

newsletter

Volume 40 Number 1 Spring 2003

FALL CONFERENCE 2002: THE HEART OF THE MATTER

MARY LOU FLEMAL

"The Heart of the Matter" brought together approximately 250 English/language arts teachers from all areas of the state to share concerns and offer insights at the 2002 fall conference of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English on October 25 and 26. For the third consecutive year, our annual conference was held in Springfield.

Garry Moore, anchor and producer of News 25 in Peoria, gave the keynote address. He presented teachers



Keynote speaker Garry Moore

with startling statistics regarding the rapid increase of African American males who will be incarcerated. He challenged English teachers to understand and bridge the differences created by culture, and he urged teachers to work with African American sororities and fraternities to initiate reading programs.

Donna Blackall received the Lifetime Membership Award at the Honorary Awards Luncheon on Friday. Lela DeToye and Helen

Norton received Golden Apple Awards for serving for five years on the Executive Board. In her acceptance speech, 2002 IATE Author of the Year Mary Schmich said the honor made her feel "like a writer rather than a journalist, a chef rather than a short order cook."

A very moving part of Friday evening's Annual Banquet was Dr. Ron Fortune's speech remembering our colleague and *Illinois English Bulletin* editor Dr. Maurice Scharton, who passed away unexpectedly on August 28,

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From the President

BARBARA FUSON

As I attended sessions and listened to the speakers at the fall conference this year, I was reminded of just what "The Heart of the Matter" is for English teachers. While course content and state standards are important parts of our jobs, especially with the "No Child Left Behind" act in play, teaching is more than texts and tests. As our speakers pointed out, it is also caring, connecting, and communicating.

The keynote speaker, Garry Moore, anchor and producer of News 25 in Peoria, set the tone when he spoke eloquently of the need for compassion in our classrooms, especially compassion for African American male students. The cultural differences of language use, dress, and behavior often doom these youths to failure. Thus one of three inmates in prison is black, and that number will rise to two of three by 2020. The solution, said Moore,

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News from the Central District

CLAIRE LAMONICA

About twenty IATE Central District members gathered for wine, cheese, and conversation in district coleader Claire Lamonica's room at the Renaissance Plaza hotel during the IATE Annual Conference in October. The gathering gave members an opportunity to "unwind" before the Friday evening banquet or (for some) before starting the trip home.

The district's third annual "Day of Reunion and Renewal" on Saturday, February 22, in Stevenson Hall, Room 401 on the campus of Illinois State University, provided a second opportunity for Central District members to gather. The "Day of Reunion and Renewal" offered Central District members an opportunity to meet and learn from one another. In 2002 the topic was "Teaching Revision." This year's topic was "Teaching with Technology."

In July 2003, Central District members will have an opportunity to enjoy "An Evening with Shakespeare." The evening will include dinner, a brief address by a Shakespearean scholar, and a trip to the Shakespeare Festival at Ewing Manor in Bloomington. Central District members should watch their mailboxes this spring for "Evening with Shakespeare" registration materials.

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IATE OFFICERS

Barbara Fuson President
Mary Lou Flemal 1st Vice President
Teri Knight 2nd Vice President
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Illinois State University, Campus Box 4240, Normal, IL 61790-4240

News from the Western District

JANNA HAWORTH

The Western District of IATE met on Thursday, November 14, at Western Illinois University. The program offered ideas for teaching creative writing and helping students compose entries for Western's Spring Creative Writing Festival. This year the category of creative nonfiction has been added, and we were lucky to hear John Halwass, regional historian, writer, and professor, talk about the range of nonfiction writing. Other panel members were Aisha Barnes, director of the Creative Writing Festival, David Stevenson, graduate director of English and fiction writer, and S'thembile West, a professor and poet. \square

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2002. The banquet honored Dorothy Cannell, the Peoria-based mystery novelist, who after dinner entertained attendees with her interactive mystery game. She gave the audience the opportunity to create a mystery by first developing a setting, then characters, fleshing them out and deciding who would be the sleuth. After her presentation, she gra-



Mystery novelist Dorothy Cannell

ciously signed her novels for those in attendance.

The Saturday Presidents' Luncheon honored past presidents of IATE and was a time to give thanks for the energy and dedication they have given to the organization. The featured speaker for the luncheon was Dr. Beth Berghoff, the president of the Indiana Council of Teachers of English and professor of language education and chair of teacher education at Indiana University at Indianapolis. She emphasized that each student creates his or her own version of the text, and the teacher needs to determine what text the student has created. This can be best accomplished by the use of various symbolic systems. She shared one strategy, sketch to stretch, with participants and gave ideas of how it could be used in the classroom. Her speech was cosponsored by NCTE.

Six sessions of breakouts and workshops allowed participants to hear the latest in best practices. Members of the Illinois State Writing Project presented a strand of breakout sessions on the teaching of writing. Members

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Conference Proposal Form

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH 2003 FALL CONFERENCE

The Circle of Learning

in the

English and Language Arts Classroom

October 17 and 18, 2003 Marriott Hotel, Oak Brook, IL

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Proposal submitted by:	
Home Address:	
City & Zip:	Home Phone:
School Name and Address:	
	School Phone:
E-mail:	
Are there others presenting with you?	
Name:	School:
Address:	
Name:	School:
Address:	
Can you name a colleague or two who	might serve as chair or recorder for your session if accepted?
•	School:
Name:	School:
Have you presented at an IATE conventor ☐ Yes	
Please check the type of equipment you	will need, if neccessary:
\square TV/VCR	Internet connection
☐ LCD projector/screen	Overhead projector
Other (please specify):	

Form continued on back...

This proposal is for a:					
☐ 90-minute workshop	☐ 50-minute workshop	☐ 50-minute workshop			
The intended audience is:	l High school	☐ General			
Presentation Title:					
Type or print a 50-word description of your program booklet.	presentation. Your description will be p	rinted in the			

Proposals must be returned by March 28, 2003 to:
Teri Knight, Program Chair
IATE Fall Convention
Maine South High School
1111 South Dee Road
Park Ridge, IL 60068

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM SURVEY

As we enter the year 2003, it is important for members of IATE's Intellectual Freedom Committee to update our knowledge of intellectual freedom issues in the state of Illinois. (The last survey of this kind was done in 1993.) Please take the time to complete the survey below and mail it to:

Deborah Will

IATE Intellectua 1871 Independe	al Freedom Chair		
Gurnee, IL 6003			
1. Does your school l	nave a formal written policy regard Yes	ing the censorship of read No	ling materials?
2. Does your English	department keep rationales for the Yes	use of controversial texts No	s on file?
3. If parents wish to written form?	file a complaint about the suitabilit	y of a text, are they require	red to complete a
	Yes	No	
4. In the past three y used?	ears, have there been any challenge	s in your school to reading	ng materials that were
	Yes	No	
If yes, please	list the name of the text:		
• •	e text retained or removed?	Retained	Removed
5. In the past three ye that were given?	ears, have there been any challenges	in your school to specific	writing assignments
	Yes	No	
If yes, please	list the writing assignment:		
If yes, was the	e assignment retained or removed?	Retained	Removed
6. In the past three y teaching?	ears, have there been any challenge	s in your school to a part	icular method of
C	Yes	No	
If yes, please	list the method of teaching:		
If yes, what w	vas the challenge:		

Form continued on back...

-	e years, have there been a	ears, have there been any challenges in your school to non-print materials that			
were used?	Yes		No		
If yes, plea	se list the materials:				
If yes, wer	e the materials retained o	or removed?	Retained	Removed	
8. In the past thre	e years, have any school Yes	publications be	een censored by your sch No	1001?	
If yes, plea	ase list the publication and	d the nature of	the censorship:		
9. In the past thre	e years, have you deliber Yes	ately excluded	a controversial text? No		
10. In the last three	ee years, have you altered Yes	l a text?	No		
11. In the past thr	ee years, have you been f Yes	forced to exclu	de a text by your commu No	nity?	
12. In the past thr	ee years, have you been t	forced to exclu	de a text by school offici No	als?	
Comments:					
Address:					
E-mail:	:: Scho				
	Sch	,01 1 tuille			

is to communicate with them where they are. These students need to be made to feel comfortable in the class-room and at ease expressing themselves. The caring teacher will allow communication in their own vernacular and only begin to impose grammar rules when that comfort level with communication has been attained. This teacher will also care enough to connect with the student and learn his language as well.

When Mary Schmich accepted her award as the Illinois Author of the Year, she too spoke of communicating and connecting. Describing the award as "better than a Pulitzer," she went on to explain that it meant that her writing was connecting with others. A special aim of the *Chicago Tribune*, she stated, is to reach fourteen- to eighteen-year-old readers—the population of our secondary classrooms. As teachers, we give away our ideas, cultures, words, etc. to the students—we connect with them. But connection should be a two-way street where teachers also value students' ideas, cultures, and words.

Finally, at the Saturday luncheon, Dr. Beth Berghoff, cosponsored by NCTE, continued this theme of communication and connection. She pointed out that there are multiple systems of making meaning and that language is but one of those systems. Good teaching, then, should not focus on teaching knowledge systems as much as on answering the questions students have. The connections begin with tapping into the background knowledge of the student. Then students can read and respond to text. Learning is further enhanced through working in groups and holding conversations to communicate ideas. Projects can follow—and not only through writing exercises. Rather, the student can choose to communicate and connect through other systems of making meaning, such as music or art. The result, said Berghoff, will be the development of varied perspectives.

The numerous breakout sessions and workshops provided a kaleidoscope of topics for the preservice as well as the practicing teacher of English. Several dealt with engaging the student through active learning and authentic discussion. Genres discussed ranged from poetry, drama, and fiction to photography and media. A common thread, however, was the need to connect to and communicate with students while caring about them as individuals as well as learners.

A stellar example of engaging the "students" and making connections about communication occurred at the Friday evening banquet. Author Dorothy Cannell turned the ballroom into a classroom as she took those in attendance through the process of developing a mystery

REMEMBERING MAURICE SCHARTON

Janice Neuleib

Our colleague and *Illinois English Bulletin* editor Maurice Scharton was killed in an accident on August 28, 2002. He was honored at the IATE annual conference in Springfield, where Illinois State University English Department Chair Ron Fortune spoke about Maurice's devotion to IATE and to the profession in general.

Maurice Scharton came to Illinois State University in 1977, having finished his master's degree at Utah State and his Ph.D. at Kansas State. He quickly became a popular teacher of rhetoric, writing, and grammar, as well as a teacher of teachers through grants and workshops. His wit and good humor made learning a pleasure for all his students. One former doctoral student perhaps said it best: "He shaped who I was to become."

As a scholar, he changed the course of teaching by writing books, book chapters, and journal articles which always moved at the cutting edge of research and teaching in the field. He liked to say that his research was a way to take his teaching to an audience beyond the ISU community. Not only was he prolific in his publishing, but he also edited the oldest English education journal in the United States, the *Illinois English Bulletin*.

Through the Illinois State Writing Project, he worked with teachers from across the state to help them improve their own writing and their teaching of writing. He was tireless in his desire to "gladly learn and teach," though he would have wanted us to say it in the Middle English of Chaucer, Maurice having been always the English purist. His department has many, many empty hearts and many students who will miss the challenge and excitement of his classes. \square

novel. With humor and genuine care for our ideas, she elicited suggestions for a setting, a victim, a murderer, and a detective and sidekick, letting the group generate the selections. As I enjoyed the experiment, I was struck with how much fun learning can be when the students are engaged and valued as individuals.

Many thanks go to Conference Chair Mary Lou Flemal and her committee. She set out to make this conference about "The Heart of the Matter" and succeeded. I hope we will all take the message of caring, connecting, and communicating into our dealings with students. Also, I hope that we will see all those who attended in 2002—and many more as well—at the next annual IATE conference this fall (2003) at the Marriott in Oakbrook. \square

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Bulletin Editorship

Ken Lindblom is the new editor of our organization's journal, *Illinois English Bulletin*. Central District co-leader, Claire Lamonica, is Associate Editor of the *Bulletin*. Submit essays and other material you wish to see published in the *Bulletin* to:

Ken Lindblom, Editor Illinois English Bulletin Department of English Campus Box 4240 Illinois State University Normal, IL 61790-4240 phone: (309) 438-7158 e-mail: kjlindb@ilstu.edu

Life Membership Award Goes to Donna Blackall

Lee Mulcrone introduced the 2002 winner of the Life Membership Award, Donna Blackall, at the Honorary Awards Luncheon held at the Fall Conference. Donna earned her bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University and her M.A. in Speech from Northeastern Illinois University. She began her teaching career at Miner Junior High School in Arlington Heights and later transferred to Thomas Middle School, where she still teaches. In 1977, she was appointed District Leader of the Northeast Suburban District of IATE. She has been the local arrangement chair, the membership chair, and the chairs of the audit, budget, nominating, special projects, and constitution committees of IATE. As vice president she was program chair, and she was president of IATE from 1986-1987. She was appointed coordinator for the NCTE Promising Young Writers Program in 1986 and has served as both an author and an editor for McDougal, Littell & Company. Donna received the John Heissler Award for Excellence in English Education. This past year she agreed to serve on the site selection committee for IATE. Donna Blackall has done it all for IATE. The organization is grateful for her service and commitment. Her more than twenty-five years of dedication to IATE are an inspiration to all English and language arts teachers. Congratulations, Donna.

IATE Shirts Now Available

Regular T-shirts are available in ash gray or athletic gray for \$12.00 each. Sizes: M, L, XL, and XXL.

Long sleeve T-shirts with IATE down one sleeve are available for \$15.00. Sizes: M, L, and XL.

To get your shirt to wear throughout the year and to be fashionable at the 2003 IATE Fall Conference October 17–18 in Oakbrook, Illinois, contact:

Jean Black Palatine High School 1111 N. Rohlwing Road Palatine, IL 60074 phone: (847) 755-1600 e-mail: jblack@d211.org

Checks should be made payable to IATE and should include a \$2.00 shipping and handling fee.

Our popular IATE pins (\$5.00 each) and T-shirts will also be available for purchase at the Fall Conference. See you there!



Fuson and Neuleib attend NCTE Affiliate Conference

IATE President Barbara Fuson and Executive Secretary Janice Neuleib attended the NCTE state affiliate conference in St. Louis in August 2002. They had many exciting experiences and were especially impressed with the CoLEARN demonstrations. Jan later wrote a National Writing Project grant in which she proposed the inclusion of the Illinois State Writing Project in CoLEARN. Teachers have begun to interact over CoLEARN and to enjoy the many exciting activities provided through this service. NCTE will still sign up groups and schools if your district is interested. To discover more about CoLEARN, go to the NCTE Web page: www.ncte.org/CoLEARN.

IATE New Teacher/Instructor Program

If you teach an English Education methods course or direct an English Education Program and you would like to get your students involved in key professional organizations, then you will be happy to know that IATE has just launched a "New Teacher/Instructor Program" to help get preservice teachers on board at the Illinois Assocation of Teachers of English.

All you need to do is send an e-mail to IATE's Office Secretary, Martha Frieburg, at mrfrieb@ilstu.edu. Tell Martha how many students you have in your methods class and she will send you a box of materials for each student. Kits include:

- IATE membership forms (preservice and firstyear teachers may join for free)
- a recent issue of Illinois English Bulletin
- the IATE Newsletter
- the IATE brochure, "What IATE Can Do For You"
- information about the organization from the Web site
- something new that we are very excited about: a free IATE tote bag.

These materials will introduce teaching candidates to the many benefits of being a member of IATE, and they will receive something that they can use right now that will show their pride in being a member of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.

Illinois State Writing Project to Host Twelfth Summer Institute

The Illinois State Writing Project (ISWP) will host its twelfth Summer Institute June 30–July 31, 2003, on the campus of Illinois State University. The Institute is open to teachers from all levels (pre-K through college) and all disciplines who are interested in growing as writers and teachers of writing.

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If you would like more information about activities in the IATE Central District, call or e-mail either of the district's co-leaders, Brian Conant or Claire Lamonica:

Brian Conant btconan@ilstu.edu (309) 438-2828

Claire Lamonica cclamon@ilstu.edu (309) 438-3297 The ISWP is the Central Illinois site for the National Writing Project (http://writingproject.org), a highly successful professional development initiative based on a philosophy of "Teachers Teaching Teachers." Becky Hansen, a fifth-grade teacher from Central Illinois, said this of her ISWP experience: "The Writing Project changed not only the way I teach writing, but the way I teach *all* subjects in my classroom. It gave me a whole new attitude about teaching. I love coming to school every day now, and so do my students."

Teachers who become ISWP fellows spend five weeks together (four days/week) writing, reading, and sharing their best practices in the teaching of writing. Then they take the ideas they've generated back to their own classrooms and schools for implementation, exploration, and revision.

If you would be interested in becoming a 2003 ISWP fellow, call or write for an informational flyer and application form. Requests should be directed to:

Dr. Claire Lamonica, ISWP Co-Director

Campus Box 4240 Department of English Illinois State University Normal, IL 61790-4240 phone: (309) 438-3297

e-mail: cclamon@ilstu.edu

Join us for CITE 2003

All teachers of English in Illinois (at all instructional levels, including middle and high school) are invited to the Conference for Illinois Teachers of English (CITE). This year's CITE will take place Friday, April 11, 2003, in the Bone Student Center on the campus of Illinois State University. For more information on CITE, please contact Paula Ressler, Director of English Education at ISU. Phone: (309) 438-7705. E-mail: pressle@ilstu.edu.

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of the Language Arts Assessment Advisory Committee of the Illinois State Board of Education presented several sessions of working with Illinois rubrics and instructional strategies that improve writing. Other sessions addressed technology in the classroom, and a strand for new teachers culminated with a Friday afternoon seminar for preservice and new teachers. Teachers also had the opportunity to visit the book exhibits on Friday. "The Heart of the Matter" afforded teachers an opportunity to renew old acquaintances and to reconsider what is the heart of the matter in their classrooms.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

IATE Minority Scholarship for Teacher Education

IATE issues this call for applications for its minority scholarship awards to chairs of recognized language arts teacher-education programs in Illinois colleges and universities. Applications—which must include a sample of student writing, a student essay, a recommendation from a professor, and a cover sheet—will be accepted beginning May 1, 2003. Applications must be mailed to Janice Neuleib, Executive Secretary of IATE, and will be accepted no later than September 15, 2003. The specific goals, procedures, and criteria are these:

Goals:

For both philosophical and practical purposes, the Illinois Association of Teachers of English is committed to recruiting minority* language arts teachers. To meet that commitment, IATE reserves \$1,000 each year for one scholarship as designated by the Minority Scholarship Committee, a subcommittee of the Minority Affairs Committee.

Procedure:

The Minority Scholarship Committee will send out a call for applications to the chairs of public, recognized language arts teacher-education programs in Illinois colleges and universities in the spring. A follow-up call will be made in August.

After applications are received, the Minority Scholarship Committee will judge the applications, issue an invitation to the winner to attend the fall conference (October 2003) when the award will be given, and assist the winner in making arrangements to attend the conference. When at all possible, the winner will be escorted by an IATE member.

In addition to the cash award, winners will also receive a complimentary one-year membership in IATE, free registration for that year's conference, luncheon and banquet tickets, lodging, and mileage (if an escort cannot be secured).

Criteria:

- 1. The candidate must be a member of a minority group.
- 2. The candidate must be duly enrolled in a four-year or upper-division, public, recognized teacher-education program in an Illinois college or university.
- 3. The candidate must have declared a major in English, English Education, or Elementary Education with a specialty in language arts (Junior or Senior status), and plan to teach in Illinois.

- 4. The candidate must have demonstrated potential for academic success.
- 5. The candidate cannot be an individual already on full scholarship, and some degree of need for the scholarship must exist.
- 6. The faculty member who recommends a student for one of the awards must submit these items in one envelope:
 - a. A sample of the candidate's writing done for a class in the past year (instructor comments included).
 - b. A candidate essay on this topic: "What piece of literature by a person of color would you especially like to teach? Explain why you chose this particular piece and how you would go about teaching it."
 - c. A sealed recommendation which addresses items 1–5 above in some detail.
 - d. A cover sheet with the full name, home address, and phone number of both the candidate and the recommender.
- *As in other IATE matters, "minority" here is defined as non-white minority, a person of color.

Newsletter Call

The IATE Newsletter welcomes articles, reviews, reports, announcements, calls for papers, and other material important to the professional lives of English teachers in the state of Illinois. The deadline for submitting material for the Fall 2003 newsletter is May 1, 2003. Please send submissions via e-mail to Bob Broad at: rlbroad@ilstu.edu.

Teachers of English: Share Your Writing at the 2003 CITE Conference

For several years, the Conference for Illinois Teachers of English has featured a session entitled "Teachers of English Share Their Writing." All IATE members and other teachers of English in Illinois are invited to attend the CITE Conference on Friday, April 11,2003, and to bring a poem, brief essay, story, journal entry, or other writing to share. Please plan to limit your reading to five minutes. For more information and/or to be listed in the CITE conference program, please contact CITE Program Co-Chair Paula Ressler in Illinois State University's Department of English (phone: (309) 438-7705; e-mail: pressle@ilstu.edu). We hope to see—and hear—you at CITE 2003.

First-Year Teacher Free Membership

Attention: First-Year English Teachers

IATE offers a free, one-year membership to all teachers who have not previously been members of IATE. IATE membership entitles you to three issues of the *Illinois English Bulletin* and two issues of the *IATE Newsletter* as well as convention information and district news. Stay current with trends in our profession and gather tips for surviving and thriving during your first year in the classroom. Please fill out the information below and return it to:

IATE, Department of English, Campus Box 4240, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240
E-mail: jneuleib@ilstu.edu

Name: _____ Grade levels taught: _____

School: _____

School street address: _____ City: ____ Zip: ____ County: ____

Home street address: _____

City: ____ Zip: ____ Home phone: (___) ____

Mailing preference: Home _____ School _____

IATE MEMBERSHIP Name: School: Level of Instruction: ELEM__ JRH__ HS__ COL __ School Address: City: ______ ZIP: _____ _____ IATE Dist: _____ County: _____ Home Address: ____ ZIP: ____ City: _____ Home Phone Number: _____ _____ E-mail: _____ Mailing Address To: School _____ Home ____ Membership type: First-Year Teacher/Member ____ Student ___ Regular ___ Patron ___ Retired ___ Free: Student/First-Year Teacher/First-Year Member IATE Yearly Membership Dues (please circle one): \$20 Regular \$25 Patron \$3 Retired IATE Membership Pin: \$5 _____ Check enclosed for amount: \$ _____ Mail to: IATE, Martha Frieburg, Membership Secretary, 4240 English, Illinois State University Normal, IL 61790-4240 Phone: 309-438-3957 Web Site: www.iateonline.org E-mail: mrfrieb@ilstu.edu; jneuleib@ilstu.edu



IATE homepage: http://www.iateonline.org

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