

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

EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

New Standards Fit Montana, Emphasize School Climate as Indicator of School Quality

By **DANA HARING**



Superintendent of Public Instruction Denise Juneau released Montana's draft state plan for implementing the *Every Student Succeeds Act* or ESSA Nov. 16. This occasion marked an important milestone in

the development of a new era in public education.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and its roadmap to full implementation represent a substantial shift from the prescriptive federal oversight of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), to more state and local control.

Gone, for instance, is the notion of adequate yearly progress (AYP) which became a familiar and feared term during the years of

NCLB. Instead, states are tasked with establishing their own long-term goals for measuring the academic achievement and progress of all students and subgroups of students. (The identified subgroups are English language learners, racial minorities, students with disabilities, and students with economic disadvantages.)

And while some things didn't change, such as the requirement to assess students in math and reading/English language arts annually in grades 3-8 and once in grades 10-12 and in science once in each of the grade spans of 3-5; 6-9; and 10-12, the way that assessment data will be used is largely left for individual states to decide.

To make these decisions and others, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) convened a group of stakeholders from across Montana. This group of 36 included parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, tribal leaders, legislators, and community leaders, giving it depth, breadth, and a uniquely Montanan sensibility. I was one of those 36 stakeholders, so I quite literally had a seat at the table and a voice in the process.

Over the course of four day-long meetings and two webinars,

from May through November, we gathered in Helena to "share ideas and address concerns about implementing the federal law" (Montana Office of Public Instruction 2).

At each meeting, OPI set forth an ambitious agenda about different aspects of ESSA. Through a combination of presentations, small group work, and whole group discussions, we became informed about the specific issue or element of the law at hand, examined and discussed it, and provided input. It was enlightening and arduous, fulfilling and draining. It involved a substantial amount of coffee and more than a few cookies.

The preparatory and organizational work was thorough and thoughtful, designed to make the best use of our time and to explicate the substantial and valuable work being done at OPI and at different schools and other organizations across the state to make continuous progress in student learning.

Importantly, it was this work, our Montana-made solutions to Montana situations, that is showcased in our state plan. Rather than being hand-

ed what felt like a one-size-fits-all plan as was often the case during the NCLB years, we worked to make our plan fit our Montana students and schools.

In ESSA, four indicators of performance are non-negotiable:

See ESSA Page 2

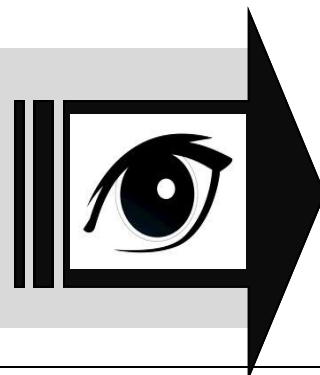


opi.mt.gov

ESSA represents a substantial shift from the perspective of federal oversight.

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- Goal Treasure Maps p 10-11
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ESSA from Page 1

Test Scores Only One Part of New Criteria

academic achievement, academic progress, graduation rates, and English learner proficiency progress. Within those, the stakeholders had practical and philosophical discussions about goal setting.

The wording gets complicated, but in the end, the plan focuses on goals being both aspirational and flexible, depending on current levels of performance of groups, subgroups, and schools. As the plan states, “A primary focus is to narrow the achievement gaps between subgroups and to set realistic expectations for all students at each grade span” (Montana Office of Public Instruction 8).

ESSA is not all about the standardized high-stakes test as in the past, as there will be various ways to look at achievement and improvement. Importantly, the 100-percent-proficiency requirement, which, of course, was never possible, does not exist under ESSA.

One of the most significant of our decisions had to do with school quality and climate. States were invited to select additional indicators to add to the aforementioned ones of academic achievement, academic progress, graduation rates, and English learner proficiency progress. This indicator needed to be a measurement of school quality and success.

The stakeholders “universally agreed that numbers are not the only way to ascertain a school’s effectiveness” (Montana Office of Public Instruction 2). We stressed that schools need to be inviting, safe, and closely connected to their communities.

To make that agreement actionable, we “strongly voiced using school climate as the indicator of school quality” (17). We further agreed that the term school quality and climate can encompass many things, from the existence of classes in the arts to after-school activities to the simple, but essential, notion that all students feel safe and valued. As those of us in schools understand, it makes a difference to staff and students when a school is a happy place.

In a perfect world, all teachers would be highly qualified (although that term as a federal requirement is also eliminated in the new standards), all schools would be successful, and all students would be above average.

However, since we don’t live in Lake Wobegone, that is not the case. Perhaps the most important difference between NCLB and the ESSA is that when schools are struggling, they won’t be sanctioned. They will be supported. The schools in need of support will be identified in a number of ways using the accountability indicators.

All high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent, schools that have been identified for targeted support that have not improved over three years, and Title I schools scoring in the lowest five percent of aggregated scores on the five indicators will be identified for “comprehensive support.”

A school with any subgroup performing at a level equivalent to schools in the lowest five percent will be identified for “targeted support.” This support will be directed by OPI under a continuous improvement plan and will include evidence-based interventions,



Photo by KJJS, used with permission Creative Commons

Bunche Montessori, Fort Wayne, Indiana, makes classroom climate a priority, one of the new emphases of Montana’s ESSA.

including local and culturally relevant strategies.

The plan, throughout, elaborates how best to help our most vulnerable students: those with disabilities, those in poverty, those in minority groups, those in foster care, those who are homeless, those who are English learners, those in the LGBTQ community, and those who are migrants.

In educating all students “regardless of their heritage, economic status, or zip code” (1), in the plan, OPI encourages local education agencies (that is, districts) to “adopt a whole-child philosophy

to ensure that all students receive a fair, equitable, and high quality education” (43). With ESSA, we can collectively and officially “broaden the definition of a well-rounded education” and “get the balance right in places where the focus has become too narrow” (47).

As you can imagine with 82 pages, there are many more details to the Every Student Succeeds Act Montana State Plan. I invite you to look at it for yourself; it’s currently available at http://opi.mt.gov/ESSA/Index.html?gpm=1_4. Although the public comment period ended Dec. 16, the plan itself, perhaps with some modifications, will soon be a part of our daily teaching life. In fact, soon ESSA

will become as familiar to us as NCLB was, but hopefully with more ardor and less angst.

Works Cited

Montana Office of Public Instruction. *Every Student Succeeds Act Montana State Plan*. Montana Office of Public Instruction, 16 Nov. 2016. Web.

The stakeholders ‘universally agreed that numbers are not the only way to ascertain a school’s effectiveness.’ We stressed that schools need to be inviting, safe, and closely connected to their communities.

LESSONS LEARNED AT NCTE

Teachers Hold Key to Effect Change, Set Example Like MLK

By CAITLIN CHILLER



This year's NCTE conference, *Faces of Advocacy*, held in Atlanta, afforded me the opportunity to do something I had wanted to for quite some time.

After arriving, I took a Lyft to the Auburn Street neighborhood where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. grew up and where the Ebenezer Baptist Church is located. I toured the National Park Visitor's center and The King Center, which is dedicated to his life's work of nonviolent social change.

I also stood outside the handsome two-story Queen-Anne-style home where King grew up, which was, unfortunately, closed for repairs. Then I turned and walked back to the corner and stopped inside the firehouse where I met volunteer Jerry who carefully explained the history of the "Sweet Auburn" neighborhood and the context of King's upbringing.

While visiting, I was surprised to find out that during King's childhood the neighborhood had the distinction of being one of the wealthiest black communities in America, if not the whole world. This surprising island of prosperity in a Jim-Crow sea of segregation and poverty was the result of careful planning and entrepreneurship on the part of the black community.

Young Martin, then, was not born into a community of poverty, ignorance, and segregation; he was born

into a community of wealth, education, and segregation, a community that offered him privileges that other black people simply did not get to experience.

From his comfortable, educated experience as a preacher's son and then a preacher himself, King chose to use his position of privilege to help the underprivileged rise up. His activism was dangerous and exhausting work; he challenged ideas that were hundreds of years old and affected change to the status quo, albeit at the cost of his own life.

As teachers, we enjoy privileges not unlike that of King's childhood. Quite often, we are the most educated people in our communities, offering our students a glimpse into the world of middle-class, educated life. We might be the only person a child knows who has travelled abroad, has friends and colleagues of different race, ethnicity and/or religion, and who has experienced what Americans think of when we refer to "diversity."

It is time we start taking full stock, and start using those privileges to better our communities. We are on the forefront of our students' lives and can make our classrooms safe spaces to learn and grow, challenge the status quo, and bring about positive change. What does that mean?

It means listening: As author Jason Reynolds pointed out in his session, "Diversity, at its core, is about acknowledgement," acknowledging the invisibles and the machine that perpetuates the invisibles by giving them voice in our classroom through books, through

"We might not be aware of the privilege we have within our own communities or our state, but it is time we teachers start taking full stock of the privileges we enjoy and start using those privileges to better our communities."

See LESSONS Page 5

MATELA Membership Form for 2016-2017

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.

Name _____

Street/Box _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

E-mail Address _____

School _____

Grade Level _____

Phone (w) _____ (h) _____

(c) _____

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

Student membership: \$10 ____

Retired membership: \$10 ____

Regular yearly membership: \$25 ____

Special 3-year membership: \$65 ____

Special combined membership (includes MCTM, MSTa) \$51 ____

New member: ____ Renewal: ____

Mail your check and this form to:

Dana Haring, MATELA Treasurer
620 First Avenue West, Kalispell, MT 59901

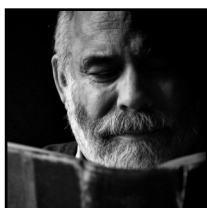
Or sign up online at www.matelamt.com
Credit cards accepted online only

NCTE CONFERENCE NEWS

Newsletter, Journal Receive Honorable Mention from NCTE

Call for Session Proposals due Jan. 5

By CURT BOBBITT



The annual Affiliate Roundtable Breakfast helps set the tone for the final day of the NCTE Annual Convention.

This year, MATELA President Caitlin Chiller and Past President Curt Bobbitt attended to accept MATELA's two awards for publications. Five speakers added to the celebration.

MATELA's *Update* newsletter received an honorable mention for its three issues during the 2015-2016 school year. The judges considered 14 entries for the most outstanding newsletter. Only three of the submissions were in print form. All of us need to applaud Katie Kotynski for her editing of each issue.

MATELA's *Montana English Journal* received honorable mention for its 2015 issue. Judges considered 12 entries, five print journals and seven exclusively online. Heather Jurva edited the issue, deciding on the sequence and overall appearance of the articles and supplementary features.

Vice President Calls for Session Proposals; Due Jan. 5

Emily Kirkpatrick, NCTE's Executive Director, summarized the council's rebranding, a process that will continue to roll out through February. She encouraged affiliates to keep their brands fresh, warning leaders at the breakfast of the difficult (and expensive) demands. A slogan accompanies the council's new logo: Turn the Page.

Jocelyn Chadwick, incoming NCTE vice president and convention chair, encouraged affiliate members to propose sessions by the Jan. 5 deadline. The conference theme will guide the program committee in choosing concurrent workshops, roundtables, presentations, and discussions: Teaching Our Students Today, Tomorrow, Forever: Recapturing Our Voices, Our Agency, Our Mission.

Chadwick hopes to use a town-hall model for a majority of the sessions. She included in the call for proposals the requirement,



Photo courtesy Curt Bobbitt

Immediate Past President Curt Bobbitt accepts MATELA's honorable mention awards for both of its publications: *UPDATE* newsletter and *Montana English Journal*.

"all program proposals must be interactive, engaging the audience and providing clear takeaways."

Sharon Draper, author and 1997 National Teacher of the Year, reminded everyone of the lasting influence of teachers on students, parents, and communities. She spoke as one of the three recipients of the Affiliate Intellectual Freedom Award. The other two recipients, both high-school teachers, also spoke: Daniel Reynolds of Martinez, California, and Janelle Schultz

of Gering, Nebraska.

Ross, Miller Earn Awards

Two MATELA members took home awards at the Secondary Section Luncheon. Jeff Ross accepted his High School Teacher of Excellence Award.

Donna Miller could not attend, but her article "Cultivating Creativity" (July 2015) was named an honorable mention article by the 2016 NCTE *English Journal* Edwin M. Hopkins Award committee.



Photo by Curt Bobbitt

Jeff Ross holding his Teacher of Excellence award at the Secondary Section Luncheon at the NCTE Annual Convention in Atlanta, Nov. 19.

Montana Teacher Leaders Advocate for ELA

By **CHRISTY MOCK-STUTZ**



The NCTE conference in Atlanta did not fail to disappoint. Each year, this national conference invigorates, inspires, and gives me a new perspective on teaching and learning.

The theme of this year's conference was "advocacy," and many attendees and presenters referenced the changing political climate in regard to the importance of advocating for ourselves and our students.

As Montana educators presented sessions on teacher leadership, rural education, and rurality, I was reminded, yet again, of the wonderful educators across the state of Montana. The most important take-away for our students was the reminder that we are active portrayers of our own histories. We are the story tellers. As English teachers, educators, and advocates, we must write the stories.

This year, I stayed to attend the Conference on English Leadership (CEL) conference that started Nov. 20. The incredible presenters Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle gave an inspiring keynote that set the tone for all the sessions.

Reminding us that "compliance does not mean understanding," Kittle talked about how volume is critical in students growing as readers and writers. Reading more texts develops habits of mind to be able to understand more complex texts.

Focusing on short, single text-types creates stereotypes for children that are not only untrue but also provide incomplete under-

standing of the genres and variety of reading materials.

The more students read, the more variety they read, and this will enhance their writing by providing them opportunities to identify the types of writing that will best fit what they want and need to say. Advocating for students to read volumes of texts enhances their learning in all curricular areas.

According to Gallagher, then, writing should anchor instruction in all curricular areas. Different kinds of writing generate different types of new ideas. For example, analytic writing helps students focus on details, while summary writing provides support for the "big picture." Teachers must provide time for students to write and revise their work in all content areas. The best way we can advocate for our students is to provide them the time to write.

Ernest Morrell opened the second day of the conference, where again we were reminded of the need to write the books our children need. The books need to represent the diversity and quality we want our students to be able to understand and have access to.

Reminding students that the world needs their voices brings relevancy to their school work. Helping students find their voices will help them tell their stories and begin a cycle of advocacy that will enhance learning across schools, districts, and states.

These powerful speakers reminded me of our own Montana teachers and the leaders we have across the state who help their fellow teachers by providing resources, curricular materials, and mentorship. Our own teachers are the best advocates for themselves, the teaching profession and, most importantly, the students.

"Compliance does not mean understanding"

~Penny Kittle

LESSONS: From Page 3

Giving 'Invisibles' a Voice in Classroom Is No Longer Optional

writing, through discussion.

"We must be less loyal to our fears and more loyal to our students' futures," Reynolds said in a later session. This means letting students know that we love and care about them.

At his keynote, Ta-Nehisi Coates commented on the relevance of education: "I was most effective in school when I could connect it to something real." Unfortunately, Mr. Coates' experience in school was more a lack of relevance, rather than a connection.

He equates his poor grades to a disconnect between content and context. In our own classrooms, we must reflect on the lessons we teach and how they apply to the real world, not just "college-and-career readiness" but the social and emotional skills students learn through literature: empathy, awareness, and compassion.

It means layers of advocacy: At a Saturday morning session on advocating for diversity in sexual identity, I heard the story of Daniela, a transgender student in Ohio who also had the added challenges of poverty, incarcerated parents, and an ED label.

Rather than focusing on the student holistically, the school district chose to focus solely on the IEP. Daniela was sent to a school for similarly labeled ED students where she was segregated based on gender.

She was not given the option to choose her bathroom, nor was she allowed to eat with girls. Instead, her days at school were stressful ordeals focused more on where Daniela went to the bath-

room and where she ate, rather than on the pressing issues of gender identity, poverty, and lack of support at home. Daniela's story is a reminder that we need to see the whole child, not just an IEP, a discipline record, or a report card.

Of course, to truly be advocates for our students and our schools means that we get involved, take on leadership roles, and possibly put ourselves in the path of ridicule and scorn. We will have to work on respectfully disagreeing with those around us and teaching our students how to disagree respectfully.

The popular media images of teachers and the poor rhetoric surrounding our work makes our jobs a lot more difficult, but it's not impossible. We can have a positive influence in our students' lives, helping them to become advocates for rural, working-class America and making sure they are not left behind more than they already have been.

We know that we are up against a changing job market, rapidly shifting technologies, opioid addictions, and a dark sense of hopelessness on either side of the political spectrum. But the solution to many of these problems lies in the jobs we do every day. Every day. We teach research and sourcing, critical thinking skills, rhetorical analysis and argumentation, audience, purpose and occasion. English teachers of Montana, we have all the privilege we need to effect the change necessary. We just need to capitalize on it.

S. E. HINTON SPEAKS

'The Outsiders': 50th Anniversary Celebrated at ALAN Breakfast

by SUE STOLP

"One day I was at home watching *Jeopardy* on television, and there I was...an answer."

Susan Eloise Hinton, the S.E. Hinton of literary fame, spoke at

the ALAN Breakfast in Atlanta on Nov. 19 with dry humor and wit, joking about "going from a teenage wonder to an old lady of letters" in the blink of an eye.

She says that for the first half of her life, people thought she was male (she wrote *The Outsiders* at the age of 16 using the pen name S.E. Hinton), and during the second half, everyone thought she was dead.

In fact, S.E. Hinton is alive and well, residing in her native Tulsa, Oklahoma, the setting for *The Outsiders*, the 1967 classic novel for teens that is now credited for launching the revolution in young adult literature.

I currently have over 140 seventh graders in my five language arts classes reading *The Outsiders*, so when I saw that Hinton would be speaking at ALAN, I jumped at the opportunity to see her in person.

Hinton discussed the irony of becoming famous and having to speak in front of large audiences while pursuing writing as a means by which to fuel her introverted nature.

She also stressed the importance of writing for oneself, not trying to write for what publishers want.

Her reasons for writing *The Outsiders* were simple: 1) She loved to write; 2) She was mad about the social situation at her large and socially divided high school; and 3) She wanted to read a book that realistically portrayed her life. In essence, she was writing the book for herself, never expecting it to be published or having the significant impact that it did.

Hinton earned a degree in education, but student teaching taught her that she was not cut out to be a teacher. She thanked the teachers who came to hear her speak for "doing a job she couldn't," as well as for keeping her book alive through its use in the classroom when it was nearly doomed to be relegated a dime store paperback, not fitting with literature for either children or adults.

Just when I was wondering if it would come up, the author stated that she couldn't



Horse photo by David Erdek

S. E. Hinton Today and at 17, shortly after she wrote *The Outsiders*. Photo used with permission from S. E. Hinton. Inset: Creative Commons.

speak about *The Outsiders* without mentioning the movie. "How many women can say that they get hugs from Matt Dillon and Rob Lowe on a regular basis?" she queried.

When asked if there would ever be a remake of the 1983 film, she vehemently declared, "No!" and in regard to a potential sequel, she announced, "No sequel ever!" She believes she could never recapture the idealistic voice of the emotionally intense teenage version of herself in 1967, nor should she try.

In closing, Hinton shared the plans for an Outsiders museum, scheduled to open in the spring of next year in the Tulsa house that served as the home of the Curtis brothers –

Ponyboy, Sodapop, and Darry – in the film.

She also offhandedly mentioned her cameo, an appearance in the film of which I was entirely unaware; she is the nurse in Dallas Winston's hospital room. My students will be looking for that scene when we watch *The Outsiders* next week.

“Hinton stresses the importance for writing for self and not for publishers.”

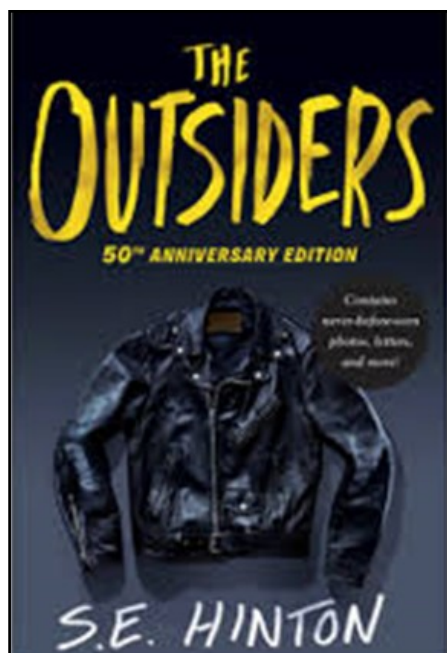




Photo courtesy Humanities Montana

Mary Jane Miller brings history to life by portraying Jeannette Rankin through the Humanities Montana Program. The program is entirely free.

Humanities MT Provides Free Speakers

By SARAH KAHN

Humanities Montana offers free programming through the Speakers in the Schools program.

Over 70 programs on topics such as history, Native American culture, literature, and civics are available. Humanities Montana speakers are scholars and recognized experts in their fields.

Teachers can apply for a program using the easy online application. First, teachers can browse the online catalog of diverse educational programs; then they can contact the speaker directly to check availability, and fill out the quick and simple online application.

The Humanities Montana website also offers a range of other free resources for teachers, including Native American Literature study guides, interactive maps that bring regional literature to life, and an overview of the state's vibrant literary history. www.humanitiesmontana.org

Here is a sampling of the speakers:

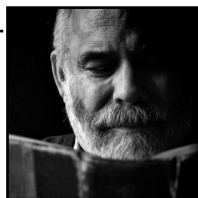
- **Jeannette Rankin - American Conscience** with Mary Jane Bradbury
- **Perspectives on Islam** with Samir Bitar
- **Live, Work, Play: How Can Art Bring Us Together?** with Jennifer Bevill
- **Beowulf: Monsters, Heroes, and a Heritage of Language** with Dave Caserio
- **The Legend of "Poker Joe"** Lean Elk with Philip Burgess
- **Walt Whitman and the Civil War** with Dave Caserio

Full Catalog:

www.humanitiesmontana.org/programs/speakersintheschools_catalog.php

NCTE encourages affiliates to launch at least one initiative

By Curt Bobbitt



Executive Director Emily Kirkpatrick and the presidential team invited members of the Standing Committee on Affiliates (SCOA) to meet prior to the annual convention. Representing region 7, I enjoyed the chance to collaborate. The invitation shows NCTE's interest in affiliates like MATELA.

Though not part of any votes, SCOA representatives rotated through three subcommittees at the meeting: strategic planning, professional learning, and policy/advocacy. All three groups will meet during the first quarter of 2017, each one with three tasks. The chairs will continue to welcome ideas from all sections, assemblies, conferences, and affiliates of NCTE.

Executive Director Emily Kirkpatrick and President Susan Houser charged SCOA reps to encourage affiliates to launch at least one of the initiatives. Some of the tasks match MATELA's slogan--Promoting literacy for all learners: Advocating, Educating, Networking.

Charges for the Professional Learning Subcommittee fit MATELA's current

membership and needs most closely. Slightly edited, they direct us to determine what products/services NCTE/MATELA may successfully market to educators, identify key opportunities for members to mentor new teachers/members, and recommend future publishing efforts.

The MATELA board has already answered for itself one of the discussion questions: What can you envision NCTE/MATELA publications becoming in the future? Moving the *Montana English Journal (MEJ)* to an online publication will streamline submission and review of content. Members should let the board know preferences for delivery format of the triannual *Update*. A survey is on the website: matelamt.com/publications.

The new joint membership with the Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Montana Science Teachers will lead to answers to one other question: What might NCTE's/MATELA's unique contributions in professional learning be? What could we offer that other organizations do not or cannot?

MATELA might also follow NCTE's lead in strategic planning. To combat our continuing budget struggle, the board needs to respond to two challenges: Iden-

tify opportunities for innovation and identify practices and programs that may need to be discontinued. The most relevant discussion question for MATELA is which goals should take priority within the next five or 10 years?

The Executive Committee envisions NCTE as having a vigorous presence in national and local politics as part of its new "Turn the Page" brand. The Policy and Advocacy Subcommittee seeks to "focus on state advocacy work, inclusive of affiliates and state policy analysts."

MATELA's small membership base may prevent large-scale advocacy for ELA issues. We can, however, keep our seat on the Commission for College and Career Standards and maintain positive, personal connections with OPI and MEA/MFT.

MATELA luckily has multiple methods to gain from NCTE's national leadership. We also return the favor by representing needs and talents of Montanan ELA educators to NCTE committees, sections, and assemblies. The current NCTE leadership team honestly invites members' ideas and opinions, including those sent directly to executivecommittee@ncte.org.

Meet Your MATELA Leaders

New Board Members Elected at October Meeting

EXECUTIVE BOARD

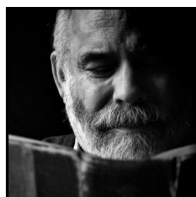
PRESIDENT CAITLIN CHILLER

Caitlin Chiller is an English teacher at Whitehall Public Schools and the president of the Montana NCTE affiliate MATELA. She is a master teacher with over 80 lessons on BetterLesson, past publisher of *Signatures from Big Sky*, a K-12 art and literary magazine and an NEA Teacher Leadership Initiative alumni. Chiller strives to foster teacher leadership through networking and connecting educators around Montana.



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT CURT BOBBITT

Forty years ago this month, Curt Bobbitt continued his third year teaching English at Connersville High School in Indiana. The previous fall Edward Albee, Garry Trudeau, and Annie Dillard received Pulitzer prizes. Students debated which film would win the best-picture Oscar: *Nashville*, *Jaws*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, or *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (no one had seen *Barry Lyndon*). Agatha Christie's *Curtain* topped the *New York Times* list of best-selling novels. More recently, Old Man Bobbitt soldiers on in his 30th year teaching at the University of Great Falls, teaching classes in fantasy literature, business writing, and descriptive linguistics. Each June, he scores AP-English Literature exams for ETS. MATELA and NCTE continue to offer him extracurricular enrichment. He served as MATELA's president 2013-2015 and currently serves as the region 7 representative to NCTE's Standing Committee on Affiliates, editing its monthly newsletter.



FIRST VICE PRESIDENT SUE STOLP

Sue Stolp is in her 11th year in Bozeman School District, currently teaching seventh grade communication arts at Chief Joseph Middle School. She is working on her doctorate in curriculum and instruction through Montana State University and has been an adjunct instructor in MSU's education department since 2003, teaching language arts methods, content area reading, assessment, and currently a course in mentoring new teachers. Stolp's main emphasis as a teacher is to help students find their voices in their writing as well as to introduce them to quality literature. Research for her dissertation is focused on young adult literature and how characters seek to establish agency in their worlds. She loves skiing, river rafting, and hiking with her husband and two black labs.



SECOND VICE PRESIDENT DONNA BULATOWICZ

Donna Bulatowicz teaches language arts/children's literature (graduate and undergraduate), curriculum, and elementary junior field at Montana State University-Billings. She is ABD (all but dissertation) for a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction (literacy concentration) from Montana State University in Bozeman. Bulatowicz earned an M.Ed. in reading and a B.S. in elementary education, taught elementary school for 12 years, and served in the AmeriCorps VISTA program. She enjoys MATELA and is honored to serve as Second VP/Membership Chair.



SECRETARY BRYNN CADIGAN

Brynn Cadigan is an English/AP Literature teacher at Columbia Falls High School where she has also served as the school play director and speech and debate coach. She holds a BA in English and theatre education, as well as a BFA in costume design/technology. As of the Spring of 2017, she will possess an education master's in curriculum, instruction and assessment. Previous teaching experience was as an English and Advanced Placement teacher and speech and drama coach at Shelby High School, on the east side of the divide. Prior to teaching, Cadigan worked for many years in numerous aspects of professional and educational theatre as well as in the realm of social work. She is passionate about building relationships with students and crafting authentic standards-based assessments. She is thrilled to be a part of the inspiring and dynamic MATELA board. She and her husband Daniel, a para-educator at Columbia Falls Junior High, live in Columbia Falls with their three cats. When not at school, she enjoys cooking, reading, yoga, the outdoors, music, and socializing.



TREASURER DANA HARING

Dr. Dana Haring teaches seventh grade English Language Arts at Kalispell Middle School. She has taught in Kalispell for over 20 years and has also taught in Texas and Kansas. During these years, she has taught grades six through 12, with her heart, and perhaps her maturity, finding their best fit at grade seven. Recently, she has been enjoying working as an adjunct instructor at the University of Montana in Missoula teaching courses in the English teaching program. She also facilitates workshops at conferences and in-services on various topics including writing, reading, and interdisciplinary collaboration. She and her husband just launched their only child Dylan into college at MSU and are learning to be empty nesters. If you have helpful hints for that endeavor, let her know!



See BOARD Page 9

From Page 8: BOARD

*Hull Takes Reins as Newly Created Social Media Chair*TECHNOLOGY CHAIR & UPDATE
EDITOR **KATIE KOTYNSKI**

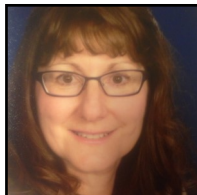
Retired from her main position at Great Falls Public Schools, Katie Kotynski remains active in the education community.

During her tenure at GFPS, she served as technology coordinator, assessment specialist, newspaper and literary arts magazine adviser, at-risk specialist, librarian and English teacher.

She currently teaches adjunct classes at two universities; she facilitates workshops in technology, gifted education, art and writing on the conference circuit.

She also designs websites and newsletters for various entities, particularly non-profits.

In her spare time, Kotynski explores Montana with the GiG (Girls in Glacier) and her husband. Join her on the trail sometime. Visit the website at www.girlsinglacier.com or her technology resource page at www.conferencecorner.weebly.com.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHAIR **SARA HAGEN HULL**

Sara Hagen Hull teaches Special Education English at the high-school level in Billings. She is also the First Vice President of the Billings Education Association.

Hull has a B.A. in English Literature from the UM, and a M.S. in Special Education from MSU-Billings. She has taught English and Special Education, adult education, and self-contained Special Education at the preschool and early elementary levels. She has completed TLI, MLT-WLT, and the NEA Alumni Academy.

Hull is the proud mom of two sons: a sophomore business major at the UM and a junior in high school in Billings, as well as a 22-pound mean tuxedo cat. She happily lives in what her students call a "grandma house" two blocks from school.

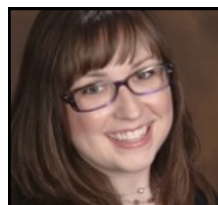
WRITING PROJECTS LIAISON &
AWARDS CHAIR **DONNA MILLER**

Although she had been serving as a full-time substitute when the '82-'83 school year began, Donna L. Miller began her first official English teaching position at Chinook High School on Montana's Hi-Line in January. That same month, the first episode of *The A-Team* aired on NBC (who can forget Mr. T who pitied the fools and wore iconic gold chains?) and Apple released its Apple IIe personal computer. The year went on to celebrate the launch of Microsoft Word; Alice Walker's winning the National Book Award for her novel, *The Color Purple*; and the airing of the first episode of *Reading Rainbow*, which introduced a generation of children to the slogan, "Take a look—it's in a book!"

Passionate about teaching, reading, and writing, Miller currently directs the Teacher Training Program at Aaniiih Nakoda College, writes book reviews for Phoenix Book Company's blog when she's not writing articles or developing ideas for her teacher-friendly website (thinkingzone.org), and continues in her service to MATELA as a tribal college representative, Writing Projects Liaison, and Awards Chair. She served as MATELA's president in 1998-1999 and again in 2011-2012.



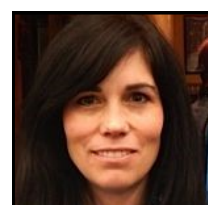
NCTE Program to Recognize
Excellence in
Student Literary Magazines State
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Herbeck**



NCTE Liaison & UM-
Missoula
Rep.
**Beverly
Ann Chin**

Board Meeting

Jan. 21 via GoToMeeting

**All are welcome to attend.
Meet your colleagues.**

Contact Caitlin Chiller at
caitlin.chiller@gmail.com

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS REVISITED

Treasure Mapping Helps Students, Teachers Set, Achieve Goals

By DONNA MILLER

We often consider a new year as a time for fresh starts, for change, for rejuvenation.



But statistics suggest that 92 percent of New Year's resolutions fizzle out by Jan. 15 unless they are written down (Goalband)!

According to research (Mace 1935, Matthews 2015), setting goals and writing them down are the first steps in making the invisible visible. In addition to the act of making a written record of one's goals, the motivation—and eventual success in reaching those goals—depends on sharing them with a trusted friend.

Teachers might facilitate the goal-setting process by repurposing the treasure map. By inviting students to create treasure maps, we make New Year's resolutions more relevant and increase the likelihood of dreams coming true.

The map provides a written guide for reaching a goal or goals and makes the plan more concrete. Without a plan, our goals may roam inside our heads, but we don't have an exact path to lead us to their achievement.

Without a plan, we become like Lewis Carroll's character Alice, who falls down the rabbit hole, encounters an unfamiliar world, and tries to find her way:

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where—" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"—so long as I get SOMEWHERE," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough" (87-88).

The map provides a tool for navigation so that the path to goal fulfillment is purposeful rather than aimless.

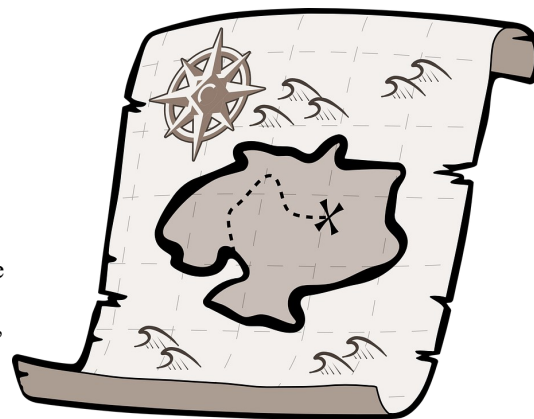
If Jan. 1 has come and gone, teachers have no excuse. An important traditional festival, Chinese New Year's Day is Jan. 28, so there is still time for treasure mapping while adding a cultural lesson about the Year of the Rooster.

Once created, the map should be displayed where it can serve as a daily reminder. As we glance at our plan for the year and the paths we hope to take, the goals we aspire to accomplish, the desires and dreams we will pursue, we can adjust our behavior to meet those expectations and draw on the images and inspiration for strength.

Teachers can encourage students to take the following steps and to think of the treasure as the *new and improved you*; to think of the journey as the stages and the steps to take in 2017 to make that vision/that vision a reality.

These goals are stops on a treasure map that guide the maker to success and possibility. Although I have used this lesson successfully with ninth graders, it can be modified so that even second graders develop the habit of goal-setting and achievement.

Step One/ Prewriting: List some goals (5-10) you hope to accomplish; consider your academic, athletic, social, lei-



sure (hobbies), and family life. For what achievements do you hope—to break the school weight-lifting record, to win state in track, to earn all B's or better, to visit the ski hill 10 times this winter, to learn a new snowboard move, to finish a quilt or saddle you are creating, to travel to Disneyland with your family, to get to the next level in Halo?

Next, consider your daily habits. Do you plan to revise some bad habit: to stop chewing your fingernails, to curb your cursing habit, to manage your anger, to show more compassion, to spend more time with family, to give up smoking? What are your resolutions for change and self-improvement? The more specific you can make the goal, the better. For example, "I want to increase muscle mass" is vague and general, but "I want to gain a pound of muscle in a week" is specific and puts a deadline on the goal. Deadlines often push you to take action. According to a Chinese proverb, "A goal without a deadline is only a wish. A dream with a deadline becomes a goal."

Is there something new you would like to try, even if it seems far-fetched? Perhaps you would like to go hang gliding, wind surfing, or parachuting. Maybe you would like to travel to Africa or Spain.

See MAPS Page 11

DEADLINE Jan. 9

Humanities Montana Sponsors Letter-Writing Contest

By SARAH KAHN

The deadline for elementary- and middle-school students to submit their letter to an author for the Letters About Literature is fast approaching. Students are to write a letter to an author about a book that affected them in some way. To see sample essays from prior years, find teaching resources as well as the entry form and guidelines, visit read.gov/letters/

Students can enter themselves, or teachers can send in their submissions using the guidelines, which can also be found on the LAL site.

Entry deadline for **grades 4-6 and grades 7-8 is Jan. 9**. The high-school level contests are closed for this year.

MAPS From Page 10

How to Create Authentic-Looking Treasure Maps

Would you like to learn a new language, acquire an exotic pet, or eat an uncommon food? Would you like to perform as a stand up comedian or a rock star? Be brave; dream big.

Now think about your long-term wishes and dreams. Even though you won't become a veterinarian in 2017, you can work toward that dream. Envision yourself doing that through your science experiments and/or research, volunteer work at the local clinic, or animal nurturing on the ranch. What goals or passions does your work with FFA, 4-H, Scouting, sports, and other clubs reflect?

Step Two/Securing Images: Surround yourself with stacks of magazines, your cell phone gallery, and scissors. Cut out and/or print images that remind you of how you want to live in the coming year. Keep your prewriting lists in mind and find pictures to match your goals, your self-improvement promises, your "something-new" dreams, and your long-term wishes.

Step Three/Constructing: Select several (a minimum of five) of the items from your prewriting lists and their corresponding images. Arrange these images as a treasure map on a poster board, a 12" x 18" sheet of construction paper, a piece of

white paper prepared to look like leather (See instructions below), a piece of brown butcher paper, or a discarded paper grocery bag. As you plan, consider dividing the year (not your paper) into quarters. Giving yourself a deadline to meet certain goals will also increase the likelihood of their coming true.

Which steps will you achieve in the first quarter of 2017, the second quarter, and so on? During this planning/envisioning phase, searching the Internet for some images of treasure maps might help to stimulate ideas and provide artistic inspiration for what you are about to create.

Once you have an appropriate arrangement—a plan that makes sense to you and a path for completion—glue the pictures to your map and connect them by drawing a dashed or dotted-line trail with markers. You can make the trail as convoluted or as straight as you desire, but it should lead to an X, where you might consider pasting a picture of yourself. Now, go back and jot text at each "scenic stop" on the map.

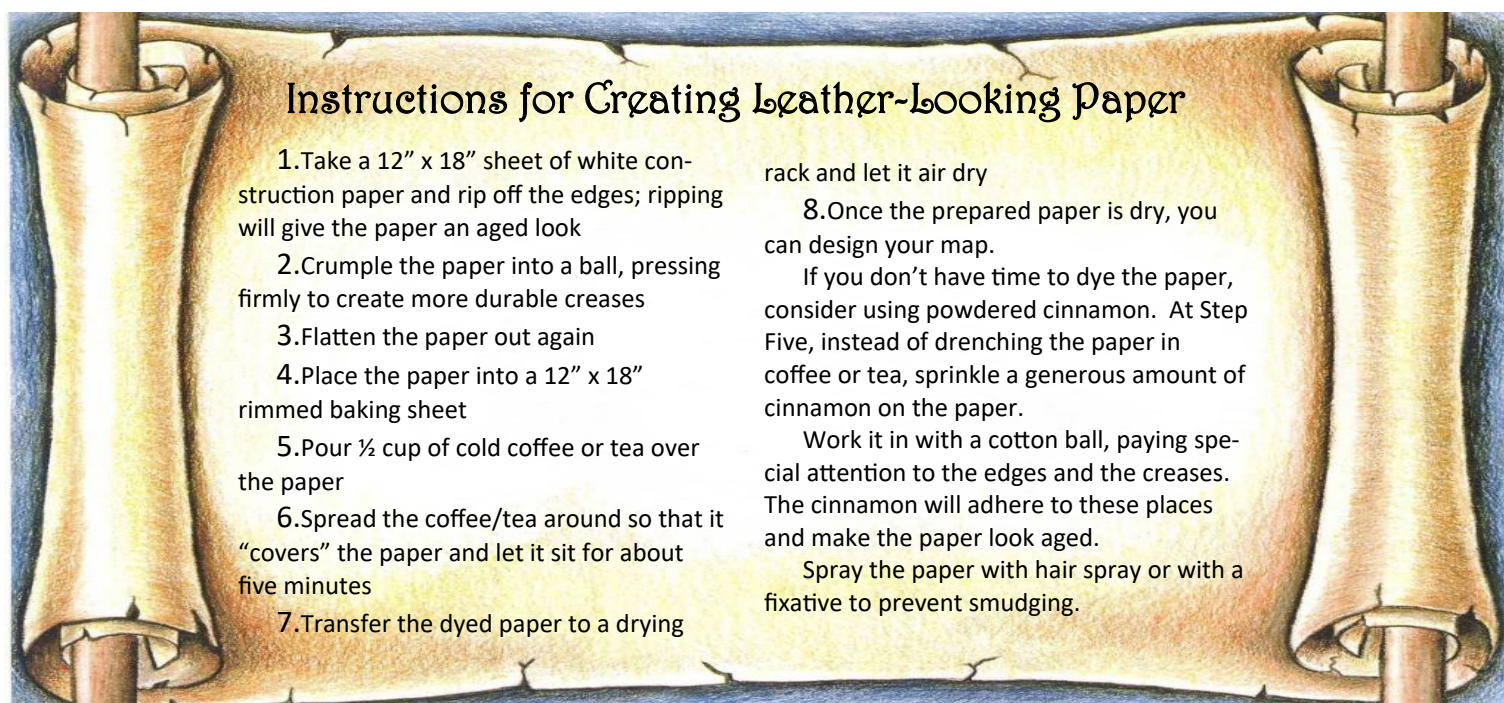
These jottings should be specific, measurable goal statements. Finally, ponder the effect of creative methods for graphic enhancement: borders, fonts, color, graphics to resemble mountains, trees,

or bodies of water, a compass rose, a map legend. The decision to creatively enhance your work will depend on time available and personal preferences.

As the year progresses, teachers can invite students to give a status report each quarter, reporting on their progress. This sharing will not only provide time for oral speaking but will foster accountability and increase the likelihood of reaching goals.

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NEWS FROM OPI: New Courses, Help Create Courses, Join Associations

By **CHRISTY MOCK-STUTZ**

Teacher Hub Has New Writing Courses

The "Write From the Start: K-2 Writing Strategies" and "Writing to Learn: 3-5 Writing Strategies" courses are already open.

The 5-12 course, "Becoming a Writer: Writing Strategies for 5-12" will be open soon.

Each course offers about 12 renewal units and provides an in-depth look at the Montana Core Writing Standards and the developmental phases of writing that will give all teachers resources and tools to apply immediately to their teaching.

Help Create Courses for the Hub!

The Teacher Learning Hub's course offerings are expanding! OPI is looking for educators interested in sharing their content expertise and becoming course designers to help create and build online courses for Montana teachers.

New courses will cover a variety of subject areas including ELA, math, science, IEFA, world languages, technology, general school issues, and mental health.

To become part of the team of available course designers and content experts, you must successfully complete "Course Designer Training." This training has two components: an online course to be completed on your own, followed by an in-person meeting in Helena. Stipends and travel reimbursements will be available for the meeting. In addition, course designers and content experts may



be paid on a per-course basis for future course development. If you are interested, please fill out the course designer application. Contact Jessica (jbryant3@mt.gov) with any questions.

Be Inspired by our MT Professional Organization - Join Today!

The NCTE Conference in Atlanta featured many presentations by Montana Educators! Montana's educators led the way in discussing and addressing issues of teacher leadership, ruralities, and best-practices for teachers.

As always, attending these large conferences brings energy and inspiration to teacher's practices. The Montana Association of Teachers of English (MATELA) has grants to help support travel for new teachers to attend these types of national conferences. Be sure to join or renew your membership today in this valuable professional organization for teachers of English. This year, The Montana Science Teachers Association (MSTA) and Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM) are offering a special discounted joint membership for teachers who teach more than one subject area. Visit matelamt.com to join.

Interim Assessments

Calling interested teachers! The Smarter Balanced interim assessments are available online now. The OPI is looking for teachers interested in helping to present information on the scoring of the interim assessments. The Assessment Conferences are scheduled for January 12-13, 2017 in Missoula, and February 1-2, 2017 in Billings. Please contact Jessica Eilertson at 406-444-3656 for more information on helping to present. Travel and hotel costs will be provided.

MSU-BOZEMAN OFFERS ONLINE ENDORSEMENT

Answer the Call: Become a School Library Media Specialist

By **ANN EW BANK**

Imagine teaching in the most well-resourced room in your school. Imagine infusing research skills and technology into all areas of your school's curriculum. Imagine collaborating with teachers and co-teaching with them. Imagine being an instructional leader in your school. All of this and more awaits those who are library media specialists.

Today's youth are born digital, but they still need to learn the competencies that make them savvy consumers and producers of information. Now more than ever, in the era of fake news and the tsunami of information found online, students learn how to manage information with the assistance of a school library media specialist. Teaching at the intersection of literacy, research and technology is their domain.

MSU-Bozeman offers a 100 percent online graduate certificate in K-12 library media that will prepare teachers for the joys and challenges of teaching in the library.

Financial aid is available for qualified individuals. The program is seven classes (21 credits), and these are offered in rotation so teachers can complete in three semesters or six if they take one class per semester (doubling up in your last spring). See class descriptions at www.montana.edu/education/grad/librarymedia/courses.html. The program flow is available at www.montana.edu/education/grad/librarymedia/requirements.html. Applications are accepted for fall, spring, and summer semesters.

The program also offers an option for a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction after completion of library certificate plus nine additional credits, which are also offered online.

For more information visit www.montana.edu/education/grad/librarymedia/index.html or email the program director, Dr. Ann Ewbank at ann.ewbank@montana.edu.



Photo courtesy Creative Commons, Green County Public Schools

School librarians are in short supply. MSU-Bozeman offers a teaching endorsement online.

LOCAL COLOR WRITER

Neglected Novelist, Dillon's Finest Historian

Savage's writing deserves recognition similar to that of other Montana authors

By **ALAN WELTZIEN**

I really have a yen,
To go back once again,
Back to the place where no one wears
a frown,
To see once more those super-special just
plain folks
In my home town.

~Tom Lehrer, "My Home Town" (1953)



Montana's southwest corner, and Dillon in particular, have never received sustained historical attention apart from the usual local histories. Thomas Savage (1915-2003), a first-rate if neglected Montana novelist who published 13 novels over four decades in the last century (1944-88), also serves as Dillon's best surrogate historian, particularly the Dillon of the interwar (i.e. 1918-39) period.

Savage imaginatively returned to Dillon repeatedly, rewriting it in seven of his eight Western-set novels. In his case, novelistic representations of a community exceed, in quantity and value, other historical representations.

Those interested in Dillon during the interwar period should turn to Savage's novels which capture, better than any other texts, the *feel* of a Montana county seat long dominated by hay and cattle ranching.

Based on his assessment, Dillon aspired to the same social distinctions and revealed the same socioeconomic divisions as most smaller communities.

Life there proved stultifying and painful for some, particularly those who imagined or desired something much more from their lives. For such, small towns figure more as prisons than havens.

From Savage's portrait gallery, Dillon emerges as a typical community dominated by cattle ranching, one in which the oldest ranching families and the newest money comprised the social elite.

Linked from the beginning by the Union Pacific, Dillon became the service center not only for the Beaverhead Valley, but two valleys to the west (i.e. the Grasshopper and the Big Hole), and, to some extent, the Ruby Valley to the east. While some might object to his generally harsh treatment, Savage's Dillon represents a vital counter-history to the usually un-

critical, celebratory appraisals of local histories.

Dillon was more and than Savage's Herndon or Grayling (his two primary names for his hometown). But that said, the novels present essential truths about their hometowns that are ignored to their peril.

By his second novel, *Lona Hanson*, Savage had re-created Dillon ("Sentinel") between 1928 and 1933. Dillon reappears in several scenes as Herndon—a Savage 'near name'—in *The Power of the Dog*, which is set in 1924; and again in *The Liar*.

Dillon becomes Grayling in *Midnight Line*; *I Heard My Sister Speak My Name*; retitled *The Sheep Queen*; *For Mary, With Love*; and *The Corner of Rife and Pacific*. Dillon (Grayling) serves as protagonist, one manifested through a range of characters, locales, and colors.

The Corner, Savage's swansong, chronicles Dillon in the 1890-1920 decades and, more than his earlier versions, lends itself to easy dating, as though this hometown chronicler more tightly braided his last plot with obvious historical reference points.

Savage writes historical Dillon with acuity and trenchant observation, and his novels veer extremely close to the historical record, as the vast evidence of unchanged or barely changed names suggests. He certainly had Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street* in mind as he wrote, and sometimes scorned, Dillon.

More central to Savage as Dillon's pre-1950 historian looms the example of Willa Cather, who based several of her novels, in part or whole, in her hometown of Red Cloud, Nebraska. Cather had long served as a literary mentor, one who, like Savage, left her hometown for college and infrequently returned thereafter but, more importantly, frequently returned in her imagination and her fiction.

When Savage rewrote Dillon, he never did any research but simply opened the floodgates of memory. Nearly 68 during his final trip home in 1983, he easily remembered names, faces, voices, and quirky habits belonging to individuals from 50 to 65 years earlier, and mostly long deceased.

His versions of Dillon bring to vivid life building exteriors and interiors and the pervasiveness of gossip. They also foreground the ubiquitous story of social classes, of social climbers and aspirants as well as down-and-outers who far out-number them.

Savage was *in* the old ranching coterie but not *of* it. His insider-outsider, double perspective de-romanticizes the ongoing, idealized vision of rural life sustained in popular cultural production. Savage provides a uniquely subjective, in-depth interpretation of hometown history that continues to capture

readers as other historical writing does not.

He provided an essential, critical voice in the interwar history of Montana's southwest corner. Such a voice does much to provide a nuanced, diverse perspective on particular historical periods of a community.



Photo by Adison Berkey, Creative Commons

Thomas Savage pictured at home from the back cover of his books.

Career, Technical Jobs Still Do Require Communication Readiness

By JAN CLINARD

Communication skills are critical for students entering career and technical education programs, such as accounting, aviation maintenance, and automotive technology. Although these technicians may never be required to write an essay, they will write letters, reports, email, and maintenance logs.

Their reading will be technical, their listening tuned to details, and their speaking primarily instruction, explanation and description. Vocabulary is precise: one word and one word only is the accurate adjective, noun, or verb.

And yet, students without good communication skills are often encouraged to enter the trades, as though they will poke their heads under the hood of a car, see and hear the problem, instinctively pull the right part from a shelf, and install without reading, speaking, or completing an order. What are some of the communication skills needed and how can teachers help students overcome the typical weaknesses seen by college instructors and help them succeed in two-year technical programs?

A Sampling of Critical Communications Skills

According to one of Helena's automotive technician instructors, students will need to "read and follow written repair procedures, comprehend technical data from textbooks and repair manuals, and interpret customer concerns on repair orders."

He suggested a simple assignment that could help: "Using the *General Automotive Repair Textbook*, select a section and re-write it in your own words." Automotive technicians must document the



repairs performed, and they must

set up and save electronic portfolios. They must communicate with customers, describing a complex repair to a lay person.

A firefighter needs to be able to read and comprehend step-by-step instructions, to read case studies on new developments and fire behavior, and to understand medical terminology. She must write incident reports, communicating factual, objective information.

She must communicate with the public through presentations and radio announcements and provide information directly, concisely, and clearly to individuals in highly stressful situations. Helena's fire instructor suggests playing the "telephone game" to illustrate how information can rapidly become miscommunicated.

In welding and computer-aided manufacturing, students must read step-by-step instructions, learn key technical terms, know safety regulations, and interpret blue prints, diagrams and charts. They must write instructions, emails, orders, and reports. They must ask detailed questions to ensure work orders are accurate. Students can simulate an ordering experience by asking questions such as "Exactly what do you want me to make?" Then, write out instructions for making the item.

Likewise, students in medical careers, need to learn correct terminology; it is helpful if nursing students understand prefixes, root word analysis, and suffixes. They must write research papers using APA format. A nurse's listening and speaking skills are critical. Helena College's director of nursing suggests that students read medical journals, write a research paper about a medical field, and include some medical terminology in their vocabulary study.

The accuracy and precision required in technical writing is best illustrated by an aircraft's maintenance log, kept throughout the lifetime of the airplane. It is a legal document, written by technicians who document every repair and every part meticulously.

Although the need to communicate clearly crosses the career and technical fields, the formats in which they communicate differ. Teachers can partner with a career and technical educator to find relevant resources and ideas for assignments.

Common Weaknesses

Helena College's technical writing instructor believes that students' greatest deficiency is the lack of punctuation, which leads to run-on sentences, sentence fragments and a pattern of students writing just as they speak. This pattern leads to subject/verb agreement issues, tense changes, and a misuse of pronoun/antecedent rules.

With peer editing and proofreading, some of these issues begin to subside, but the process requires constant reinforcement. Since attention to detail is important in all workplace activities, accurate punctuation, agreement, tense, and pronouns are critical.

Instructional Approaches from LISSTs

During the LISSTs project (Literacy in Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects), several strategies were used to help students with highly technical reading. One was scaffolding—first assigning a relatively simple graphic about a particular topic, moving to a blog about that topic, then an article from a popular magazine, and finally to complex text in a technical journal.

Students consider "What does it say? What does it mean? Why does it matter?" Students should learn technical vocabulary, how to



Photo by Tom Kotynski

Students at Great Falls High School hone welding skills before transferring to Great Falls College-MSU to receive certification.

See CAREERS Page 15

Celebrate Chinese New Year with Lin's Latest Book

by **DONNA L. MILLER**



Grace Lin is an American children's writer and illustrator

who grew up in New York and whose parents were Taiwanese immigrants. Reading Lin's recent release, *When the Sea Turned to Silver* (Little, Brown, 2016), is an ideal way to celebrate Chinese New Year's Day, which is Jan. 28.

Inspired by ancient Chinese folklore and woven with both adventure and villainy, *When the Sea Turned to Silver* is a lyrical, well-told tale. It is the tale of Pinmei, a shy girl whose words freeze in her throat at the sight of anyone unfamiliar, and of Yishan, a boy who often forgets he is young and speaks with a confidence and vehemence that belie his youth.

Both Pinmei and Yishan live on a mountain, a remote place of solitude. But the tranquility of their lives is shattered when soldiers come and capture Amah, Pinmei's grandmother, who is the famous storyteller.

People are drawn to Amah, not only for her embroidery skills but to hear her "weave silk threads with her voice" (9). After taking Amah prisoner and setting her hut on fire, the soldiers leave the hut, unaware that Pinmei has been hidden in a wine urn.

Yishan, who finds the entire situation confusing, discovers Pinmei and learns the anecdote of Amah's capture.

Hoping to rescue Amah, Pinmei and Yishan set out to find a Luminous Stone

That Lights the Night. In exchange for this stone, the emperor promises to release his prisoner.

Yishan is not all that he seems to be, but Amah had told Pinmei that she could always trust the boy. Amah also told Pinmei, "When it is time for you to do something, you will do it" (9).

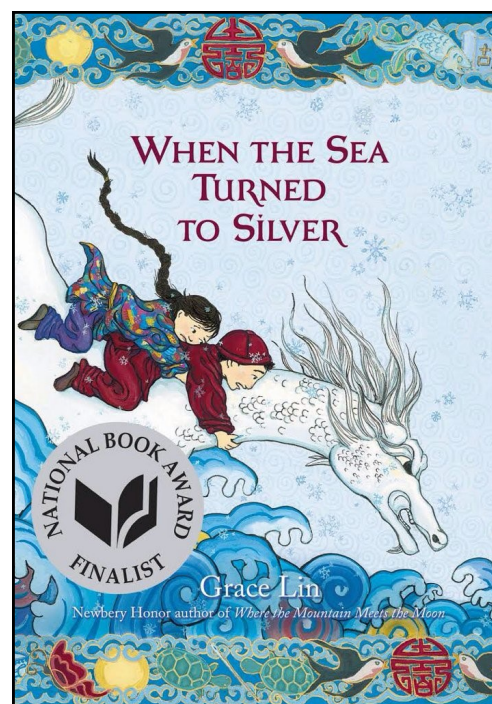
That prophecy turns out to be true when the two children embark on a journey that is fraught with adventure and peril as they encounter numerous obstacles, many with legendary proportions. Along the way, various threads of their adventure unravel in stories that Pinmei remembers from Amah's telling.

These stories not only carry the reader along but also ultimately connect to tell their own story. Lin reminds her readers that stories are an art form; stories memorialize great people, preserve history, bring joy, foretell events, impart truth, grant immortality, and make time disappear.

Just as Amah was honored and respected for her role as storyteller, Pinmei learns to take her listeners to places only dreamed of, to make them feel sorrow and joy and peace with the magic of her story.

With her fantasy-adventure novel, Lin proves that—just like paintings and embroidery—stories come to life with the skill of a master.

Readers will likely appreciate this companion to the Newbery Honor winner *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*. Lin's vibrant chapter decorations and full-color, full-page paintings add to the beauty of *When the Sea Turned to Silver* and partially contributed, I suspect, to its nomina-



tion for the 2016 National Book Award for Young People's Literature.

Teachers can visit the author's blog (www.gracelinblog.com) to find enrichment activities for math, science, and art, activities such as how to create invisible writing, how to calculate longevity, and how to reflect and refract a rainbow.

Visitors to the site can even find Chinese proverbs like this one: "Even the mighty oak was once a nut like you." Lin shares words of wisdom like these in her Fortune Cookie Fridays.

CAREERS From Page 14:

Disciplines Require Deep Reading for Vocabulary Development

extract information from graphics, and how an expert approaches the reading, seldom in the order that it is printed.

Writing in specific disciplines requires understanding their "ways of knowing." Vocabulary, organization, sentence length, and how evidence and graphics are integrated into the text vary from field to field.

Deep reading helps students understand those conventions. Welding, auto, diesel, nursing, accounting journals are great resources not only to improve reading skills but also to model the language and organizational patterns of the discipline and provide topical writing assignments.

Diagramming may help students understand how sentences are constructed.

RAFT (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) assignments lend themselves to the technical writing students in trades programs will face. Developing and labeling graphics are also key components to writing effectively in technical areas.

Addressing the Critics

Employers complain employees cannot write or speak well. Instructors complain students cannot read technical manuals, nor write simple orders or instructions, and have limited speaking skills.

Have we heard these criticisms for dec-

ades or are students actually becoming less articulate? Are students hindered by vocabulary, complex sentences, unfamiliar organizational patterns, or are they unwilling to carefully examine a lengthy text? Are they unable to spell or are they lazy?

Specific critiques, such as "punctuation errors" are helpful. When we hear those complaints, we should ask for specifics and then perhaps we can design instruction to target problems.

Finally, instructors from all disciplines need to insist that students apply the reading and writing strategies their English language arts teachers taught.



Dana Haring, Treasurer
620 First Avenue West
Kalispell, MT 59901

**Please consider sharing your talent and expertise with
MATELA!
Upcoming publication deadlines:**

Spring UPDATE: March 1

MEJ 2014: June 1

Fall UPDATE: Sept. 1

Winter UPDATE: Dec. 1

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Submit articles for consideration via our website at www.matelamt.com/publications

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.

If your piece includes graphics or photos, please send these jpg files as separate attachments.