

A newsletter of the Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts
www.matelamt.com

MEA-MFT CONVENTION PREVIEW

Speakers, Folger Library Highlight ELA Sessions

By CAITLIN CHILLER

The annual MEA-MFT conference in Billings will begin for MATELA members on Wednesday evening, Oct. 14, at The Rib & Chop House, 1849 Majestic Ln, in Billings. Michael LoMonico, senior consultant from the Folger Shakespeare Library and author of young adult novel *That Shakespeare Kid* will give a talk “Fly-specks and Shakespeare’s First Folio.”

Using images from the Folger Library’s collection, he will share some insight into the significance of the First Folio and demonstrate how to use that book in our teaching.

A no-host dinner will start at 6 p.m.; the talk begins at 7 p.m.

Please contact Caitlin Chiller at caitlin.chiller@gmail.com for more information. Renewal units will be available for the after-dinner workshop, and members can attend one or both events.

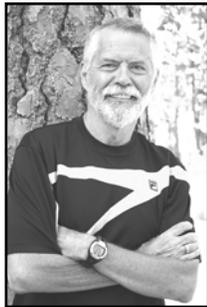
After this pre-conference event, MATELA invites its members to select from the over 40 MATELA-featured sectionals offered for professional development. The topics range from using classical literature in writing, team debates, to our keynote speakers: Alan Sitomer and Chris Crutcher.



Alan Sitomer

Alan Lawrence Sitomer is a California Teacher of the Year award winner and the founder of The Writer’s Success Academy. In addition to having been an inner-city high school English teacher and former professor in the Graduate School of Education at Loyola Marymount University, Sitomer is a nationally renowned keynote speaker who specializes in engaging underperforming students. To date, Mr. Sitomer has authored 19 books.

His keynote address, *Using Humor and Poetry to Make Pedagogy Connect*, will be Oct. 15, 3 p.m., in the Billings



“I have forever been intrigued by the extremes of the human condition. The remarkable juxtaposition of the ghastly and the glorious.”

Chris Crutcher

Skyview Theatre. This presentation will discuss how today’s academic standards place a premium on close reading, re-reading and providing textual evidence to support claims.

With these ambitious aims come heightened challenges across all domains of literacy, including, but not limited to, ELA classrooms. The goal of this session is to provide research-based, take-away tools that are immediately usable.

Sitomer will also conduct a smaller session on Thursday at 10 a.m. in Skyview classroom 210, entitled “Close Reading with Reluctant Readers.”

Friday’s 11 am. keynote speaker, award-winning young adult author **Chris Crutcher** will present some fresh ideas on memoir writing in the classroom. During his address, *Turning Real Life into Fiction*, Crutcher will share the journey through his life and adventures as an author.

“Turning those gritty tales into works of fiction has helped make the Spokane-based author one of the most popular and critically acclaimed young adult writers

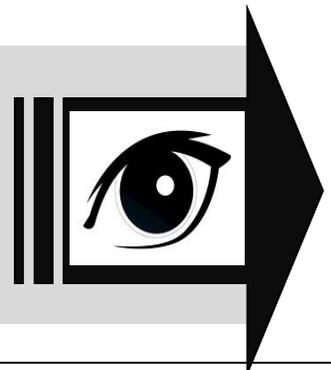
of our time -- and one of the most frequently banned,” according to his website. “How does he do it? Why does he do it? He’ll explain in this presentation.”

More from his website: “Crutcher’s years as teacher, then director, of a K-12 alternative school in Oakland, Calif., through the 1970s, and his subsequent 20-odd years as a therapist specializing in child abuse and neglect, inform his 13 novels and two collections of short stories. ‘I have forever been intrigued by the extremes of the human condition,’ he says. ‘The remarkable juxtaposition of the ghastly and the glorious.’”

See MEA, Page 2

INSIDE This Issue:

- MEA Schedule: PP 3-4
- Chin Honored: P 4
- Distinguished Educator: P 5
- Meet New ELA Coord.: P 9



MEA From Page 1

Mini-Institute Brings Shakespeare Alive

position of the ghastly and the glorious. As Eric ‘Moby’ Calhoun tells us at the conclusion of *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes*, ‘Ain’t it a trip where heroes come from?’

“He has also written what he calls an ill-advised autobiography titled *King of the Mild Frontier*, which was designated by *Publisher’s Weekly* as ‘the YA book most adults would have read if they knew it existed.’” www.chriscrutcher.com

Crutcher has won the following: “Most Likely to Plagiarize,” American Library Association’s Margaret A. Edwards Lifetime Achievement Award as well as two Intellectual Freedom awards, one from the National Council for Teachers of English and the other from the National Coalition Against Censorship.

Five of Crutcher’s books appeared on an American Library Association list of the 100 Best Books for Teens of the Twentieth Century

Michael LoMonico, will present a series of five workshops on teaching Shakespeare in the 7-12 classroom.

These sessions can be attended together as a “mini-institute” within the conference or as independent sessions. Each session is two hours long. Check the MATELA conference schedule for detailed descriptions and times.

According to the Folger Education Blog

www.folgereducation.wordpress.com/author/mikelomonico/: “Michael LoMonico is the Senior Consultant on National Education for the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Since 1986, he has worked at Teaching Shakespeare Institutes at the Folger, serving as Master Teacher there for several summers.

“He was the Teaching Shakespeare Institute Director in 1996. He has served as a consultant, taught courses, and conducted workshops for K-12 teachers in 35 states and in England.

“LoMonico also teaches English and teacher education classes at Stony Brook University, including a course which he designed called ‘Performance and Technology in Teaching Literature and Composition’ to pre-service undergraduate and graduate students.

“LoMonico is the author of *The Shakespeare Book of Lists* and *Shakespeare 101*. He was an assistant editor for the curriculum section of all three volumes of *Shakespeare Set Free*, published by the Folger Shakespeare Library

“He served as guest editor of the September 2009 NCTE *English Journal* (‘Teachers Set Free: Folger Education and Other Revolutionary Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare’).”

Further questions? Contact Caitlin Chiller at caitlin.chiller@gmail.com.



Michael LoMonico, Senior Education Consultant for the Folger Shakespeare Library, will present a series of five workshops on teaching Shakespeare in

To register for the conference, members can visit www.mea-mft.org.
www.meamet www.meaeducators_conference.aspx.

Vote for, Meet the MATELA Officers at Annual Business

By CURT BOBBITT

All MATELA members are invited to attend the annual business meeting, which will take place at noon Oct. 16, at the MEA/MFT Conference in Billings at Skyview High School. Members may come for lunch and to vote for the slate of officers for the 2015-2016 school year.

The meeting provides a chance to question members of the board and suggest projects for the organization.

The meeting also provides a way for members from around the state to get to know one another and network.

The Board will be presenting a method for teachers to collaborate on book talks as well.

This year, members can also congratulate Jeff Ross, the 2015 Distinguished Educator recipient.

The business meeting is an easy way to renew your membership, or visit our webpage to pay online at www.matelamt.com

The minutes of the 2014 annual business meeting are available at <https://goo.gl/5UNUPW>

Agenda for MATELA Annual Business Meeting

- Approval of the minutes of the meeting from October 2014.
- Vote for the slate of officers for the 2015-2016 school year:
 - ◊ Caitlin Chiller, President
 - ◊ Jill Melcher, First Vice President and Conference Chair
 - ◊ Donna Bulatowicz, Second Vice President, Membership
 - ◊ Sue Stolp, Secretary
 - ◊ (Pending), Treasurer
- Report of Board Actions 2014-2015
- President’s Address: MATELA’s Legacy
- Recognition of MATELA’s Distinguished Educator, Jeff Ross

MATELA Offers 45 Speakers/Sectionals at MEA-AFT Conference *Dinner, Shakespeare Wednesday Night (Featured speakers listed in gray)*

TITLE	ROOM (All Skyview unless noted)	DATE	START	END	SPEAKER
Fly-Specks and Shakespeare's First Folio	Rib & Chop House 1849 Majestic Ln	10/14	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Michael LoMonico
MATELA Executive Board Meeting with FREE lunch	Room 217	10/15	7:30 AM	8:20 AM	Caitlin Chiller
How to Qualify for & Establish Dual-Credit Courses	Room 210	10/15	8:00 AM	8:50 AM	Curtis Bobbitt
Poetic/Prosaic Blending of Argument in Sappho	Room 215	10/15	8:00 AM	8:50 AM	Jeffrey Ross
Quality Latino Literature for Children	Room 211	10/15	8:00 AM	8:50 AM	Joyce Herbeck
A Framework For Argumentative Writing	Room 212	10/15	9:00 AM	9:50 AM	David Airne
Folger Shakespeare Workshop Act 1: Starting a Play	Room 211	10/15	9:00 AM	10:50 AM	Michael LoMonico
The Scoop on Soil: Science Literacy and Elementary	Room 215	10/15	9:00 AM	9:50 AM	Georgia Cobbs
Generation in Storytelling: Maus & Visual Metaphor	Room 210	10/15	9:00 AM	9:50 AM	Caitlin Chiller
Close Reading with Reluctant Readers	Room 210	10/15	10:00 AM	10:50 AM	Alan Sitomer
Writing in Place:The Global Teacher Fellowship	Room 212	10/15	11:00 AM	11:50 AM	Michael Galt
Cross-Curricular Assessment of College Writing	Room 211	10/15	11:00 AM	11:50 AM	Beverly Chin
Mock Trial: Using Speech & Debate in the Classroom	Room 214	10/15	11:00 AM	11:50 AM	Stephen Macartney
Poetry Out Loud	Room 215	10/15	11:00 AM	11:50 AM	Jonna Schwartz
Assistive Technology in the K-5 ELA Classroom	Room 208	10/15	12:00 PM	1:50 PM	Luci McCausland
8th Graders Love to Read!	Room 212	10/15	1:00 PM	1:50 PM	Leanne Deschamps
Folger Shakespeare Workshop Act 2: 3-D Shakespeare	Room 211	10/15	1:00 PM	2:50 PM	Michael LoMonico
"Signatures from Big Sky" Annual Board Meeting	Room 210	10/15	1:00 PM	1:50 PM	Caitlin Chiller
Evaluating Picture Books	Room 215	10/15	1:00 PM	2:50 PM	Donna Miller
Why we should be teaching English usage	Room 207	10/15	2:00 PM	2:50 PM	Eric Cioe
Engaging Strategies: Incorporating Global Issues	Room 214	10/15	2:00 PM	2:50 PM	Linda Linnen
Doing the Write Thing in Montana's Middle Schools	Room 212	10/15	2:00 PM	2:50 PM	Julie Fischer
Brown vs. Robinson: Social Justice and Literature	Room 210	10/15	2:00 PM	2:50 PM	Brynn Cadigan
The Other Twenty Percent: Narrative Writing	Room 208	10/15	2:00 PM	2:50 PM	Jean O'Connor
Using Humor, Poetry to Make Pedagogy Connect	Theatre	10/15	3:00 PM	3:50 PM	Alan Sitomer
9-12 ELA Planning with the MCCSS	Room 208	10/15	4:00 PM	4:50 PM	Kathy Pfaffinger
"Signatures from Big Sky"	Room 215	10/15	4:00 PM	4:50 PM	Caitlin Chiller
Brown vs. Robinson: Making Classic Texts Modern	Room 210	10/15	4:00 PM	4:50 PM	Brynn Cadigan
Teaching in Remote and Rural Contexts	Room 212	10/15	4:00 PM	4:50 PM	Robert Petrone
Picture Books: The Newest and the Best	Room 211	10/15	4:00 PM	4:50 PM	Joyce Herbeck
Folger Shakespeare Workshop Act 3: Close Reading	Room 211	10/16	8:00 AM	9:50 AM	Michael LoMonico
Going Google: Strategic Uses in the Classroom	Room 210	10/16	8:00 AM	8:50 AM	Brynn Cadigan
More Engaging Books to Teach Critical Literacy	Room 214	10/16	9:00 AM	10:50 AM	Jessica Gallo
Using Team Debates to Teach the Research Process	Room 208	10/16	9:00 AM	9:50 AM	Jessica Vallincourt
Writing about Art and War	Room 210	10/16	9:00 AM	9:50 AM	Priscilla Lund

See SECTIONALS Page 4

Chin Honored with 2015 Richard W. Halle Teaching Award

Press Release, Urbana, IL – Aug. 1

Beverly Ann Chin from Missoula, Montana, has been named the winner of the 2015 Richard W. Halle Award for Outstanding Middle Level Educator, given by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

Established in 1996, this award honors a junior high school/middle level educator who has worked to promote understanding of the developmental needs and characteristics of young adolescents, especially in the English language arts.

The award recognizes the contributions of middle level educator Richard Halle of Marshfield, Wisconsin.

Chin is chair of the English Department and director of the English Teaching Program at the University of Montana and former director of the Montana Writing Project.

She has more than 35 years of experience as an English language arts teacher, adult education instructor, and teacher educator and consults nationally and internationally on English language arts standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Chin is a past president of NCTE, former board member of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and served as the senior project consultant for

the 2011 Writing Framework for National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In 2012, Chin received the NCTE Distinguished Service Award.

The award criteria define a “middle level educator” as anyone who has worked to improve schools and schooling for the junior high school/middle level—teacher, principal, curriculum specialist, or supervisor as well as anyone at the university or college level.

Nominees encourage a spirit of inquiry and development of critical and creative thinking within the profession; show evidence of exemplary professional involvement, including participation in activities such as workshops, curriculum development, and association programs and projects; connect classroom with community; foster the development of literacy education at the middle level; and promote research on the middle level student.

Chin will be announced as the recipient of the Richard W. Halle Award for Outstanding Middle Level Educator at the Middle Level Get-Together on Thursday, Nov. 19, during the 2015 NCTE Annual Convention in Minneapolis, Minn.

For more information about the NCTE Richard W. Halle Award for Outstanding Middle Level Educator, including previous winners, visit the website at www.ncte.org/awards/halle.



Dr. Beverly Ann Chin, recipient of the Richard W. Halle Teaching Award.

The National Council of Teachers of English, with 30,000 individual and institutional members worldwide, is dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education. For more information, please visit <http://www.ncte.org>.

Contact: Debbie Zagorski
800-369-6283, ext. 3612

SECTIONALS From Page 3

TITLE	ROOM (All Skyview unless noted)	DATE	START	END	SPEAKER
Pre-Service & 1st-Year Teachers Create Networks	Room 207	10/16	10:00 AM	10:50 AM	Allison Wynhoff Olsen
Fibonacci, Poetry, and the Creative Process	Room 212	10/16	10:00 AM	10:50 AM	Sue Stolp
Guiding Close Reading	Room 215	10/16	10:00 AM	10:50 AM	Donna Miller
Graphic Novels "Draw" Readers In	Room 211	10/16	10:00 AM	10:50 AM	Joyce Herbeck
Turning Real Life into Fiction	Theatre	10/16	11:00 AM	11:50 AM	Chris Crutcher
MATELA Business Meeting	SHS Rm 243 - Library	10/16	12:00 PM	1:50 PM	Caitlin Chiller
Exploring Diversity in Literature	Room 212	10/16	2:00 PM	2:50 PM	Donna Bulatowicz
Folger Shakespeare Workshop Act 4: What You Will?	Room 211	10/16	2:00 PM	3:50 PM	Michael LoMonico
Taking "bored" out of the Bard in the Classroom	Room 210	10/16	3:00 PM	3:50 PM	Brynn Cadigan
Classical Literature as a Medium for Writing	Room 214	10/16	4:00 PM	4:50 PM	Stan Provenza

MATELA to Honor Jeff Ross as Distinguished Educator of Year

Belt High-School Teacher also Founder of Belt Valley Shakespeare Players

by DONNA MILLER

At the upcoming MEA/MFT Educator’s Convention in Billings, Oct. 15-16, MATELA will present its Distinguished Educator Award to Belt High School’s English Teacher, Jeff Ross.

This distinguished educator will receive his award at MATELA’s Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon Oct. 16 at noon in the Skyview High School Library, Room 243.

He will also be honored during a no-host gathering at the Rib and Chop House, located at 1849 Majestic Lane in Billings, with dinner slated to commence at 6 p.m. and program at 7 p.m.

All members and interested others are invited to both events.

During his seven years of service as a professional, Ross has taught English, Honors English, creative writing, and drama in the Belt school system.

His colleagues consider him a passionate professional with a high expectations, ethos and with “an intense desire to drive students to reach their academic potential.”

They also refer to him as one who shares his knowledge, “inspires his students to greatness,” and “allows a place for students who are interested in more than sports.”

In addition, Belt High School Principal Kyle Paulson wrote in Ross’s support: “Mr. Ross has made a tremendous impact on the students in our district by constantly displaying a passion and enthusiasm for teaching and learning that encourages and motivates students to achieve....”

“Through creative use of technology, structured peer-to-peer collaboration, and creative design of assignments and assessments, Mr. Ross is always looking for activities that challenge and push students to engage in higher level thinking,” Paulson wrote.

A further testament to his commitment to the profession, Ross is a regular contrib-

utor to the broader professional community, offering workshops at state, regional and national conferences to share his innovative ideas.

As a consequence of these contributions, Ross’s résumé enumerates multiple achievements to which he will now add MATELA’s Distinguished Educator Award.

Ross earned his Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing and his Master of Arts in English with a Teaching Emphasis in May of 2010 from the University

of Montana—Missoula.

He is also the founder and director of Belt Valley Shakespeare Players, a community acting troupe. MATELA’s Distinguished Educator award is intended to honor language arts teachers who exemplify excellence in teaching and professional involvement.

“Mr. Ross has made a tremendous impact on the students in our district.”

Principal Kyle Paulson

Anyone interested in nominating a deserving colleague for the 2015-2016 year can send nominations to

Donna L. Miller, Awards Chair: donnamiller@itstriangle.com. Nomination forms will also be available at MATELA’s Membership Table at the Educators’ Conference Oct. 15-16.



Website photo: <http://www.beltschool.com/Page/153>

DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR: Belt High School Teacher Jeff Ross poses with his 2015 Cast of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*.

SAVE THE DATE

MATELA to Sponsor Two-Day Shakespeare Workshop

By BEVERLY CHIN

The Folger Library—Shakespeare's First Folio exhibit will be in Missoula May 9 through May 31 at the Montana Museum of Art and Culture.

The University of Montana is the only host site for the Folio in Montana – a wonderful opportunity for the community and state. As a co-sponsor of this very special exhibit, MATELA is hosting a two-day event for students and educators on the University of Montana-Missoula campus.

MATELA will showcase middle-school, high-school, and college student performances of Shakespeare May 20.

These performances will be free and open to other students, pre-service candidates, teachers, parents, and other members of the public. After each performance, the audience will have the oppor-

tunity to talk with the student performers about their experience with studying Shakespeare.

A teachers' conference will feature workshops on teaching Shakespeare at the middle-school, high-school and college levels May 21.

Teachers will share resources, lesson plans, and instructional strategies that engage their students in the studying of Shakespeare.

Please save these dates.

If you are interested in having your students perform and/or if you are interested in presenting a workshop for teachers, please contact Dr. Beverly Ann Chin, Chair, Department of English, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812.

You may call her at (406) 243-2463 or email her at beverly.chin@umontana.edu

MATELA Earns Membership Recruitment Award

NCTE Press Release

The **Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts** has been named one of 10 winners of the 2015 Kent D. Williamson Affiliate Membership Recruitment Award given by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

MATELA was able to substantially increase its membership this past year by more than 29.4%, enough to garner attention for the award.

Established in 1987, this award recognizes NCTE affiliates that have increased their memberships over the past year. Awards are calculated as a percentage of increase based on membership lists submitted by the affiliates.

Other winners this year include California Association of Teachers of English, Colorado Language Arts Society, Illinois Association of Teachers of English, Iowa Council of Teachers of English, Kentucky Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, Maryland Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, Oregon Council of Teachers of English, Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, and Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts.

The award winners will be announced at the 2015 NCTE Annual Convention in Minneapolis, during the Affiliate Roundtable Breakfast on Sunday, November 22.

For more information about the Kent D. Williamson Affiliate Membership Recruitment Award, see <http://www.ncte.org/affiliates/awards/membership>.

Contact: Millie Davis, 217-278-3634, mdavis@ncte.org.

The National Council of Teachers of English, with 30,000 individual and institutional members worldwide, is dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education. For more information, visit www.ncte.org.

Mark your calendars

Banned Book Week is Sept. 27-Oct. 3

The focus of this year's Banned Book week, Sept. 27-Oct. 3, is young adult literature, a perfect fit for high-school teachers. The website has a variety of ideas on how to celebrate the week for a various audiences from art teachers to book sellers to writers.

The American Library Association is a big supporter of Banned Book week and posts a list of the top 10 banned books of each year. The list for 2014 just came out and can be viewed at

www.ala.org/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10.

This site also has a place to report any books that have been questioned at a school.

Get more information at www.bannedbookweek.org/. The week is sponsored by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress

NCTE's National Day of Writing is Oct.20

It doesn't matter if your students use text messaging to write a poem to a friend, a blog to expand upon their hobbies, a computer to write fiction or pen and paper to complete a timed-write essay, teachers can help celebrate NCTE's National Day of Writing Oct. 20 in any number of ways.

Teachers can get information and suggested activities from the website: www.ncte.org/dayonwriting/about. When teachers complete an activity with their students, they should be sure to fill out the form to share their lesson plans to mark the day <https://goo.gl/umVB44>

NEW AWARD HONORS BEST CHILDREN'S FICTION

Martin's 'Rain Reign' Wins Charlotte Huck Award

By JOYCE HERBECK



A brand new award for children's literature will be presented this November at the annual conference of the National Council of Teachers of English in Minneapolis.

The Charlotte Huck Award is named after the educator who taught at Ohio State University until 1986 and authored five editions of *Children's Literature in the Classroom*, the classic textbook on children's literature. Huck died in 2005.

The winner of the Charlotte Huck Award for 2015 is *Rain Reign*, by Ann M. Martin.

It is the story of Rose, a high-functioning autistic girl, her love of homonyms, her love of a dog named Rain, and her struggle to be brave when doing the right thing is painful and heart wrenching.

While addressing weighty issues of

loss and identity, Martin maintains a light-hearted and positive tone that makes the reader want to be part of Rose's world.

Rain Reign won the Charlotte Huck Award because it exemplifies the criteria for the award:

Fiction for children that has the potential to transform children's lives

--Fiction that invites compassion, imagination, and wonder

--Fiction that connects children to their own humanity and offers them a rich experience with the power to influence their lives

--Fiction that stretches children's thinking, feelings, and imagination

Exemplary literary quality of text and illustrations
Published in the United States during the previous calendar year

Primary audience for the

book is children ages three through 12

The award also recognizes five honor books and eight recommended books. (see sidebar for list)



Runner-Up Honor Books

- *Absolutely Almost* by Lisa Graff
- *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander
- *El Deafo* by Cece Bell
- *The Farmer and the Clown* by Marla Frazee
- *Revolution* by Deborah Wiles

Recommended Books

- *A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd
- *Draw* by Raul Colon
- *The Madman of Piney Woods* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *The Meaning of Maggie* by Megan Jean Sovern
- *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires
- *Otis and the Scarecrow* by Loren Long
- *The Secret Hum of a Daisy* by Tracy Holczer
- *The Turtle of Oman* by Naomi Shihab Nye

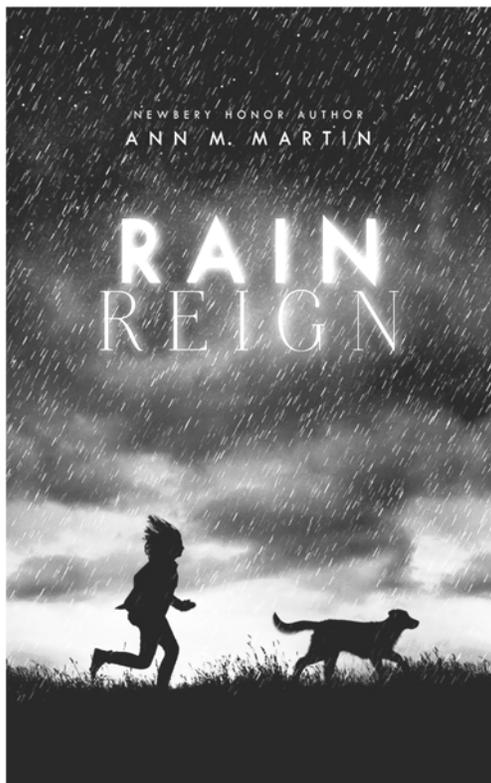


Photo by Joyce Herbeck

BOOKS GALORE: The Charlotte Huck Award committee is at work now, reading approximately 300 books, to choose the 2016 winners. As a member of this committee, the author Joyce Herbeck's living room is quickly filling up with books, as boxes from publishers arrive almost daily.

NCTE National Conference Features 17 Montanans

By CURT BOBBITT

This year's NCTE Annual Convention in Minneapolis will feature many Montanans. The theme is Responsibility, Creativity, and the Arts of Language.

Ticketed meals feature guests of special interest. The luncheon for the college section hosts Frank X. Walker, who wrote a book of poems from York's point of view.

The Affiliate Roundtable Breakfast Sunday morning



Shanna Peeples



Dr. Beverly Chin



Poet Frank X. Walker

hosts Shanna Peeples, National Teacher of the Year (English). Conference goers may attend the events without a meal ticket if seats remain.

In addition to special programs featuring celebrities, the conference will feature several educators from Montana.

- Rob Petrone, Montana State University
- Allison Wynhoff-Olson, Montana State University
- Beverly Ann Chin, University of Montana
- Leanne Deschamps, Florence-Carlton Middle School
- Kelly Boswell, author/consultant
- Joyce Herbeck, Montana State University
- Danette Long, Montana State University

- Donna Bulatowicz, Montana State University
- Cindy Dell, Montana State University-Billings
- Rachael Waller, Montana State University-Billings
- Curt Bobbitt, University of Great Falls
- Nigel Waterton, Montana State University
- Penni Anello, School District Six
- Carre Gnauck, School District Six
- Kami Heinz, School District Six
- Kathryn Osgood, Bigfork Elementary School
- Sue Stolp, Bozeman School District



Karen Blumenthal meets last year's MATELA Board Members.

An Invitation to Write Inspired by NWP/MWP Principles

Invite two or three colleagues to form a writing group to generate ways to inspire each other. Members of the MATELA board offer the following ideas to initiate engaging discussion and writing for small writing communities. The prompts alone may serve the purpose, yet the paragraphs offer a few possible expansions.

- Reconstruct a writing assignment or task from your past that led to a product you are still proud of.
- What new assignment for writing have you initiated in a class this semester?
- Bring a first-rate paragraph from a student's draft and praise one or more of its features.
- What one personal writing task that you face this month or semester motivates you most?
- What metaphor/analogy describes your goal for the writing group?
- What published advice about writing has motivated you recently? Bring no more than two pages as a catalyst for discussion/writing.
- What lyrics, music, painting, or sculpture inspires your writing?

Here are some suggestions from MATELA Board Members:

Curt Bobbitt: Three of my colleagues and I must complete a post-tenure review this year for UGF's P & T committee. We meet once or twice a month to plan, compare notes, and read what we have written so far.

We are also observing classes with follow-up discussions and short written analyses. The academic vice president has agreed to let our reviews count as our self-evaluations to his office this year. My colleagues' disciplines are art, computer science, and physics. All four of us have team-taught interdisciplinary courses and hope to repeat them and develop others.

Donna L. Miller: When we're young, we're often told to hold our tongues. These lessons linger into adulthood and transform into messages about tolerance and political correctness.

If you could release your thoughts and speak out, about what would you talk? Don't hold your tongue; there's power in the spoken word, power to instill confidence in others. Write to free yourself.

MEET CHRISTY MOCK-STUTZ

ELA Instructional Coord. to Build Teacher-Leader capacity

Love of Reading, Writing Has Been Key for Mock-Stutz’s Teaching Career; Success in Life

By Christy Mock-Stutz

My love of reading began in the primary grades with Nancy Drew mysteries. The same way parents get tired of seeing their children attached to video screens today, I think my mother got tired of seeing my nose stuck in a book (she loves reading, too, but wanted me to go outside and play!)

My love of reading helped me get my first “real” job as a page at my local library in Warsaw, Ind., where I spent many happy hours surrounded by books (and card catalogs...remember those?).

I loved writing as well and filled notebook after notebook with mystery novels and stories.

My seventh-grade teacher still stops my mother in the grocery store to tell her he continues to use one of my writing pieces as a text exemplar for his students!

All of that early exposure to reading, writing and books laid a foundation for my eventual career in the English Language Arts.

My teaching career started 20 years ago when I lived and taught second and third grade in Lahore, Pakistan.

I had just received my BA in photography from Purdue University. I wanted to travel the world, and found a private school system that hired teachers with a bachelor’s degree, and not necessarily in education.

The curriculum was scripted and we were told what pages in the workbook to present to our students each day. Our students were given rigorous examinations every three weeks to monitor their progress.

What that year showed me, however, was the importance of the relationship between teacher and student in fostering a classroom culture that emphasizes the importance of reading and writ-

ing in all curricular areas.

Upon my return to the States, I was not endorsed to teach in the public schools, so I worked in advertising as a graphic designer for several years. In the meantime, I kept busy taking photographs and writing photography reviews for publications.

Eventually, I earned my MA from National-Louis University and taught for over 10 years in Chicago Public Schools, serving as a fourth grade teacher and then a sixth-grade Social Studies and

LA teacher. After that, I coordinated and taught the fifth- through eighth-grade Talented and Gifted Program.

Ultimately, I accepted the position of Literacy Coordinator. As the Literacy Coordinator, I helped our large school (1500+ students) transition from the Illinois Content Standards to the Common Core State Standards by bringing a balanced literacy perspective to the English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum.

Now, as the ELA Instructional Coordinator for the Office of

Public Instruction, I know teachers across the state are aware of the Montana Common Core Standards, but we are at the important stage of providing high-quality professional learning (PL) during implementation of the ELA, and particularly, the writing standards.

My focus as the ELA coordinator will be to build teacher-leader capacity throughout the state and ensure that all teachers have access to PL through face-to-face and on-line learning opportunities.

I am excited to be part of the OPI team and am looking forward to a partnership with MATELA that will build teacher leaders across all the regions of Montana and foster the love of reading and writing for all our students.

Contact Information:

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“My focus as the ELA coordinator will be to build teacher-leader capacity throughout the state.”
Christy Mock-Stutz



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NCTE NEWS

Leadership Meeting Shows How to Build Affiliate

by SUE STOLP



The issue of “building capacity” was explored in depth at the recent NCTE Affiliate Leadership Meeting, held July 10-12 in San Jose, Calif., as educators from around the country convened to share ideas about how to build capacity within their schools and districts.

The concept begs for a succinct definition, and NCTE provides the following: “Building capacity is a ‘process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, and societies increase their abilities to perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives, and understand and deal with their developmental needs in a broad context and sustainable manner.’” (UNESCO, 2009, p. 81).

In order to move groups forward collaboratively in the attempt to provide solutions, the problems must first be identified and named, and the group moderators, Jenna Fournel, Millie Davis, and Susan Houser, provided many opportunities in the form of engaging protocols for participants to think differently about the work they do.

Within this environment of thoughtful challenge, we came away from the weekend with a renewed vision for MATELA and ways we can serve our members.

NCTE’s statement about building capacity highlights the im-

portance of collaboratively leading change. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on intentionally creating conditions and practices that will serve to initiate and support this change.

Through “barriers inquiry” groups, conference participants were given the opportunity to discuss in-depth strategies for overcoming obstacles.

While MATELA is alive and well in Montana, and we feel the board and a core group of active members function productively, we were drawn to this idea of *intentionally* creating conditions, situations, opportunities for our members.

Limits of space (Montana being geographically large) and time (never enough) can be detriments, but in keeping with trying to change our thinking, we began to see these limitations as somehow within our control.

What we see currently lacking within our organization is a true assessment of what members want and need.

We also recognize the need within our vast state, to create more connection, so we have started an on-line book discussion, originally sparked by Joyce Herbeck at our April board meeting in Great Falls.

An EdModo platform has been created by Caitlin Chiller to discuss, explore, and make teaching and learning connections with Jacqueline Woodson’s award-winning children’s book *Brown Girl Dreaming*.

Additionally, we believe that our members want to be validated and heard and to be given opportunity to voice their concerns. Opportunities for publishing through MATELA are available and in the works.

MATELA Membership Form

Please join/renew by filling out this form, making out a check, and mailing both to MATELA’s treasurer at the address on the bottom of this form. Or use our online order form at www.matelamt.com. Our membership year begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30.

Name _____

Street/Box _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

E-mail Address _____

School _____

Grade Level _____

Phone (w) _____ (h) _____

(c) _____

PLEASE CHECK:

Student membership: \$10

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Regular yearly membership: \$25

Special 3-year membership: \$65

New member:

Renewal:

Mail your check and this form to:
 Dawn Sievers, MATELA Treasurer
 PO Box 402, Vaughn, MT 59487
Or sign up online at www.matelamt.com
 Credit cards accepted

**Please consider sharing your talent and expertise with
MATELA!**

Upcoming publication deadlines:

Winter UPDATE: Dec. 1
Spring UPDATE: March 1
MEJ 2014: June 1
Fall UPDATE: Sept. 1

Submit articles for consideration to katiekotynski@gmail.com

All submissions must be in .rtf or .docx format, no columns or extra spaces between paragraphs, and without embedded graphics or photos. Include a byline with your name the way you would like it to appear at the beginning of your copy.



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