



# LAWP Newsflash

## 2006

### Year of the Dog



## Happy Chinese New Year!

### LAWP CALENDAR

#### January 21st

Saturday Seminar

#### January- April

Gardner Elementary  
Inservices

#### February 3rd-5th

CATE Conference  
*An E-ticket Experience*

#### February 18th

Saturday Seminar

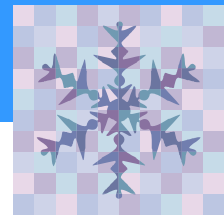
#### March 18th

Saturday Seminar



### From the Desk of Carolyn Frank...

Please nominate a colleague for our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Institute by emailing me at [carolcsula@aol.com](mailto:carolcsula@aol.com). Also, if your school would like Professional Development on writing instruction, email me at [carolcsula@aol.com](mailto:carolcsula@aol.com). We are contacting teachers interested in teaching in our Young Writers' Camp (contact Jenny or Denise) and registering children for the summer. Our Saturday Seminars continue to be a strong component of our project and you can contribute by sharing the flyer on the website with your colleagues ([www.calstatela.edu/lawp](http://www.calstatela.edu/lawp)). Many of our fellows have participated in the NWP/National Council of Teachers of English conference in Pittsburgh and will be presenting at the California Association of Teachers of English in Anaheim in February. Finally, we are planning an Advanced Institute for Principals and if your principal is interested, please contact Bob at [rland@calstatela.edu](mailto:rland@calstatela.edu).



This issue:

- \* *From the desk of Carolyn Frank*
- \* *Beverly Glass*
- \* *Fellow Buzz*
- \* *Gurupreet Khalsa*
- \* *Shahe Mankerian*
- \* *Cat's Chat*

## My NCTE Experience

By Beverly Glass

If you have never attended the annual conference of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), make it your goal to go to Nashville this November! I attended the 2005 NCTE Conference and the National Writing Project (NWP) Annual Conference in Pittsburgh, and had a wonderful experience. Prior to going, I was filled with anticipation, because I knew I was about to embark on a weekend with educational workshops, informative speeches, and great resources. Thus, I anticipated getting ideas to improve my craft. I had no idea how magnificent the weekend would be.

Early Friday morning, I went to the Omni William Penn Hotel for the start of the National Writing Project Conference. On the seventeenth floor, I felt a palpable sense of excitement in the air. I attended an invigorating facilitated discussion about closing the achievement gap between black students and their white counterparts.

Later that day, I entered the David Lawrence Conference Center, the site of the NCTE Conference. The outer hall was abuzz with activity, and an electric energy filled the room. Because of the yellow first-time attendee ribbon on my name badge, repeat NCTE attendees gave me lots of tips and good advice to enhance my conference experience. There were so many good sessions, and I made a conscious effort to attend sessions that addressed the needs of English Learners, since they are the predominant student group at my school. In between going to incredibly good sessions, I took time to visit hundreds of vendors in the Exhibit Hall.

One aspect of the conference I especially enjoyed was the interaction I had with my fellow attendees. Talking with teachers and researchers from all over the country was an eye-opening experience. It was fascinating to learn from other teachers how the education system differs across our nation, but I also realized the commonalities among us (exemplified in the conference theme, "On Common Ground"), regardless of where we teach.

On Saturday afternoon, I attended a session that paid homage to a professor who served as a mentor to many professors currently teaching and working all over the country. The session was not only a tribute to a mentor by his appreciative mentees, but we had a round table discussion about the merits of the mentor-mentee relationship. One of the directors of my Writing Project (the Los Angeles Writing Project), Dr. Robert Land, facilitated the session. I was very inspired by his presentation.

Overall, the conference was a terrific experience. It was nice to be in an environment with people who display the same passion about education that I do. I learned new strategies and got ideas that I am currently using, and they have improved my professional practice.

## See You At CATE!

My CATE Presentation

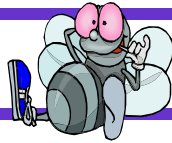
By Beverly Glass

On February 4, 2006, I will be presenting a workshop entitled, Using the Six Traits of Writing as the Ticket to Exciting Student Writing, at the CATE Conference in Anaheim. My interactive session consists of strategies that enable students to revise and enhance their work with word choice, sentence fluency, voice, and an opening with a good hook. I would love to see you at the conference!

---

## Fellow Buzz:

---



My brother Michael's new book will be released on November 1st. Details can be found at [www.nyupress.org](http://www.nyupress.org) <<http://www.nyupress.org>> by just typing in Foley, Michael S. The book is collection of letters to Dr. Spock (the famous baby doctor and anti-Vietnam war activist, NOT the fictitious Dr. Spock of Star Trek fame), so it may be of interest to teachers, parents, and anybody who lived through that era.

Erin Foley

---

I am proud to announce I will graduating in the next week or so with my Masters in Education emphasis in Reading with all the bells and whistles. I am waiting to hear if I graduate with HONORS. Keep your fingers crossed for me. Happy a very Merry Holiday and enjoy your the grandkids. Love, Katy Bayless

---

Hello Everyone!

After a surprise C-Section, I came "out" on Saturday, October 29th at 3:27pm. I weigh 9 lbs, 1oz, and I'm 22" long! My name is Robert Brooks Hall; I'm named after two of my daddy's uncles. Mommy and daddy, though, are calling me Bobby! Here are few photos of me while I'm still in the hospital. And one with me hanging out with my daddy! I'll have my mommy take some more photos of me soon--I'm already bigger than when I was born!

Love to you all,

Bobby Hall (son of Kim Weber)



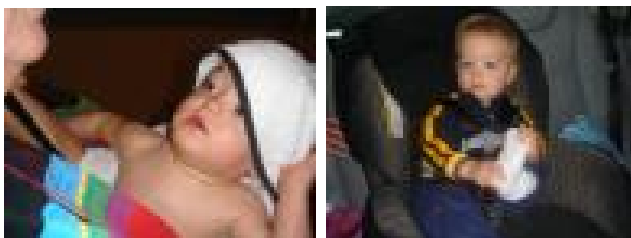
---

I am working on the STAR/ETS Range Finding Group Meeting in Sacramento for the 4th grade writing test. There were 3 teachers associated with the CA Writing Project who were involved, and we were highly regarded as teachers with excellent writing experience in the classroom by the state people. We had to apply, and be accepted to participate.

Victoria Molner

---

Carolyn's grandson Tyler is learning how to SWIM!



---

## **NWP Pittsburgh!**

by Gurupreet Khalsa

The little wooden gondola that carries passengers up and down the Duquesne incline in Pittsburgh is unheated, creaky, and slightly rattletrap. It has been going up and down the hill for umpteen years, and when Veronica and I clambered aboard on a starry Friday evening to ride it to the top of the incline, we were a bit wary. OK, Veronica was terrified. Not me, no way, unh-uh. The three German tourists riding up with us were bristling with good humor and cameras. The gondola latched into its tracks set into the hill at about a 60-degree angle, and squeaked upwards. We hung on tightly, although if the whole thing had detached from its moorings and gone crashing into the Allegheny (or Monongahela, maybe, on that side of town), we would have gone right along with it.

But it didn't. We lumbered to the top and climbed gratefully out into the quaint little "museum" and incline-works at the top of the hill. In the museum were pictures of how Pittsburgh had looked back in the 19-teens and twenties, blackened and choking from industrial pollution. No longer. The city today is clean, bright, and surprisingly inviting. I had expected to feel a dismal, crowded, sort of urban despair, but the city was nothing like that! On the balcony outside, we had a fabulous view of downtown Pittsburgh, the rivers, the buildings, and stadiums. It was Pittsburgh "light-up night" and after a long day of visiting sessions at NWP and NCTE, and presenting our own session, we were delighted to be outdoors in the freezing cold over-looking the bright city.

We were expecting to hear from Bob, Gina, Beverly, and Shahe. Bob was arriving in Pittsburgh Friday evening, and we were all to have dinner together. Veronica and I took photos of the city views and of our German tourist friends, and then decided to use our round-trip gondola tickets to head back down the incline. Just as we began the descent, Bob called and said they were going to meet us at the top of the incline. Whoops! We exited at the bottom and pleaded with the kind gentleman in the quaint ticket booth to let us go back up, because we had made a mistake. He let us do that, without paying again! Proves how nice those people are in Pittsburgh.

Back at the top, we met Bob and company, and found out that we were just in time to see the fireworks that bloomed in the night sky over the city. It was fantastic, and after the show we ate a lovely late dinner at the restaurant next door, with great conversation and camaraderie. Cal State Writing Project fellows hanging out together in a warm restaurant in the starry, sparkly city of Pittsburgh – what could be better, so far from home?

Well, I'm supposed to be writing about the convention, and, of course, it was fabulous. As always, the National Writing Project concurrent (and free) convention was cozier, more intimate, and generally more interactive than the usual NCTE convention sessions. The NCTE sessions I attended were excellent, too. I always learn a lot, get great ideas, and find interesting people to talk to at the convention. It's always a professional boost, a way to get re-inspired about the greatest job there is!

---

## **Pittsburgh Is Bob's Land**

by *Shahé Mankarian*

I don't mind telling you that I had a phenomenal time at the 95<sup>th</sup> Annual NCTE Convention in Pittsburgh. My second pilgrimage to the Mecca of English educators outdid my last year's trip to Indianapolis. Previously, I was confined to the perimeters of the National Writing Project; however, this year, I ventured out into the world of English Teachers with a capital "T." First and foremost, Pittsburgh ain't no Indianapolis. This city of rivers has grit and guts, but much more of this I will savor for later.

*(Continued on page 5)*

I don't mind telling you that after my red-eye flight from LAX to PIT (Pittsburgh International Airport), my adrenaline rushed to overdrive as I sat foot on Pittsburgh's common ground. I shuttled to the hotel, dropped my bags at the front desk, inhaled a quick breakfast, shuttled back out of the hotel, submerged into the Liberty Tunnel, and spewed out into the most breathtaking sight any American city could aspire. Downtown Pittsburgh bannered and framed itself like a Warholian canvas between Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers. The skyline encapsulated skyscrapers, rod iron bridges, outdoor stadiums, and a striking shooting fountain. I could see the similarity between Warhol's birthplace Pittsburgh and his adopted city of Manhattan.

I don't mind telling you that the day I set foot in Pittsburgh's David L. Lawrence Convention Center, I discovered a building full to the rim with Anglophiles, bibliophiles, high-middle-elementary-preschool English teachers, professors, presenters, authors, vendors, and chairpersons of national this and that. The human traffic on the escalators, hallways, meeting rooms, and the grand showroom was awe-inspiring. I kept bumping into name badges from all over this great country. All states, I assume, were represented well. Out of all the places, the girl sitting next to me on my first ride into town came from La Cañada, California. She taught English at John Muir High School in Pasadena. Out of all the cities and states, I ended up sharing a bus seat with a local.

I don't mind telling you about the diversity of options in the NCTE catalogue. On my first day, Friday, November 18, I found myself in a vast variety of sessions, from "The Rose That Grew from Concrete: Standing in the Shadows of Our Ancestors (Richard Wright to Tupac)" to "Administrators and Classroom Teachers: Adversaries or Advocates?" As an audience member, I became both critical and intrigued by these topics. Obviously, I attended these presentations because they interested me; however, I also observed these 75-minute sessions with the critical eye of a presenter. I watched for the dos and don'ts of being an effective ringmaster.

I don't mind telling you that some presenters left me spellbound. For example, Ross M. Burkhardt from National Middle School Association, Westerville, Ohio, presented a dynamic session on "Teaching Poetry in Middle School: Three Successful Ideas in Action." His approach to teaching poetry was through his personal poems. He advocated the idea of teachers being reciters and writers of poetry. He challenged the teacher-poet to be a role model and allow students to witness their instructor's successes and failures as poets. Throughout the session, Mr. Burkhardt peppered his presentation with the recitation of his poems. He also recited classic and contemporary poems with equal vigor and enthusiasm. This method of well-paced recitations invigorated his presentation tremendously.

I don't mind telling you that I met my favorite authors of YP novels at the NCTE Convention. At the grand showroom, these giants of the writing field created quite a buzz and a queue of fans. Cornered by their publishing companies, these authors signed books for their legion of admirers. I met and collected autographs from Lois Lowry, Jerry Spinelli, Nikki Giovanni, Sharon G. Flake, Pam Muñoz Ryan, and a slew of other writers. For the last decade, these authors have transformed my collegiate library of classics to a carnival of classroom friendly library.

Finally, what is Pittsburgh without Bob Land? It's like saying what is Mississippi Valley without Mark Twain or Liverpool without the Beatles. Pittsburgh was Bob Land and Land was Pittsburgh. He grew up here. He attended University of Pittsburgh. He knew all the main streets, shot cuts, side alleys, watering halls, abandoned churches, used bookstores, haunted houses, and coffee shops. He was back in his city to honor his mentor, Professor William L. Smith. I witnessed the camaraderie between the protégés of Dr. Smith when they gathered at one of the local taverns that used to be a caphouse. These educators, who were once the students of Bill, understood the rarity of true mentoring relationships. They honored a man who, at some point, changed their lives. Ironically or coincidentally, I came to realize that I was in a Pittsburgh tavern with my own mentor who, at some point, changed my life. Thank you, Bob.



California Writing Project

GOT NEWS?

Submit to  
lawp@calstatela.edu

## Cat's Chat



Hello everyone!

I am currently doing my directed teaching! Whew...almost done! I have been having a wonderful time in the classroom but I have to admit that I am a bit overwhelmed! Smile- I was going to take my RICA in February but decided it was best to postpone it till Spring. I must applaud all you teachers in the classroom and especially those that have kids of their own at home! Boy, I feel like I am disciplining children 24/7 right now!

I am still here with the writing project trying to keep up with the emails and phone calls. If you need anything, just email us and either I, Carolyn or Bob will respond to you as quickly as we can!

See you soon!

Cathy