



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Mapping Diverse Literacies for the Twenty-First Century
Opportunities, Challenges, Promising New Directions

2007 NCTE ANNUAL CONVENTION • NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Join thousands of teachers (kindergarten through university), administrators, and other educational professionals, as they gather to hear award-winning speakers, attend idea-packed sessions, share best practices, and test the latest teaching materials at NCTE's 97th Annual Convention in New York!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION
Preregistration fees (until October 23) are \$210 for members, \$275 for nonmembers, \$90 for students.
After October 23, registration fees will be \$240 for members, \$305 for nonmembers, \$100 for students.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
For more convention information, visit <http://www.ncte.org/profdev/conv/annual> or contact NCTE Customer Service at 1-877-369-6283.

November 15–18, 2007
The Jacob Javits Convention Center and the Marriott Marquis Times Square
New York, New York

ANNUAL NCTE CONVENTION NEW YORK 2007



Executive Board Approves Officer Slate

The OCTE Executive Board accepted the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee for affiliate officers. The OCTE membership now needs to vote to elect the officers.

President-Elect: **Ricky Korach**, Lake Oswego High School
 Write-in _____

Vice President for Membership: **Daphne D. Wood**, Ainsworth Elementary, Portland
 Write-in _____

Secretary: **Manuel Mateo**, Wilson High School, Portland
 Write-in _____

Treasurer: **Ulrich H. Hardt**, Portland State University
 Write-in _____

The following officers continue: **John Scanlan**, Pendleton High, becomes president on July 1. **Bob Hamm**, Phoenix University, becomes past president on July 1. **Teri Houghton**, Grants Pass High, remains as executive secretary/historian. Please mail your ballots by June 15, 2007, to: OCTE Election Committee, P.O. Box 9126, Portland, OR 97207-9126

OCTE Chalkboard

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**OCTE BALLOT
ON PAGE 5**

Chalkboard is the newsletter of the Oregon Council of Teachers of English, an organization that has existed for more than 60 years to support teachers of English and the language arts in Oregon elementary and secondary schools, community colleges and universities.

Chalkboard is our way of keeping our many members and friends informed about OCTE activities, programs of the National Council of Teachers of English, conferences and learning opportunities for students, research tidbits, book recommendations, and more.

Chalkboard is a member of the NCTE Information Exchange.

For inquiries, please contact:

OCTE
P.O. Box 9126
Portland, OR 97207-9126

Editor: Debra Groves-Harman
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Oregon Writing Festival 2007

THE 23RD ANNUAL Oregon Writing Festival, which takes place annually in the spring, delighted more than 800 young participants on April 21, 2007, at Portland State University. Students from grades 4-12 came from 30 school districts across the state, some arriving on Friday to be there Saturday morning. Jay Rishel, English teacher at Wilsonville High School organized teachers, graduate students, and local authors to serve as Workshop Leaders for students of various grade levels. Festival Chairperson Rick Hardt and many other helpers worked hard to hold down a very large fort, as the young writers from across the state transitioned between keynote speakers, writing workshops, lunch, and more workshop activities. The ever-popular book sales room attracted many excited young bibliophiles, and the photos section (see page 5) features some satisfied customers.

The admission ticket for students is a sample of their best writing which they read and critique in small groups of ten, under the supervision of a teacher. These small day groups are carefully put together so that students meet others from outside of their own schools and districts. One of the thrills of these writing festivals is that students stay in touch with each other and exchange writings long after the festival is over.

During the Festival, students also participate in two writing workshops, conducted by teachers and professional writers. "Choose an interesting person (real or imagined) and write a character portrait full of vivid stories about that person" might be the writing assignment. Or "Write a letter to a distant relative (someone you know or someone you make up) and tell him or her something very moving or important to you. Describe it so that he or she will understand what kind of person you are and what values you hold." Workshop leaders offer students interesting projects, and the students respond with great enthusiasm.

In these one-hour workshops students are taught to practice the writing process: analyze the topic, writing task, and determine the audience;

brainstorm ideas, do mapping and prewriting; write the first draft, developing content, message, and style; read and critique in small groups of three or four. There is time for some of the students to read their drafts out loud to the whole group. All are sent away with ideas for revisions to do at home.

The participants also jumped at the chance to own an OCTE map, proudly pointing out authors with whom they were acquainted.



Kathleen Lacock Poynter, from Hillsboro, brought a large group of happy students to OWF

Another highlight of the OWF is listening to an award-winning keynote speaker. This year, 4th-5th graders heard Deborah Hopkinson, a widely honored writer of children's nonfiction books, from Corvallis. High school students listened to Barbara Drake, a writer teaching at Linfield College. Middle schoolers were to hear Chris Crutcher, but he was stuck in the airport in Minneapolis, so about midnight the night before, Rick Hardt was able to reach Eric Kimmel who filled in on very short notice. Have a look inside Chalkboard for photographs of some of our happy conference attendees and our workshop leaders.

The OWF is held at Portland State University, co-sponsored by the Graduate School of Education. Associate Dean Stephen Isaacson gave the welcome. Next year's festival is scheduled for Saturday, May 3, 2008. For more information and inquiries of how to participate, write bjwiegela@aol.com or call Rick Hardt 503-725-4740. ■



Joanne Yatvin

OCTE State-wide Inservice Conference Reading/Language Arts

Saturday, 6 October 2007 • 7:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Lake Oswego High School • Lake Oswego, Oregon

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Joanne Yatvin

President, National Council of Teachers of English
"Teaching English Language Learners in Regular Classrooms"

Jim Adams

Art and Music Teacher, Marshall Elementary School, Vancouver, Washington
Cartoonist of "Adams' Apples," The Oregonian

"My Daily Life as a Teacher AND a Cartoonist"

A full day of conference sessions and workshops • Continental breakfast and lunch
Choose from dozens of presentations for elementary, middle, high school, and college teachers

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Graduate credit available through PSU (separate registration at conference)
For more information, contact **Ricky Korach** at korachr@oswego.k12.or.us

www.octe.org



Oregon Writing Festival 2007



Ariana Davis, Oregon Writing Festival participant, is in 4th grade at Rock Creek Elementary. Here she shows off her new book by Deborah Hopkinson, one of the OWF keynoters.



Trevor Theis, from Capital Hill Elementary School, proudly leads his OWF group



Kasey Tamoro, who came to the Oregon Writing Festival with his mom Doris, attends 5th grade at James John Elementary School. Kasey noted, "This was really great. The best part was sharing my writing."



Workshop Leaders Enjoy Lunch at OWF left to right: Tony Valley, Principal of Molalla Elementary; Sara Behrman, freelance writer and consultant; Alison Ruch; Laura Sameison; and Peggy Sedlak

Eric Kimmel (right) helped us out at the Oregon Writing Festival

Sbauna Signorini (left) has attended OWF since she was a school girl herself, and now works the event, bringing her daughter.



OCTE CONTACTS

OCTE Fall Conference: Ricky Korach korachr@loswego.k12.or.us

Oregon English Journal: Ulrich H. Hardt, editor hardtu@pdx.edu

Chalkboard: Debra Groves-Harman, editor harmand@canby.k12.or.us



Teaching the Oregon Literature Series: Garage Sale People

Kathy Haynie



EVEN my students who roll their eyes when they sniff out a cultural diversity lesson find themselves enjoying *Garage Sale People* by Juan Epple. The story's off-hand, tongue-in-cheek tone appeals to adolescent readers at the same time that it innocently hands up a tale filled with teaching opportunities. I find the story useful for examining point of view, practicing inferential comprehension, and discussing cultural values.

This text works well as a reader's theater, because it is told from three different points of view. Dario, the immigrant father exiled from Chile, is the main character, but his wife, Marta, and daughter, Marisol, figure prominently in the narrative. As the story proceeds from the voice of one character to another, and then back again, the voice of each character picks up where the last one left off. There are no clear markers to indicate the shift in speaker, only the change in tone and voice. Presenting the story as a reader's theater helps to reduce the confusion students may experience when the story is read silently. And it's a lot more fun!

Adding to the fun is the mystery that begins to develop within the story line. As the narrator shifts through the three characters, it becomes evident that not everyone knows the whole story, and

that some of the narrators are unreliable. What is the truth about the mysterious "grandma," and why do Marisol's parents evade her questions? How can Dario be so obsessive about all things Chilean at the same time that he refuses to take his family there to visit? Unlocking the clues that begin to reveal the family secrets requires that readers infer what is really going on. I like to use a graphic organizer as we read this piece. Three strong readers take the parts in the reader's theater, while the rest of the class completes a grid with information as it is revealed. For each of the three characters, I ask students to identify characteristics of the character, secrets the character is keeping, and the character's take on U.S. culture.

By the end of the reading, and sometimes before, students' insights on their graphic organizer provide productive starting points for a class discussion on the story's treatment of cultural norms and values within U.S. culture, as well as the gaps in cultural understanding experienced by a Chilean immigrant. The story presents these cultural differences in a disarmingly straightforward manner, without any moralizing or positioning, which makes them all the more accessible for class discussion. At the risk of spoiling the ending, the highlight of the story is Dario's purchase of a local (U.S.A.) grandmother at a neighborhood garage sale. Epple tells the incident with a perfectly straight face, which delights readers while setting the

stage for a lively discussion on the values that different cultures place on families, especially on elderly members of families. Smaller cultural clashes at earlier points in the story—Marisol's teacher assumes that Acapulco is in Chile, for instance, and the Chileans are puzzled and bemused by U.S. garage sales—provide additional starting points for rich discussion.

Insights gleaned through class discussion and post-reading reflection reveal that students "get" the story and its implications. Epple's voice is sure, and though the narration through three characters is complex, the text is accessible enough to adolescent readers to provide solid practice in inferential comprehension, and a reliable springboard for class discussion.

Juan Epple is a professor at the University of Oregon, Department of Romance Languages. *Garage Sale People* in English is a translation of the original story in Spanish, *Los Persas*. Both versions of the story are available in the short fiction anthology of the Oregon Literature Series, *The World Begins Here*. Juan Epple's poem, *The Oregon Trail*, is presented in both Spanish and an English translation in the poetry anthology of the OLS, *From Here We Speak*.

Love, Glen A. *The World Begins Here: An Anthology of Oregon Short Fiction*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1993 (227-241). ■

A Site to See

Karen Johnson

The Internet is an amazing place, but finding useful information can be challenging. I've been collecting teaching favorite sites for years and have listed below some of the best.

The first site for English teachers to check out is our own parent organization, NCTE's site at www.ncte.org/ There you'll discover information about conferences, current research, education news, NCTE position statements on issues facing English teachers today, as well as a searchable, organized collection of terrific lesson plans. Be sure to check the Inbox (and sign up for the newsletter) at www.ncte.org/about/



over/inbox

The next site I'll mention is our own, which can be found at <http://octe.org/> There you'll find the purpose of OCTE, which is the local affiliate of the NCTE, along with conference details, contact information, how to apply for various awards and contests, membership forms, details about the Oregon Writing Festival, and the various excellent OCTE publications available.

Another useful and resource-rich site is Teacher's First at www.teachersfirst.com/index.cfm Here you will find lesson plans, web resource links, professional information, and much, much more.



CHALKDUST

OCTE Executive Board Adds New Members

AT its April 29, 2007, board meeting, the following teachers were selected for a three-year term on the OCTE Executive Board:

Dorothy Courtois, MAT George Fox University, 2003. BA in Art History, State University of New York, Fredonia. Dorothy has been teaching at St. Anthony School in Tigard since fall 2003, first as a long-term substitute teacher of sixth and seventh grade math and religion, then as the Reading Specialist, and since 2004 as second grade teacher.

Dorothy did student teaching at Byrom Elementary School in Tualatin.

Janna E. Reid, MAT Southern Oregon University, 2005. BA in Communication & English, SOU. Janna is teaching seventh and eighth grade language arts at South Middle School in Grants Pass, where she also serves as eighth grade Girls Track Coach.

Janna did student teaching at Grants Pass High School, and in 2001 and 2003 she did Children's Volunteer Work in Tanzania, Africa. ■



Dorothy Courtois



Janna E. Reid

OCTE Offers Grants

OCTE is offering **teacher grants for classroom projects**. These grants are designed to help teachers with the expense associated with implementing a new, perhaps innovative, classroom unit or project. Maybe you want money to do a field trip or add a new book to your curriculum. Awards will be in the range of \$250-500. Further questions can be directed to: John Scanlan. Email: jscanlan@pendleton.k12.or.us. Grant application guidelines and materials are available at octe.org. ■

OEJ Announces Theme

ENVIRONMENTAL Issues in the Language Arts Classroom is the theme chosen for the Spring 2008 issue of the *Oregon English Journal*. Once the province of science, these issues are now becoming part of our global consciousness and have begun to permeate most aspects of the school curriculum.

Join *OEJ* in unearthing ways to engage students in an examination of the world around them. How important is this subject matter in the classroom? What reading materials do you use in your study? Have you worked with teachers from other disciplines on meaningful environmental projects or inquiries?

OEJ invites articles, debates, position papers, interviews, lesson and unit plans, reviews, program descriptions. **Inquiries:** hardtu@pdx.edu

Manuscript deadline: February 1, 2008

Send to: Ulrich H. Hardt, Editor, Portland State University-GSE, P.O. Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751 ■

OCTE CALENDAR

July 2007

1 *Chalkboard*, Summer issue deadline for articles and announcements

August 2007

1 *Chalkboard*, Fall issue deadline for articles and announcements

October 2007

6 OCTE Fall Conference, Lake Oswego High School

November 2007

15-18 NCTE Annual Convention, New York, New York

20 *Chalkboard*, Winter issue deadline for articles and announcements

February 2008

1 Manuscript deadline for *Oregon English Journal*

8-9 Oregon Reading Association Annual State Conference, Portland, Oregon

May 2008

3 Oregon Writing Festival, Portland State University

4-8 International Reading Association 53rd Annual Convention, Atlanta, Georgia