shop.”

Clothing Exchanges were held every year in the small rural school where I taught. We had a total of 150 students and more

were on free lunch. Almost every child at that school brought clothes and took clothes home.

A clothing exchange builds community by encouraging students and staff to work for a common cause. Every member of the school community and his/her family is invited to participate by bringing in clothes and taking clothes home. All members of the community participate as not to single out students or staff who may be perceived to be “in need.”

A clothing exchange costs no money to the school other than the cost of coping flyers, despite this, a Clothing Exchange addresses many of the 40 Developmental Assets identified by the Search Institute. “Studies reveal strong and consistent relationships between the number of assets present in young people’s lives and the degree to which they develop in positive and healthful ways.” Assets addressed during a Clothing Exchange are: “Caring School Climate”, “Caring Neighborhood”, “Parent Involvement in

Schooling”, “Bonding To School”, “Caring” and “Equality and Social Justice.”

Any time students’ families can come to school helps to strengthen the home-school connection. Seeing bulletin boards with their child’s work, the flyers posted on the wall, talking to school staff in a relaxed atmosphere – all of this increases the likelihood that these same families will feel comfortable talking to school staff.

Clothing exchanges at Marshall School are always coordinated with Parent-Teacher Conferences. We choose this time in the hopes of increasing attendance for both the exchange and conferences by making it easier on parents. It is not unusual to have parents ask teachers if they can conference with their child’s teacher after “shopping.”

Cont. on page 11

The Students Who Stay

She's a bright light
Always offers a hug
I read it in her journal
Bulimia is killing her

She's worried about her teeth. Her parents spent a lot of money to get her braces, and she knows the acid's probably ruining them. I'm worried about esophageal cancer, but most of all, I'm worried about her. Why is she destroying herself? Of course, she tells me that she needs to be thin. Her slender, sixteen-year-old figure is beautiful, a perfect frame for her eclectic style, black lace, red polka-dots and a purple hair ribbon. I cannot stand to think that her life will be cut short. She's told her parents, and her father tells her to pray the rosary.

Innocent face fools
Mischievous smile hints
Of the complexity
Of the child, the man

I met him on my first day as a teacher. I got stuck with one prep of teaching that was something I knew nothing about. Play Production. Play Produc-

tion? The kids knew that I didn't know. More a circus than a class, that's how I met him. He was a star performer.

The next semester, I'm asked by his teacher if I mind if he spends the hour in my classroom during prep. I'm a first year teacher, and I need my prep, but he needs my prep more. He's barely making it through the day. He comes and goofs off, and sleeps, and talks. His little brother destroys the house with a knife. His grandpa doesn't know what to do. He has fun spraying himself with Axe and lighting a flame.

My second year of teaching, he asks to be my teacher's aide. Of my applicants he is the worst and the best. He knows my heart and makes himself comfortable in the back corner. He sleeps, he phones, he plays games; he works. In and out of Juvy. He's cutting. I'm helpless. I give him presents; they mean a lot. He dropped out of school and I lost him. He called me Teach.

A mom her senior year
Showed no fear
Embraced her life
Embraced her daughter

She invited me to her
baby shower. The families



were ready to welcome the baby, and had prepared a delicious meal of enchiladas, tamales, rice, salad, and flan. The following year she and the baby came to visit. She allowed me to hold the baby and rock her to sleep. In that sweet moment she told me that I taught the baby Hamlet in the womb.

Sweet gangsta

His mom saved him by moving him out of the valley.

Talking of being a dad

“You can graduate. I know that taking two English classes in one semester is tough, but you can do it, and I’m here for you.” Teaching senior English is getting students to the finish line, in one sense. In another sense, it is helping them being something new. I made extra time for the seniors who had failed their first semester of senior English. He could use the extra time.

“Mrs., I’ve done something really bad. I don’t know if I should tell you.”
“You can tell me. If it’s illegal or abuse, I have to report it, though.”

“Oh Mrs., nothin’ like that...My girlfriend is pregnant.”

“This is tough, but babies aren’t bad. Maybe you should’ve planned.”

“She told her parents; I can’t see her anymore.”

“I’m glad she told her parents; she’ll need medical care.”

“I don’t know what to do. I need to support this baby.”

“Give her room. This is a tough time for her.”



He needed extra time the next week.

“Mrs., I just don’t know what to do....She lost the baby...My baby’s gone.”

“I’m so sorry.”

And a couple of days later.

“She lied to me...she’s still pregnant...she wants me out of her life...her friends are saying bad things about me.”

“I’m so sorry.”

He passed my class. Before he left, he called me Maestra.

Happy and warm
Hiding the sorrow at home
She asked me for help
And lied

She told me that her mom wanted to know what to do about her dad beating them.

“Can we wait?” she asked, and “Should we take pictures of the bruises?”

“I have to report this; I have to.”

I told the school counselor, and CPS was called. When the counselor talked to her, she said that her dad had not beaten her, and that I must have misunderstood what she said.

I checked with her to be sure if she was okay, and we ended the year on good terms.

I saw her just the other day at the store, still happy and warm, and I couldn’t help but wonder if she was hiding bruises.

JoAnn Martin

Spring Seedling

By Donna Dunfee-Siverly

Wake-up! Wake-up! Silly sleeping spring seedling
 Spring is here and the sun is coming out from behind the cold winter clouds.
 Come on! You can shake the cold topsoil off your soft around seed.
 Wake-up! Wake-up!

That's it! Get yourself ready to sprout into the moist rich soil.
 Nature's vitamins are waiting for you.
 Feel the spring sun warming the earth tickling your roots.
 Wake-up! Wake-up!

Stretch your steams upward through the rich warm soil.
 Smell the spring dew and warmth of sun that's waiting for you.
 You can do it! I know you can!

Rise upward and embrace the fresh air and bright blue sky.
 Keep on growing straight and tall.
 Gently spring showers quench your thirst.
 Honeybees and hummingbirds seek sweet nectar kisses from you.
 Welcome little seedling to spring.

Mayan Majesty

By Joann Martin

Visiting the remains of eternity past
 where high priests climbed above
 sacred jungles to worship,
 from emerald to azure,
 children of earth and sky.

Now I climb
 their path to worship,
 steps too small for my feet
 creating sacrifice.
 Beige stones deliberately placed,
 for the priest
 not me.





I AM

By Emily Riva

I'm not a ballerina
I'm not a tap dancer
I don't dance on a pole
But *I am* a dancer in the rain.

I'm not a supermodel
I'm not a movie star
I never was prom queen
But *I am* beautiful.

I'm not a millionaire
I'm not a brain surgeon
I don't have any buildings named after me
But *I am* somebody's hero.

I don't have a hundred books published
I'm not super creative
I don't get fancy royalty checks
But *I am* a writer.

Ode to the Shoulder, Stomach, and Thigh

Rash

By Cat Lytle

O rash,
I cannot rationalize
how I love thee,
a plethora of bumps
too plentiful to count
encroaching the boundaries of my
body.

Bumps,
raised like an army
slowly invading my armpit
crawling up my neck
digging trenches on my clavicle.

Bumps,
dotting my belly
like sprinkles of bitter cinnamon
ducking from enemy lines
rifles in hand.

Bumps,
singing their way
onto my upper thighs
orchestrating a melody
with my shoulder and stomach bumps
harmonizing together
into one big itch.



A Little Teaching and a Lot of Tea

“You know, you are the fourth one this year.” The substitute’s patronizing brown eyes stare unblinkingly into mine.

“I know it will be a challenge, but I’m really looking forward to it,” I reply cheerily, impervious to the rain she is attempting to dump on my parade.

With a wry look she hands me *The List*, an accounting of every student who has committed an infraction in the last month; it is 17 pages long. This is only for first period she says, the rest are in the file cabinet behind the desk. I assess the situation. Failing to produce a real live teacher for first semester, the principal had desperately hired a string of burnt-out and inept long term substitutes like Mrs. Kartel. They had dropped like flies, and the class was apparently out of control. That is, until a true teacher could be found who would warm her students’ hearts and ignite their minds! (I recognize this as my cue to enter.)

She hands me the attendance roster. In perfect Catholic-schoolgirl handwriting she had inscribed either a *G* or *B* next to each name. According to Mrs. Kartel, there was a single *G* or “good” student in the entire first hour, Julia Ernest. A small number were left blank (the neutrals she said) and the rest were labeled bad (*B*), double bad (*BB*), or triple bad (*BBB*). As a substitute for over ten years now, she should know that there are no bad kids, only misguided children who simply needed a sensitive, young teacher to lead them to academic and personal success. Yes, I would be a sort of savior to this class, revitalizing it with my Dewian sense of educational spirit, inspiring student-centered learning, offering differentiated instruction, and creating a safe and secure learning environment. I had learned my teacher lingo, and I was ready to put it to great use in the motivation of

our future’s greatest resource: our youth.

Spring semester begins tomorrow. I hang a poster meant to inspire responsible and thoughtful living, “Life is Change, Choose Wisely”. I write my name on the board, and then re-write it several times, meticulously trying to get the *S* in Mrs. Sautner just right. I sit at my teacher desk and imagine what Monday will bring: happy, bright-eyed students, eagerly awaiting instruction. I unwrap my new mug, gifted to me for this special day, and contemplate the profound message in it touts, “You’ll never work a day in your life if you love what you do”. So true.

First bell rings. My hands are clammy, and the reality of being the lone adult in an enclosed space filled with hormone-crazed adolescents is beginning to seem less appealing. Using my desk as a barrier, I begin shuffling papers and clearing my throat to appear very busy and teacher-like. Students drift into the classroom, but they are

Outside, Yordan crosses his arms and leans against the rusty, paint-chipped lockers. I calmly ask, "Is something bothering you, Yordan? I want you to know that you can feel safe to talk to me about it." He stares blankly. I am sure he's going to give me the silent treatment, but suddenly, with a masterful display of bilingualism, he yells, "Pinche teacher, quitate de mi face!" Almost if she had been waiting at the door for this very moment to occur, Mrs. Bishop, bursts into the hallway, "Is everything alright out here?" She evaluates my ashen face and Yordan's intimidating stance.

"Let's go, young man! Now." Her class is quietly writing an essay; they remain doing as she escorts him to what I assume will be the principal's office.

Despite the fact that Yordan towers over little Mrs. Bishop, her flower-print dress swishing with her quick steps, he appears wary. They make an odd pair walking

down the hall; his shoulders involuntary slouching even further under the weight of Mrs. Bishop's reprimanding. I smooth my hair, taking care to collect myself before making my entrance back to class. I swing the door open attempting a convincing smile for my student's sake, when the final first hour bell rings. Rapturous relief washes over me - I made it! I don't have long to relish this feeling though; the previously sluggish students are now moving at hyper-speed, squeezing out of the classroom the way water swirls down a drain. I am nearly run over by a football player from the third row. The last of the class filters out and I realize that I forgot to assign the tell-me-about-your-Christmas-vacation assignment.

I retreat to the haven of my teacher's desk, which is now in a state of utter chaos from the morning's distracted paper-shuffling. I cradle my new mug, reflecting upon my genuine desire to save the world, even if it might take a bit longer than I had originally planned.

I hear a meek voice from the door, "Mrs. Saut-

ner? Can I talk to you?" My first case! "Oh! Why, yes, Julia! Please come in, you are always welcome to talk to me about anything", I respond in the most maternal of voices. "No, err, that's ok. It's just, um, don't drink that." I gave her an inquisitive look; I didn't quite understand. "Ali spit in it. That's all." She turns and walks down the hallway; I stare into the black of my tea.

Ginny Navaretta Sautner



CoCoLit – Coconino County Content Literacy Mentoring Project

A mentoring project in content literacy strategies

for teachers, by teachers

Writing Project Fellows Involved:

Mary Nebel	Coconino County Assistant Superintendent of Schools
JoAnn Lane	CoCoLit Facilitator
Rochelle Bronson	Mentor
Cynthia Granberg	Mentor
Cat Lytle	Mentee

Participating Schools:

Grand Canyon	(2 mentors, 7 mentees)
Tuba City	(2 mentors, 7 mentees)
Ponderosa High School	(1 mentor, 2 mentees)
Killip Elementary School	(1 mentor, 3 mentees)
Mount Elden Middle School	(2 mentors, 7 mentees)
Flagstaff Middle School	(2 mentors, 8 mentees)
Christensen Elementary School	(1 mentor, 4 mentees)
Kinsey Elementary School	(1 mentor, 4 mentees)

Mentors receive

- A week's training in mentoring, content literacy strategies, and background knowledge during our CoCoLit Summer Institute and on-going support and training throughout the year.
- A stipend
- Three units of NAU credit
- Content literacy resource materials

Mentees receive

- On-site peer mentoring
- Participation in a learning community at their schools
- Up to 6 units of NAU credit
- Content literacy resource materials

Interested in becoming a mentor or mentee for next year (2008-2009)? Contact JoAnn Lane at 928-679-8055

Funded by the Coconino County Education Service Agency, Northern Arizona University, and an Arizona Board of Regents' *Improving Teacher Quality* Grant.

Clothing Exchange Cont.

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Families who volunteer during the exchange feel like they are an important part of the school. Volunteers at Marshall are comfortable talking to other parents they have met while sorting clothes and with faculty they encounter during their volunteer time. These families are often people that otherwise do not volunteer at school. Although volunteers are not permitted to "shop" during their sorting times, they enjoy the preview of clothes that will be on display. Marshall also gives volunteers a ticket for every hour he/she works with the possibility of winning a prize donated by a local business.

Everyone shops to build community but some shoppers are more memorable than others. Two years ago one of my students started off the year living in a tent. Just as the family was becoming financially stronger, his father unexpectedly died of a heart attack. This little boy received a new jacket and shoes from the exchange. His smile made all the work I put into the exchange worthwhile.

Volunteers and participants for this event invariably feel empowered to affect positive change within the school after being a member of a clothing exchange team. These volunteers and participants are more likely to talk to a school staff member and speak positively about the school their child attends. Every person involved feels a little more like a member of a community that cares for one another.

Liz Curtiss

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