

The PA Writing & Literature Project Newsletter



Volume 34, Number 1

Fall 2014

Invitational Writing Institute!

The 2015 Invitational Writing Institute includes two spring meetings, three weeks in the summer, and two fall dates. Participants earn six graduate credits from West Chester University. Five \$500 stipends are available to ap-

plicants who apply by **December 5, 2014**.

Applications are accepted on a rolling admission basis. The deadline to apply is **April 3, 2015**. See page 5 for specific dates, times, and application information.

PAWLP's Invitational Writing Institute: Immersion, Introspection, and Collaboration

- by Chris Coyne Kehan and Maryellen Kenney

Every year teachers from various school districts and grade levels convene for the Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Project's Invitational Writing Institute. The Institute is an opportunity for teachers to enjoy



living like writers, participate in writing workshops, use writer's notebooks, and share writing in peer response groups. Along the way, teachers look into best practices on the teaching of writing so they can go back into their classrooms empowered to teach writing with confidence. Immersion in the most current research about teaching writing also allows participants to build a personal inquiry piece that they then take back into their own classrooms, effectively becoming teacher-researchers in action.



Each day of the Institute starts with a writer's notebook entry that is sparked by music, poetry, quotations, or excerpts from mentor texts. A few weeks before returning to school, Institute attendees are invited to share one word that encapsulates their Summer Institute experience. The words are splashed on the board and everyone copies the words into their writer's notebooks. Institute attendees are challenged to use one word or all of the words on the board to describe their Institute experience. As co-directors, we took on the challenge to use all the words.

Every summer teachers **wonder** where the Summer Institute **journey** will take them. They become **introspective** about their teaching **craft** and dig into **research** that **inspires** them to make changes. It is an **intense** three weeks that may seem **lengthy**, and filled with **stress** for some. However, the **constantly challenging** aspect of the Summer Institute is something necessary to have teachers become **reflective** practitioners. **Collaboration** among like-minded colleagues is a **refreshing**

change of pace for many teachers who may be an island in their own schools.

Engaging in the writing process, participating in writing response groups, and



having thoughtful discussions is an **invigorating** experience for all new Fellows, which enables them to be **advocates** of best practices in their classrooms for their students.

The Writing Institute is poised to welcome the next group of teachers who are looking to challenge themselves and reflect on their current practices. Are you ready to take the leap and join us for the 2015 Writing Institute?





PAWLP Community, Connections, & Collaboration

A Note from Mary

Dear PAWLP Fellows and Friends,

PAWLP has much to celebrate this year and next. This past summer we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Young Writers/Readers program started by Dr. Robert Weiss. In this issue we include articles celebrating Young Writers from summer Youth administrator Karen Pawlewicz, an article by Dr. Jolene Borgese who taught that first summer of 1984, and a vignette by one of the specialty course teachers, Linda Walker. We will “officially” celebrate the thirty years of Young Writers when we celebrate PAWLP’s 35th year in spring 2015. We will announce the location and date of the celebration later in the fall. We hope you will join PAWLP Fellows and friends in celebrating all of the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project’s myriad accomplishments at the celebration this spring.

In addition to the news of our 30th/35th celebrations, we are also excited to share the Pennsylvania

Writing and Literature Project’s fall line-up and other PAWLP endeavors in this *Newsletter*. PAWLP collaborated with the Chester County Reading Association and the Bucks County Reading Association to bring authors Peter Lourie and David Sommoza to West Chester University for a half day conference on September 27th. On September 30th, we kick-off the PAWLP Author Series in Phillips Memorial Autograph Library with PAWLP poets, Kathy Barham, Janice Ewing, and Don LaBranche.

Another event that you will not want to miss is the weekend workshop series: *Three Days, Three Modes, Six Traits*. The Three Modes/Six Traits series is a result of a year-long PAWLP inquiry. A cadre of PAWLP Fellows spent this past year discussing and applying the Six Traits Guide to Writing to student essays written in the three modes: informational, persuasive/argumentative, and narrative. We read Vicki Spandel’s *Creative Writers*, scored papers using the

National Writing Project’s *Analytic Writing Continuum* (AWC), and designed the *Three Days, Three Modes, Six Traits* series that filled to capacity this summer. See below for details regarding the October series. We hope you’ll join us!

Sincerely,
Mary Buckelew

KUDOS

PAWLP Co-Directors Lynne Dorfman and Diane Dougherty co-wrote *Grammar Matters: Lessons, Tips, and Conversations* recently published by Stenhouse.

Cecelia Evans, ‘81 WC Writing, published *Special Saturday Mornings: The Story of With Pen in Hand Family Writing Program*.

Brian Kelley, ‘11 WC Writing, co-wrote a collaborative article published in the July edition of *English Journal* entitled “Transforming Professional Lives through Online Participation.” Access it at: <http://www.ncte.org/journals/ej/issues/v103-6>.

Nicole Zuerblis, ‘14 Upper Moreland Writing, had her article entitled *Four Ways to Foster Independent Readers and Writers* published on ASCD Inservice today for their Literacy Week. Access it at <http://inservice.ascd.org/>

We enjoy keeping up with the accomplishments of our PAWLP Fellows. Please contact Director, Mary Buckelew at 610-436-2998 or e-mail mbuckelew@wcupa.edu with news we can share with our PAWLP family.

3 Days/3 Modes/6 Traits Academy

This three day academy will give educators the opportunity to explore the modes and traits of writing across grade levels and content areas (K - 12). Educators will develop a deeper understanding of the Common Core Writing Standards and their impact on classroom practice.

Where: Anderson Hall, West Chester University

When: October 10, 11, and 12, 2014

Friday, 5 - 9 p.m.

Saturday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Cost: \$350 (add \$10 to record 18 hours of Act 48 credit)

The academy may also be taken for 2 graduate credits.

Cost: \$1,129.56

Additional on-line hours and a paper are required for graduate credit.

Register on-line at www.pawlp.org

Spring Literacy Events

**Save the date -
March 21, 2015**

Lynne Dorfman and Diane Dougherty, authors of *Grammar Matters*, will keynote a seminar at West Chester University focused on grammar instruction.



Diane Dougherty and Lynne Dorfman

2015

Invitational Institute Dates

2 Spring dates, 2 Fall dates, and 3 weeks in the summer!

Writing Institute

Spring: May 9 and May 23, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Summer: Mondays - Thursdays, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

June 29 - July 2, July 6 - 9, July 13 - 16 + 1 August date TBD

Fall: October 10 and November 7, 8 a.m. - noon

Closing celebration: Nov. 7, noon - 1:30 p.m.

- For an application form go to www.pawlp.org, e-mail Ann Mascherino at amascherino@wcupa.edu, or call 610-436-2202
- Final application deadline: April 3, 2015
- Five \$500 stipends are available for applications received by December 5, 2014
- The Institute and most 3-credit courses apply toward the WCU Master's Degree in Writing, Teaching, and Criticism

Spring 2015 Graduate Courses

PWP 520-01 Strategies for Teaching Literature, 4 - 12

Tuesdays, 5:00 - 7:45 p.m.

January 20 - May 5 (no class March 10)

Location: PAWLP classroom, West Chester University

PWP 599-01 The Writer's Notebook, 2 - 10

Tuesdays, 5:00 - 8:45 p.m.

January 27, February 10, 24, March 10, 24, 31, April 14, 28, May 5

One Saturday morning in April, date TBD

Plus 6.5 independent hours

Location: Warwick Elementary School, Central Bucks SD

Find full course descriptions and register on-line at www.pawlp.org

Young Writers Celebrates

Celebrating 30 Years!

- Karen Pawlewicz, Summer Youth Administrator and WCU Alumni

How many things can you name that last for thirty years? Do appliances last that long in this day and age? How about clothing styles? Have you stayed in the same job in the same building for thirty years? Well, the PAWLP's Young Writers/Young Readers Program celebrated its 30th anniversary this summer. There were verbal bells and whistles, pizza parties, and mint green T-shirts to celebrate the birthday of this awesome program.

In 1984, the Young Writers/Young Readers Program began on West Chester University's campus as a result of the vision of Dr. Robert Weiss. The program has grown from a handful of teachers and 55 children to what it is today. We have much to celebrate, as we presently are located in four counties. The majority of sites are located at WCU and in public schools, but there are also some specialty sites located at Longwood Gardens, Graeme Park, Valley Forge National Historical Park, and The Highlands Mansion and Gardens. Pen Ryn and Buckingham Friends, two private schools, now offer sites as well. In addition, specialty classes like College Essay Writing, Fantasy, Science Fiction and Horror Writing at West Chester University and Nonfiction Writing, and Gothic, Fantasy and Science Fiction at Lower Merion were offered.



We have much to be proud of for our thirty years worth of writing. Our teachers are both creative and resourceful, challenging all types of writers. Our students are like sponges as they drink up craft from mentor texts, then squeeze their own version onto paper. Our facilities are clean and comfortable. Our parents are both helpful and encouraging. Our finished products, the anthologies, are full of fabulous pieces of writing from children in grades K-12. These are only a few of the reasons we have to rejoice this summer.

We have a staff that is the best of the best! Dr. Mary Buckelew, our Director, is both a mentor and a friend to us all. Ann Mascherino and Toni Kershaw work all year long behind the scenes to make our program run smoothly. Our co-directors, Debbie Neves and Karen Pawlewicz work as part of a team along with Kathy Garrison and Betsy Brecht to make sure all sites run as smoothly as possible. We also need to thank Carmen Moore and Adam Brecht for their help this summer.

The anthologies will be available in the fall. They are the culmination of our students' hard work. The books are authored by over 600 children in grades K-12 who eagerly wrote, conferred and revised in order to be published.

Thirty years is a long time for a program of this type to grow and be nurtured. We are very proud of the student participants, as well as the teachers who proudly put time and effort into making this summer the best yet. We look forward to another spectacular summer in 2015! Please check our website for teacher applications and locations for next summer.

Why I Love Teaching

- Dr. Jolene Borgese, '80 WC Writing

This past summer I had the pleasure of teaching a ten day writing course to middle school students at the PAWLP Youth Writing Project. In 1984, I ran the first Youth Writing Project on campus with about 50 writers and six teachers. We weren't sure what we were doing back then but we knew we were on to something big! It was a success that bloomed into a huge project for 30 years.

This summer, my 12 writers were a mixed bag of pre-adolescents who wanted to come to writing camp, and others whose parents had signed them up. They all made the best of it. They caught my enthusiasm for writing, and, in their preteen coolness, actually showed they liked my activities. After we wrote our first piece, a small collection of memories based on the picture book *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox, I had the students engage in speed responding. This technique is much like speed dating. The writers sat across from each other; one read their writing and the other listened and responded. Every three minutes I yelled time and the writers moved to the next responder.

I gave them the directions: 1) the writer will read his/her memories to the responder; 2) the responder will ask questions about the memories; 3) the writer will write down the questions or the answers to the questions to help them revise their piece later; 4) the time limit was three minutes. First I demonstrated the process with one of the writers and then I had them break into two groups with the writers facing each other across the table. Not only was it helpful for the writers, but the responders had to listen and come up with at least three questions to ask the writer. The short time cut down on any non-focusing and made it possible for all the writers in the class to hear each

Its 30th Year!!

others' memories. After the first group shared their memories I had them exchange roles and repeated the process. I observed lots of smiles and writers talking to each other about their writing. They moaned when I yelled 'time' but I could see they were enjoying this novel way of responding. Time is always an issue in teaching but this process helped my writers stay focused and be heard!

For the last couple of years I have been experimenting with technology in classrooms and workshop settings. I wanted to see if students (of all ages) were more responsible with their technology if they placed their devices on their desks or tables in front of them so they weren't reading their devices on their laps. I included the devices in my lessons this summer, and encouraged my writers to use them as tools to aid with their writing. When discussing a topic, I asked them to use their devices to find facts or stats on the topic. Although not every writer had a device they were more than willing to share. In the two weeks I worked with them no one abused the use of their smart phones. In fact, if they received a text or call they would let me know and ask if they could respond!

I read them the first two chapters of Kate Walton's novel *Crash*, about bullying, which gave them the perspectives of the bully and the victim. The mentor text gave them an example to write about an informational topic. We brainstormed informational topics and discussed showing both sides of an issue. A few of the writers choose the topics of a no homework policy and a later school-starting time for middle and high school students. They used their devices for research and were delighted to find studies and stats on both topics that enriched their pieces.

I may have been around a long time but education is the future and technology is the future. Both must be embraced together.

There and Back Again

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. (The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien)

- Linda Walker, '05 Bucks Writing

This summer a group of young eager writers and one *Hobbit* enthusiast teacher entered a world full of writing fantasy. The Highlands mansion and gardens' indoor and outdoor settings welcomed writers to stretch their storytelling imaginations. Every story needs engaging characters and of course challenging dilemmas. Can you imagine *The Hobbit* without the trolls, spiders, wolves, the Goblin King, Gollum and Smaug?

Relics and character development were the priority for the first day. A character needs individuality and a reason to go on an adventure. Listing was the strategy used by writers in developing their character's qualities and actions. Written and oral description along with sketches helped writers flesh out "the who" of their character and "the what" of the artifact.

Place is vital for a fantasy adventure. While exploring the mansion's rooms and outdoor areas ideas for treasure hiding sites, portals, and obstacles emerged. Animated talk often aroused questions like, "how would that work?" or "why would your character do that in this place?" Talking encouraged risk taking...yes you can modify that idea! These prewriting strategies were the first step for later revision which supported the writer in making changes and re-evaluating original ideas.

Obstacle plot maps helped set the hero and his/her sidekick on a path of adventure. By creating and describing what happened at each point writers were able to bring their characters *there and back again*. Often young authors struggle with a lead, moving stories forward

and developing a satisfying ending. The plot map strategy facilitated storytelling by focusing the action at each point on the map. Writers used these maps to guide them in their storytelling. Again, talk about fantasy books like the Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* and Lisa McMann's *The Unwanted* series showed how characters traveled *there and back again*.

Music and art was the unexpected writing strategy. During the week writers crafted a beginning place for their adventure using a variety of art media. It was interesting to watch them organize and reconsider their ideas...a lot like the revision process. Celtic music conjured the imagery for poetry and prose.

And so the fantasy writing and talking week ended where it started at the white door with the brass knocker of a mansion on a hill. But the roads to writing *go ever ever on*,

*Over rock and under tree,
By caves where never sun has shone,
By streams that never find the sea;
Over snow by winter sown,
And through the merry flowers of
June,
Over grass and over stone,
And under mountains in the moon,*
Writing roads go ever ever on.
The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien



My Italian Surprises

- Mary Reindorp, '94 WC Writing, '01 Lit

I was full of questions as I landed at Rome's Leonardo da Vinci Airport and excited to see the places and artwork that were so important historically and culturally. As I searched for answers, there were amazing and delightful surprises along the way.

At the Roman Forum, we saw the Temple of Vesta, which had for 700 years been over-seen by the Vestal Virgins who tended the flame that was thought to be linked to the fortunes of Rome. A sacred grove surrounded the temple with its statue of Athena. The flame in the hearth burned until the Emperor in Constantinople, Theodosius ordered it extinguished. The temple was reasonably intact until the Renaissance when it was dismantled, its marble and stones sold to be used in churches.

In the Sistine Chapel, I found the face of Vittoria Colonna just below the foot of Jesus' mother Mary in Michelangelo's *The Last Judgement*. Vittoria Colonna, to whom he dedicated some of his 300 sonnets, was the woman that Michelangelo adored from afar, saying that he had only one regret in life, that he had kissed the hand and not the face or lips of Vittoria Colonna as she lay on her deathbed.

In Florence, I was entranced by the view of the Arno and the beauty of the hills behind it at sunrise. It is spanned by the Ponte Vecchio, the only medieval bridge remaining in Florence since the Second World War. I was awestruck at my first glimpse of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, the largest church in Florence with its ornate marble facade, its dome of red tiles, its gilt copper ball and cross, placed there in the 1460's by Verrocchio.

Everything about Venice was a surprise to me. When I close my eyes, I can still see the ceilings of the luxurious basilicas of Venice, jeweled and gold enameled. The Venetian Republic, with

its empire to the east, dominated the Mediterranean for 1000 years. Whole forests from Slovenia were used to provide wood to make the pylons underlying the buildings that line the canals of Venice. Now, Venice floods 100 days of the year, the high water prevents boats from passing under the bridges, hindering normal trade. Most of the PAWLP-ers made the hour long trip by vaporetto to Torcello island, to be surprised by that fact that Ernest Hemmingway stayed there and wrote *Across the River, Into the Trees*. Over spritzers (another Venetian surprise), we laughed about this. Who knew?



The Eternal City

- Rita Sorrentino, '04 WC Writing

Peering at a spectacular view of the Alps through the window of our airplane answered my unspoken question, "Are we there yet?" The dream of visiting Italy inched its way to reality as the Captain announced, "Flight attendants, please prepare for landing." Thus began my travel to *Bella Italia* with PAWLP Fellows and friends visiting three of Italy's greatest cities: Rome, Florence, and Venice.

Rome, the city of hills and bridges, wowed me and educated me with its open-air treasures and masterpieces of antiquity along with the buzzing energetic modern-day *la dolce vita*.

Ancient architecture with triumphal arches, dazzling domes and colossal

columns revealed layers of The Eternal City's history. Museums brimming with statues and paintings on walls and ceilings narrated the influence of religion, the role of politics, and not-so-subtle messages of Rome's superiority complex. Standing under Michelangelo's masterpiece was not the prayerful experience I anticipated. The intimacy of God and Adam's almost-touching fingers was interrupted by the shoulder-to-shoulder crowds and the guards yelling, "Silenzio."

At the beautiful basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, which was close to our hotel, I had a more serene and spiritual experience.

Mary R and I made an early morning visit that treated us to a quiet peaceful look at the stunning marble and mosaics. On our last evening in Rome, I attended the evening Mass there with Lynn and Ralph, listening intently to the Italian prayers, Gregorian chants and the organ's hymn playing that culminated in a grace-filled moment of received communion amid Italian parishioners and reverent tourists.

Our four days in Rome were packed, but getting off the beaten path and wandering around the narrow *vicoli* (alleys) and *piazas* (squares) likewise revealed sights, smells and sounds of Roman gems. Colorful laundry arranged like clothesline art and flowers blooming from window boxes added special charm to interspersed neighborhoods.

Little shops, *cafes*, *pizzerie*, and *gelateria* proved to be enchanting and refreshing. Then, what better way to end the day than on the hotel's rooftop garden offering panoramic vistas, beautiful sunsets, and *vino* nightcaps!

With Mary B reminding us that we were on vacation, Lynn keeping track of our steps, and Mary R perfecting her map-reading skills, we were more than ready for our next stop – Florence.

PAWLP Book Club

Springboard: Launching Your Personal Search for Success by G. Richard Shell

- Dr. Rina Vassallo, '94 WC Writing

Our PAWLP book talk on October 7th is focused on the book *Springboard: Launching Your Personal Search for Success* by Richard Shell. I became intrigued with this book after hearing Wharton professor and author, Richard Shell at a program at University of Pennsylvania this past spring. The book is neatly divided into two parts- *What is Success* and *How Do I Achieve it?*

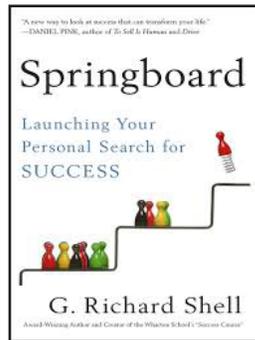
In the style of Malcolm Gladwell and Daniel Pink, Shell illustrates his ideas via scientific insights, storytelling and personal narratives. He cites his own career path as a young adult in search of meaningful work despite societal and parental pressures. His aha moment was when he learned, "success is not a place". Each chapter helpfully includes exercises to reflect on the learnings of the chapter and its application to your life.

In the first part of the book, Shell explores common definitions of success-happiness, fame, fortune, professional status and meaningful work- and challenges each of us to explore, look at what motivates us and dig deeper into our identity and values. He quotes Proust, "The voyage of discovery lies not in seeking new horizons, but in seeing it with new eyes."

Shell emphasizes that success is a

journey as opposed to a destination and can look different depending on where you are on the journey. He states that success can be measured via "outer achievements and inner satisfactions".

The second part of the book with Shell's activities, guidance and testimonials allows the reader to customize his or her roadmap to success via a unique combination of interests, passions, aptitudes, skills, past experiences and personality strengths.



This book would be helpful to anyone beginning a career, thinking of a career change, making a life transition - I guess just about anyone. As an educator

and/or a parent, this book would greatly inform you in guiding and working with young people.

I appreciate that it challenges common assumptions regarding happiness and success and that it gently leads the reader to fashion a unique path.

In the tradition of our PAWLP discussions, participants need not have read the book to participate. Just come willing to learn and converse.

Dr. Jolene Borgese and I will be leading a discussion on this book at West Chester University on the afternoon of October 7th. Please contact the PAWLP office to register.

Join us for Continuity Saturdays!

- Janice Ewing and Kim Kraf

We invite you to join us for any or all of our Continuity sessions this fall. We'll be meeting on October 11th, November 8th, and December 6th, from 10:00-11:30. As always, our overall goal is to provide a time and space for collegial sharing of ideas, writing pieces in progress, inquiry topics, technology learning, and other areas of interest to participants.

Last year, a group of us delved into an inquiry in which we compared and contrasted two frameworks for writing instruction and assessment: the NWP's *Analytic Writing Continuum*, and Spandel and Culham's *Six Traits Model*. The inquiry led us to develop a course that was offered this summer: *Three Days/Three Modes/Six Traits*. The course was successful and will be offered again during a fall weekend - October 10th, 11th, and 12th. Therefore, for our first Continuity session on Oct. 11th, anyone who is not taking the entire course but is interested in the topic is invited to attend (at no charge) from 10:00-11:30 on that day. We'll be presenting a specific module at that time, so you won't have that 'walking in after the movie has started' experience.

Another line of inquiry that has been developing for this year is the process of giving and receiving constructive feedback. We'll be spending some time focusing on this issue during the November and December meetings, as well as connecting it to the Six Traits and writing conferences.

We hope to see many of you this fall. Your ideas, questions, and participation are the energy that fuels us!

Call 610-436-2202 or e-mail amascherino@wcupa.edu to register.

~ ~ PAWLP E-JOURNAL ~ ~

Enjoy PAWLP's Electronic Journals by and for the Fellows of the Project at
<http://issuu.com/pawlp>

All Fellows are encouraged to submit essays, articles, poetry,
photography, and teaching ideas to
PAWLPJOURNAL@wcupa.edu

THE PA WRITING & LITERATURE PROJECT

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PAWLP Office Staff

Toni Kershaw
Ann Mascherino

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Writing & Literature Project, West
Chester University, West Chester, PA,
19383 or e-mailed to amascherino@wcupa.edu.

Phone: 610-436-2202

Fax: 610-436-3212

www.pawlp.org

The Project awarded scholarships to 13 Young Writers this summer due in part to generous donations from people like you. There is a link to donate on-line at www.pawlp.org or you can write a check to The WCU Foundation and mail it to The WCU Foundation, PO Box 541, West Chester, PA 19381. Please indicate "**PAWLP Scholarships**" on the memo line.

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Thank you!

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Contact Judy Jester at
judithmjester@gmail.com
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Important Dates

PAWLP and CCRA Seminar at WCU: September 27

PAWLP Author Series: September 30, October 21, November 4

Book club: October 7

3 Days/3 Modes/6 Traits Academy: October 10, 11, 12

Continuity Saturdays: October 11, November 8, and December 6

PCTELA in Pittsburgh: October 23 & 24

NCTE/NWP in Washington, DC: November 20 - 23

E-Journal submission deadlines: February 15 and August 15

Spring Saturday Seminar: West Chester - March 21, 2015