

ASLTA

American Sign Language Teachers Association

Newsletter

Volume 5 Number 3 1999

A Smashing Success!!

ASLTA Conference a Breakthrough

By Deirdre Schlehof

ASLTA's 1st National Professional Development Conference, "Study Now, Teach Tomorrow," took place at the Holidome in Rochester, New York, during October 7-10, 1999. It was hosted by the American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) and coordinated by Matthew S. Moore and his Conference Committee. Over 300 teachers, students, and advocates attended and brought many exciting ideas to be shared.

The conference offered ASL teachers and specialists opportunities for nationwide professional development in ASL teaching and related areas for the first time. The rapid increase of ASL teachers in the United States and Canada has been well-recognized, but a key problem is continued lack of access to information for this specialty. The ASLTA conference made it possible for teachers and specialists to gather together, share ideas and learn from each other, and then return to their home states to share their new learning and ideas with other teachers.

During the three-day conference, sets of three concurrent workshops/presentations were held at four different time slots during the day. This arrangement allowed more choice for participants.

(For more information about the workshops, visit www.aslta.com.) For example, the first day's group of workshops included "Visual Vernacular" by Tom Riggs; "ASLTA K-12 Curriculum" by Malcolm Peters and Janice Smith Warshaw; and "Perceptions of Incoming ASL students on Deafness and Language Learning" by Rico Peterson.

I could have attended all workshops, but I chose several that I felt would interest me, and for work purposes. Here are my observations of some workshops and presenters.

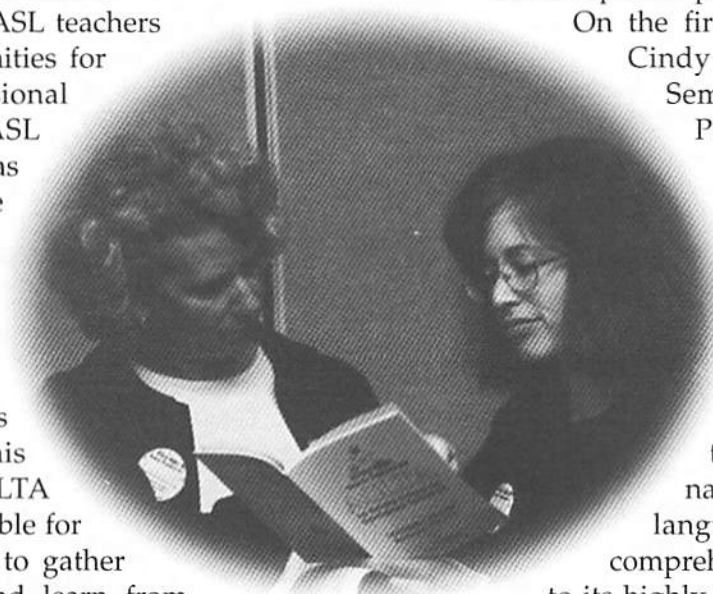
On the first day of the conference, Cindy Campbell's lecture, "A Semiotic Analysis of ASL Poetry," presented an interesting analysis of her ongoing dissertation work relating to semiotics.

She utilized Clayton Valli's rich poem "The Cow and the Rooster" as an example to illustrate the ASL discourse of the narrative structure. Second-

language learners did not comprehend the poem clearly due

to its highly complex classifier system, morphology, and opening/closing discourse. In her conclusion, Cindy asked whether hearing and deaf people might not have different semiotic processes, a significant question she's posing in her research.

Matthew S. Moore's "Great Deaf Americans: Rediscovering our Heritage" opened his lecture



with the well-known quote: "Deaf people can do anything hearing people can do, except hear." Dr. I. King Jordan popularized this quotation when he became president of Gallaudet University in 1988. However, Matthew pointed out that Dr. Fred Schreiber said it first—in a 1972 address. It was an eye-opening introduction to the "unknown" achievements and discoveries of many deaf people.

Holly P. Roth, ASL Program Specialist at the Sign Language and Interpreter Education program at Gallaudet University's College for Continuing Education, presented her popular lecture, "Using Materials in an ASL Classroom," twice. With her sense of humor and dry wit, she made it fun learning and enjoyable. Ideally, the teacher must be friendly with a smile and a wonderful sense of humor that can make students laugh.

Samuel K. Holcomb led the open forum "Hot Issues in the field of ASL Teaching." The audience split up into five groups, each dealing with different aspects of ASL teaching: ASL Teachers, Classroom, Textbooks, Curriculum Design, and Credit. Each group brainstormed among themselves and then selected a presenter to report their main points. In his closing, Sam emphasized the need to "plug in" to each aspect of teaching with knowledge and expertise, since it isn't possible to teach without correlating to individual needs.

On Friday evening, October 8, the Silent Auction Gala was held at the Holidome. Its theme was "Celebrating Sign Language through the Arts." Deaf artists including Ann Silver, Bernard Bragg, Susan Dupor, Tony L. McGregor, Mary J. Thornley, Dorothy S. Hammond, and Joan Popovich-Kutscher contributed their artworks. The auction was open to public. Hors d'oeuvres

were served during the preview. Funds raised from the Gala benefit went to the ASLTA organization for future projects. (A portion of the proceeds went to the artists.)

The second day of the conference continued with different areas of ASL teaching. Led by an NTID faculty team, Lynn Finton and Leslie Greer, in their lecture "The Language Lab: Making It Work for You," they explored lab strategies for language teaching. The pros and cons of the language lab were discussed. Immediately after the lecture, a large discussion group gathered, sharing

concerns about ASL programs across the nation. The primary problem was lack of funding for the "state-of-the-art" equipment like digital technology. The secondary problem was borrowing space from language labs that are designed as audiovisual aids for hearing second-language learners. Christine A. Evenson, Coordinator of Interpreting/Transliterating Technology at Columbus State Community College, said that teaching and testing are complementary, integral parts of the learning process. During her lecture, she handed out her "Best Tests" materials, which stressed creativity and organizational skill. In his lively lecture, Dr. Mike Kemp pointed out that many second-language learners had great difficulty mastering role-shifting when the constructed dialogue or action involved the dual role of a narrator and a signer, or required three persons who are not present. Mike suggested an innovative way of using a rectangular "prop" of foam, which could help the students correct their spatial reference and eye-gazing.

The guest speaker for Saturday, October 9 was Dr. Harlan Lane. His presentation was titled "Origins of the Deaf-World: Genetics, Language, and Marriage



The guy who helped make it all happen: Matthew S. Moore, Conference Coordinator.

(Photo courtesy of MSM Productions, Ltd.)



At the Silent Auction Gala preview, attendees saw the artworks and made preliminary bids. They snacked and, of course, chatted.

(Photo courtesy of MSM Productions, Ltd.)



Registrants chatting between sessions in the Holidome lounge.

(Photo courtesy of MSM Productions, Ltd.)



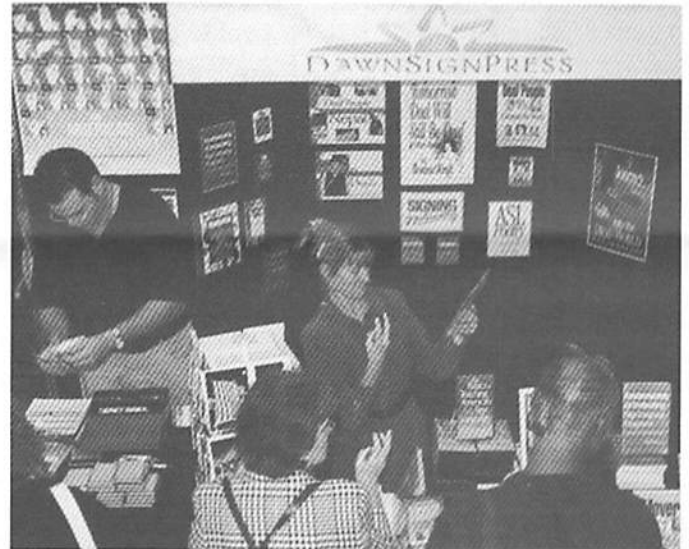
Conference sessions (keynote addresses, workshops, and presentations) were well-attended.

(Photo courtesy of MSM Productions, Ltd.)

Practices." He had studied three New England communities in New Hampshire, Martha's Vineyard, and Maine with regard to the complex social web of marriage practices and common goals, all of which differed among these communities. Based on his thorough research, he hypothesized that a "village" identity played a key role in building the close-knit community of deaf and hearing Martha's Vineyard islanders, while the other Deaf communities were strengthened by their "Deaf" identity. He hypothesized that genetics and the pattern of a dominant gene for deafness among the deaf people of Henniker, New Hampshire and Sandy River Valley, Maine, led to deafness being more isolated within families and thus to a "Deaf identity" and to the beginnings of Deaf Culture, whereas in Martha's Vineyard a non-dominant genetic pattern for deafness caused more incidences of deafness throughout a wider social network and within more families, fostering more widespread acceptance of deaf people and sign language within the "mainstream" social fabric of the Vineyard community. Deaf Vineyarders were not considered noteworthy or special and therefore, there is no indication within this community that deaf people developed a special identity or feeling of separation from the mainstream culture. They were an integral part of the community. This special presentation was sponsored by DawnSignPress.

The last day started with another round of workshops. E. Lynn Jacobowitz led "ASL Teacher Education Programs." She said that there were four existing programs available in the United

States: Columbia University, Gallaudet University, Western Maryland College, and University of Rochester. According to her study of collected information, 1,174 colleges and universities offered ASL classes in 1995—but with only 200 certified ASLTA teachers! Shared concerns relate to the



Catching up on the action (and the sights) at the DawnSignPress booth.

(Photo courtesy of MSM Productions, Ltd.)



Presenter Laurene Gallimore (left) having a typical high-energy conversation with another participant. (Photo courtesy of MSM Productions, Ltd.)

"boom" in self-made trainers connected to different fields such as Deaf Studies. Thirty-two states have already recognized ASL as a language. ASLTA is now facing the rapid growth of the ASL-teaching profession and is working to address this huge problem. The last open forum wrapped up with the ASLTA vision and its hopes for the future.

All in all, the conference was extremely successful, with its rich variety of topics, lecture-style or interactive, group-activity workshops, and opportunities for meeting new and old faces. Many presenters used humor and shared enjoyment of learning memorably. It was a great way to get together, share ideas, and network towards the goal of professional excellence in ASL teaching.

ASLTA's Second National Professional Development Conference will be held in Indiana in October 2001. It is expected to become a biennial event focusing on the continuity of ASL professional training. Very special thanks should be given to the hard-working ASLTA Conference Committee: Charles F. Bancroft, Leslie C. Greer, Barbara Ray Holcomb, Linda Levitan, David D. Long, Matthew S. Moore, and Diane White. Our major sponsors included: www.deaf.com ("Your Gateway to the Deaf Community"); DawnSignPress; the Department of ASL and Interpreting Education at NTID; the ASL Program at University of Minnesota; and Deaf Life/MSM Productions, Ltd.



This issue is dedicated to the memory of Isabelle Calvacca, who died on November 22, 1999. She will be fondly remembered as a fellow teacher and friend—and sorely missed.

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ASLTA

News from the Chapter Meeting

by Holly Roth and Laura J. Thomas



On October 9, 1999, from 7:30 to 8:30 am, ASLTA Chapter presidents and representatives held their chapters meeting at the Rochester Holiday Inn Hotel during the ASLTA 1st National Professional Development Conference weekend.

Laura Thomas, Chapter Affiliation/Bylaws Chair, introduced and welcomed current and newly affiliated chapters. All agreed that the most delightful appearance was Laura's brother, Alan Thomas, and to see this brother and sister partnership working for ASLTA. Alan Thomas is the hard-working webmaster for ASLTA. He may be young and new to ASLTA, however he is a very bright guy and has contributed many volunteer hours to designing the ASLTA website and updating it. Kudos to Alan!

A discussion topic focused on "what is the number of acceptable hours for a professional development workshop?" Evaluation Chair William Newell shared that during his ASLTA presidency, it was four hours per workshop. He emphasized the importance of professional development hours for members desiring to achieve certification status. After much discussion, it was agreed that an ad hoc committee comprised of three members (Glenna Ashton - FL, Tom Riggs - CO and Michael Kaufer - NY) to review this issue and present their recommendations before the 2000 NAD/ASLTA conference. At this time, it is strongly encouraged that chapters consider at least four hours per workshop (one in the fall and the second in the spring), however, the minimum of two hours will be accepted (until the committee presents their recommendations).

Another issue included knowing about available presenters for workshops. Chapters need assistance on selecting qualified presenters. Vice President Holcomb is currently on completing the Presenters Bureau and aims to have this distributed by the end of this year. It is also encouraged chapters look into ASLTA's website and see what workshops other chapters are providing. This will generate ideas for selecting topics and presenters.

New ASLTA chapter workshop attendance forms were distributed. They have been modified, and are much better than the older ones. If you were not

present at this meeting, and need copies, contact our Laura Thomas, Chapter Affiliation/Bylaws chair at chapter@aslta.org, for a copy.

Information and application forms were distributed regarding chapters' bank accounts. It is NOW required by NAD that all chapters have its own "employer identification number," known as EIN. Additionally, NAD will obtain federal nonprofit status for each ASLTA chapter by filling an application for a group exemption letter to the federal government. This is expected to be accomplished by the end of the year and chapters will be notified.

Laura Thomas identified the need for a "start-up" manual for new chapters (and revisions for current chapters). Pat Beech, of Veditz Chapter, volunteered to chair this project. Other members are welcome to share ideas and give input.

Pat Beech has also volunteered to assist Laura Thomas with the overall coordination of the ASLTA exhibit during the NAD/ASLTA conference ... the three chapters in Virginia will be the "host" with other chapters sharing space and time. Further information is forthcoming.

Everyone needs to prepare for the upcoming NAD/ASLTA 2000 conference to be held in Norfolk, VA, July 3 to 8, 2000. NAD and their workshops will be held at the Waterside Marriott Hotel while ASLTA's headquarters will be at the Sheraton. ASLTA workshops will be at the Sheraton also. ASLTA members are encouraged to submit abstracts for workshop presentations! Accepted presenters for ASLTA workshops will receive a waiver of the \$50.00 workshop fee.

As you know, NAD usually has a two-page ad in "Broadcaster News" to announce their upcoming conferences. We feel that ASLTA is just as important, and so we would also like to have a two-page ad in "Broadcaster News" to announce our conference next July in Norfolk.

REGISTRATION ALERT:

ASLTA/NAD "Early Bird I" - Deadline for registering is December 31, 1999. The cost will be \$180. ASLTA/NAD "Early Bird II" - Deadline for registering is April 15, 2000. The cost will be \$205. After April 15, 2000, the cost will be \$255. Be an "Early Bird!!!"

News from SECRETARY/ REGIONAL EDITORS
COORDINATOR

by Jan McCready-Johnson



WESTERN REGIONS

by Eric Scheir, Western Regional Editor

WASHINGTON ASLTA is now "official"!!

Eric Scheir, the Western Regional Co-editor is very pleased to announce that on October 1, 1999

Washington ASLTA was granted affiliation with the national ASLTA!

WORKSHOP "ASL TEACHING TECHNIQUES"

Betsy Burks gave a workshop on ASL Teaching Techniques at Portland Community College Sylvania in Portland, Oregon on November 5 & 6, 1999. It was sponsored by NWASLTA.

WORKSHOP "OPPRESSION"

ASLIS sponsored a workshop given by Ellie Savidge on "Oppression" on November 19 - 21, 1999. For more information: aslis@juno.com, or phone 206.860.3503. Seattle, Washington

SIGNING NATURALLY TRAINING

The Pudget Sound Tech-Prep Consortium and the Kent School District will sponsor a four-day training on Signing Naturally on January 13 - 16, 2000. It will cost \$400.00. The contact person for this training is Ruth Jacque - rjacq46151@aol.com.

WEBSITE FOR DEAF COMMUNITY IN WASHINGTON

This website has lots of information about a variety of topics related to deafness in Washington state. The reason I have included this particular site is because it has an events calendar that you might want to share with your students. Take a look!

ARIZONA ASLTA

In the past year, Arizona ASLTA has held two workshops "ASL Certification - What is it? How to get it?" by Tom Riggs. Another workshop was given by Pam Howard on "National Standards for Foreign Language Learning: What are They? and How to Incorporate Them Into Teaching ASL".

Election of Arizona ASLTA new officers on October 23, 1999 -President - Tom Riggs; Vice-President Tina

Neumann; Secretary/Treasurer - Pam Howard.

TeachASL -

<http://members.aol.com/alysser/teachasl.htm>

This is the website for the TeachASL listserv. The listserv is like an on-going chat room that focuses on issues related to teaching ASL. The website contains information and products developed from the activities on the listserv. You can subscribe to the listserv and lurk or join the discussions yourself (it's free!). Directions for how to join the listserv can be found at the website.

June 27 - 30, 2000, 4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEAF HISTORY

Researching, Preserving, and Teaching Deaf People's History, Gallaudet University, Washington, DC. Contact Audrey Wineglass at 202.651.6060; conference.cce@gallaudet.edu; www.gallaudet.edu/~dhiweb/dhi.html

EASTERN REGIONS

by Holly Roth, Eastern Regional Editor

Teacher (\$44.00) and Student (\$39.00) books on "Target Practice" by M. Lynn Woolsey, 1998, Butte Publications

"Target Practice: The teacher's resource for ASL games and activities" has a nice guide for the ASL teachers. For example: it tells how long an activity would be, which level, group size, materials and etc. It keeps on talking about safe environment. Anxiety can be a significant barrier to successful language learning. The teacher who designs a safe environment in the classroom will find that students, particularly adults, will be more likely to take risks.

This book is wonderful for non-deaf high schools because many ASL teachers are running out of activities since they teach every day. This book is for them as well for College/University level.

"The Laughing Classroom..." by Diane Loomans and Karen Kolberg, 1993, H.J. Kramer Inc., Calif.

This book, "The Laughing Classroom: Everyone's Guide to Teaching with Humor and Play" is a wonderful way to share information. It's a guide to help you reawaken your playful, spontaneous self, which may have gotten lost somewhere between correcting the papers and collecting the paycheck. It's a plea for play..an appeal for you to tap your

Continued on page 11

Letter from NAD Vice President

Dear ASLTA members,

It was a pleasure and a honor to be able to take part in the highly successful 1st ASLTA National Professional Development Conference in Rochester, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the National Association of the Deaf.

With over 21 workshops, the conference theme "Study Today, Teach Tomorrow" was especially appropriate. Over 300 registrants came to the conference to gain new information, acquire the latest training techniques, network with others, and establish new connections.

Many thanks should go to the Matthew Moore and his committee for their hard work in ensuring the success of ASLTA's first professional development conference!

The NAD values its partnership with ASLTA, and fully supports the expansion of certified ASLTA teachers nationwide. ASLTA-certified teachers, through their work, are making it



possible for hearing learners of ASL to develop a greater appreciation for our language, culture, and heritage.

The NAD applauds your efforts as well as the ASLTA Board in building a stronger and more influential organization. The growing professionalism of the field of ASL instruction is also bringing national recognition to ASLTA for its pioneering efforts. ASL teachers nationwide are now involved with interpreter training program efforts, and greater attention is being given to development of K-12 ASL curriculum. It is clear that there is much more work ahead of us.

Again, thank you for the rich opportunity to join your recent conference, on behalf of the NAD. Let us now focus on unity, to support of the efforts of both ASLTA and the NAD to improve the quality of life for all deaf and hard of hearing Americans!

Sincerely,
Kent Kennedy
NAD Vice President

"This book is terrific! I plan to use it in my graduate courses and with my patients who have hearing loss."

—Susan V. Rezen, Ph.D., CCC-A
Full Professor, Worcester State College

Clinical psychologist, Dr. Michael Harvey shares ten true stories of people struggling with hearing loss. Compassionate and honest, this book chronicles the unique and the universal issues faced not only by the people in the book, but by the therapist as he struggles to meet the psychological, social, and spiritual needs of those seeking his help.

Insightful and wise, *Odyssey of Hearing Loss: Tales of Triumph* is an important, healing gift for people who love and cherish, offer professional care to, or are themselves people with hearing loss.

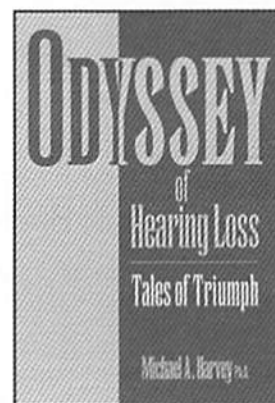
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ASLTA

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Richard Tennant, a former mathematics teacher who has studied American Sign Language extensively, resides in Acra, NY. Marianne Gluszak Brown, a child of deaf parents, is a member of the American Sign Language Teacher's Association and a professional interpreter certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, who works in Palisades, NY.

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AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

Please use this form to submit your abstract for a 60- or 90-minutes presentation, forum or discussion session related to applications to American Sign Language teaching/learning/linguistics and Deaf Culture for college/university level, K-12, L1/L2, and community-based, non-credit teaching at the 45th Biennial NAD Conference on July 3-8, 2000 in Norfolk, Virginia.

ABSTRACT REQUEST

(Please type or print all information).

Presenter/Co-Presenter(s) Name(s): _____

Address: _____

TTY/Voice: _____ E-mail: _____ FAX: _____

Presentation Title: _____

Proposed Format: _____ Lecture _____ Teaching Demonstration _____ Panel _____ Hands-on Workshop

Anticipated Target Audience: _____ College/University _____ K-12 _____ Community-based

Concurrent Session: _____ 60 minutes _____ 90 minutes

All workshop rooms will be equipped with overhead projector, screen and VCR/Monitor. Presenters are expected to provide their own handouts. **NOTE:** *Interpreters (voice and signing) will not be provided.*

Please attach this form with a description of the proposed presentation or workshop on a separate piece of paper. Limit 100 words in the description as it will be printed in the ASLTA conference program book. Please send a short biography about yourself.

Presenter's Expenses: The ASLTA will **not** be responsible for any expenses incurred by the presenter. The presenter is responsible for his/her travel, room, board and conference registration.

DEADLINE: January 30, 2000

Please send this completed form to:

Barbara Ray Holcomb, ASLTA Vice President
65 Covered Wagon Trail
West Henrietta, NY 14586
FAX (716) 475-6500

ABSTRACT

Please type no more than 100 words

Completed all in this form? Enclosed a biography of yourself? Attached your 5X7 photo with this form?

Continued from page 6 Roth

funny bone..not just on weekends, or during vacations, but during your teaching time, when you have the most influence and power.

The pages contain methods for creating a learning environment filled with trust, creativity, spontaneity, wonder, and joy. You'll find self-help tests, and other funny ideas intended to evoke laughter, play, and bonding in your classroom. These techniques are designed to be simple, fun and organized so that you can use them today, without a practice run. They have been polished and developed through trial and error and have been proven successful with thousands of teachers and students throughout the country.

Although many of the techniques can be used for a multitude of purposes, some work most effectively for building rapport, some enhance the learning process, and others are great energizers.

We need to remember that there are students who come to learn sign language scared. We need to teach ASL in a positive and fun environment and let the students feel comfortable and enjoy learning.

Please buy this book and it is not too expensive. It is only \$14.95. I read it over and over to help me reminding myself to be a good ASL teacher. You should too!

ASL ACCESS DONATED VIDEO COLLECTIONS

The two public libraries in Washington, DC and Fairfax, Virginia received the donations of the "Alice L. Hagemeyer American Sign Language Video Collection" and "Laurent Clerc American Sign Language Video Collection" respectively from the ASL Access.

ASL Access is a 100% volunteer, non-profit organization raising funds to purchase collections of ASL videos for donation to public libraries.

More information, look up at the website: www.aslaccess.org.

Is it acceptable for teachers to wear perfume or aftershave while teaching?

Years ago, this question was never asked -- it was a personal choice. But in today's world, more and more people appear to be highly sensitive to odors in the workplace. The smell of perfumes and aftershave lotions can cause some people to feel nauseated or to have headaches. In nursing schools, students are taught not to use perfumes or

aftershave because of close contact with patients. In stores, sales personnel cannot spray perfumes onto unsuspecting customers without permission because someone might prove to be allergic to the spray, or to be highly sensitive to it. As teachers, we must be concerned with our students' needs on this subject. We should arrive at class freshly bathed and in clean clothes, but we should avoid wearing perfumes, aftershaves, or any other substance with a strong odors. You never know who might be allergic or sensitive

Code of Ethics for ASLTA

Please check into ASLTA web site for their new "code of ethics". It was developed by June Reeves, Barbara Ray Holcomb and Leslie Greer. There are 10 principles and please do take the time to read each one. It is well written by them.

- Principle #1: Content Competence
- Principle #2: Teaching/Pedagogical Competence
- Principle #3: Dealing with Alternative Points of View
- Principle #4: Equitable Treatment for all Students
- Principle #5: Relationships with Students
- Principle #6: Confidentially
- Principle #7: Respect for Colleagues
- Principle #8: Valid Assessment of Studnets
- Principle #9: Respect for the Profession of ASL/Deaf Studies Teaching
- Principle #10: Respect for Institution

ASLTA Chapters with their own web site page

There are only two ASLTA Chapters with their own web site pages. That are Florida ASLTA and Veditz ASLTA (VA). We need to have each chapter to do it's own chapter web site page along with the main ASLTA web site. It has a lot of information like the past and future workshops/trainings, events and etc. Please take a look at their web site. It is really cool.



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News from Board Liaison

by E. Lynn Jacobowitz



After completing my term as ASLTA president, I took a long leave of absence from the NAD-ASLTA office. I realize now that I miss the action at the NAD-ASLTA office, getting no news from the ASLTA members, and keeping in touch with the new ASLTA board officers. I am glad to be back in action and operate in a different capacity. I am sure the ASLTA board officers are making very good progress on their own.

How about the good news with the JCNL-NCLIS? Jay Innes, Kathee Christiansen, Laurene Gallimore, Larry Fleischer, Mel Carter, and I worked hard to establish recognition and become an official member of these important professional and lobbying organizations. We are now in the same league as ACTFL, TESOL, and other language organizations. We will soon receive training to become language activists and lobbyists. This is what ASLTA needs. But before that, ASLTA members must be professionally ASLTA certified and obtain proper credentials (degrees) in the field of ASL, Linguistics, and the like in order to make our lobbying efforts worthwhile. If there is an insufficient number of certified teachers, then our arguments for requiring states to recognize ASLTA certification will be difficult or moot. Please get your ASLTA certifications and help us raise the professional status of ASL pedagogy/ androgogy. I think it's high time we tell all language organizations that we have home page, etc. Did any of you read Nov. 9th issue of *Chronicles of Higher Education (CHE)*? ASL classes in high education rose 165% from 1995 to 1998!! Wow. That tell us that there are a lot of ASL teachers out there are NOT certified. It is best that the board informs the CHE about our organization, a certifying body of ASL teachers, exists!!!

During my "sabbatical" I attended two language conferences. The first one was the ASLTA conference in Rochester. This was successful because of the great planning by MSM Productions and the co-coordinators, Leslie Greer and Barbara Ray-Holcomb. Many workshops were concurrent, which made it hard to decide which to attend.

However, I am sure you agree that they were beneficial for us.

The other conference I attended was called the William C. Stokoe and the Study of Signed Languages. This one was held at Gallaudet. It was also successful and well planned. I didn't have to choose workshops because there were no concurrent sessions; each presentation was in the Kellogg Conference Center Swindells Auditorium. It was a great learning experience for me. I want to thank the ASLTA board for funding my registration attendance and giving me the opportunity to share my views with you, the ASLTA members, in this newsletter. Below is a summary of the highlights of the conference.

THE WILLIAM C. STOKOE AND THE STUDY OF SIGNED LANGUAGES

In honor of William C. Stokoe's 80th birthday, the conference started off with I. King Jordan recalling Stokoe's his early days at Gallaudet telling the world that American Sign Language was a language of its own and how many of us viewed Dr. Stokoe as a crazy man with weird ideas. In addition to his presentation, he explained that Dr. Stokoe had a huge impact, not only at Gallaudet, but to the world who emulated his study and applied his linguistic principles and research in other countries' signed languages. In Jordan's letter in the program, he mentioned that "[t]his recognition of ASL has had an enormously positive impact on the struggle of deaf people everywhere for educational and human rights." I noticed that there were a lot of deaf people participating in the conference which made me realized how this important field of study, ASL Linguistics, has changed our lives. We not only teach ASL, but we research on our language as well. Jordan suggested that Stokoe's research has led to universal recognition of the signed languages of deaf people as equal in status to the spoken languages of hearing people.

On Friday, October 15 at 7 p.m., there was a panel called, "Reflections, Memories, and Sentiments: William C. Stokoe - A Career in Review." The moderator was Arlene Blumenthal Kelly (Deaf Studies), and the panelists were Gil Eastman (former professor of Theatre Arts), MJ Bienvenu (ASL, Linguistics and Interpretation), Carl Croneberg (former professor of the English Department) and Britta Hansen (Director, Centre for Sign Language and Sign Supported Communication, Copenhagen, Denmark). Each

panelist discussed their encounters with Dr. Stokoe and how they thought of him back in the early 1970s.

On Saturday, October 16 at 8:30 a.m., "Trends in Sign Language Research: Historical, Current, and Future Perspectives" was moderated by John Vickery "Vic" Van Cleve. The panelists were Douglas Baynton (University of Iowa), Scott Liddell (Gallaudet University), Ted Supalla and Elissa Newport (University of Rochester).

The other symposium that was on Saturday, October 16 at 11 a.m., "The Impact of Sign Language Research on Language Acquisition", was moderated by Carlene Thumann-Prezioso and the panelists were all hearing: John Bonvillian (University of Virginia), Carol Erting (Gallaudet University), and Virginia Volterra (Istituto di Psicologia del CNR, Rome, Italy).

On Sunday, October 17 at 8:15 a.m., in another symposium, Dr. Sherman Wilcox explained that

Stokoe was like Floyd Wright who was full of ideas but could not get them out. He said that Stokoe was an architect of linguistic ideas. At the end of the conference, Carol Padden, in her closing speech, challenged us to ask whether we need a place (clubs for the deaf, schools for the deaf) to preserve ASL. We have state associations, religion organizations, sport leagues, professional organizations (ASLTA), etc. to preserve, promote and perpetuate ASL. In addition, she explained that sign language is not diminishing or dying because there is ongoing linguistic research, educational study of language acquisition and literacy, language assessment and evaluation, and new sign languages popping up in other parts of world. Her presentation left me mesmerized and I left the conference with great feelings as well as overwhelming thoughts of future of ASL linguistics. We still have so much to learn!

News from the Evaluation Chair

by William J. Newell, Ph.D.



Evaluations for Professional Certification Planned

ASLTA is planning to offer the Professional Level Certification Interview on July 1 & 2 (depending on how many candidates we have registered).

These dates are Saturday and

Sunday prior to registration day for the NAD/ASLTA Conference which will occur on July 3, 2000 in Norfolk VA.

If you currently hold the Qualified level certification and meet the criteria to be interviewed for the Professional Certification, please mark the dates above and make your plans to take the Professional Level Certification Interview. All persons holding the Qualified Level Certification will be notified by mail in March regarding this opportunity to be evaluated for the Professional Level Certification.

If you currently hold the Provisional Level Certificate and meet the criteria of professional development hours and classroom teaching hours to take the Qualified Level Certification examination, please contact me as soon as

possible to get started. There is still time for you to complete the Qualified Level examination and be ready to take the Professional Level Certification examination in Norfolk.

Congratulations to our newest Professional Level Certificate Awardees

It is my pleasure to announce the following individuals have been awarded the Professional Level Certification from ASLTA.

Thomas Riggs, Arizona

Cindy Campbell, New York

Congratulations on this outstanding achievement!

ASLTA Evaluation Information Online

Information regarding the ASLTA Evaluation & Certification System is available online at our website at: www.aslta.org The Screening Application is available online to be printed and sent to the Evaluation Chairperson. Interested persons may also contact the Evaluation Chairperson at: evaluation@aslta.org

We look forward to seeing you in Norfolk. Come Celebrate our 25th Anniversary!

Dear Friends,

There are no adequate words to express our feelings of gratitude upon receiving the first Veditz award in honor of Marie, given during the ASLTA convention last July in San Antonio and brought to us by Alma Bournazian.

The award states, "The Veditz Award in recognition of Marie Philip's significant contribution to the field of Bilingual-Bicultural education. A Staunch supporter of ASLTA in recognizing ASL as a language and advocacy for bilingual-bicultural education for Deaf children."

We could not agree more. The Learning Center for Deaf Children, which Marie was so devoted to and an integral part of, stands as a model for schools across the country and internationally. But it is not enough. We need to work together to continue what Marie started.

Marie worked tirelessly to spread her 'gospel' of ASL, other signed languages, Deaf culture, and world cultures to a variety of people of all ages and backgrounds. MJ Bienvenu told us of the time she attended a sign language class Marie was teaching at Harvard University. MJ was awed by Marie's rapport with her students and the seamless way she blended teaching ASL and Deaf

culture into a message that inspired them. The students responded to Marie's style of teaching with high spirits that encouraged them to continue to learn.

We received so many letters from people whose lives were influenced by their experiences with Marie. These letters were very touching, and painful to read when our loss was so new, but when we read them again, we will smile with pride and nod in agreement with the tributes to her influence.

George Veditz is renowned for the wonderful films of ASL he made to preserve his cherished language. In her own way, Marie made a similar contribution to the survival of ASL. Now it is our turn to take on this work and continue the dreams of George Veditz and Marie Philip with the next generation.

Again, we are deeply honored to received this award on behalf of Marie and offer our sincere thanks to the ASLTA. May you carry on the work as a strong organization for us all.

Warmly,
The Philip Family
Doris, Sue, Joan, Jessica and Jonah

K-12 ASL CURRICULUM

by Rachel E. Stone, Ph.D. and Laurene E. Gallimore, M.Ed.

In Rochester, New York prior to the American Sign Language Association Conference, the working session was held at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf and Holiday Inn for one and a half day on October 7 and 10, 1999. The following individuals of the committee attended the session: Rachel Stone, Co Coordinator - ASL L1, MD; Laurene Gallimore, Co-Coordinator - ASL L2, OR; Lynn Jacobowitz, Liaison and Project Coordinator, MD; Glenna Ashton, FL; Betsy Burks, OR; Kerry Carter, VA; Malcolm Peters, IN; Beatrice Pfaff, IN; Janice Smith Warshaw, MD; Kristi Winter, OR. On the October 6th arrival day, the group met in the NTID with the co-coordinators to discuss the program content and logistics for the meetings.

ASL - Second Language learners (L2): Gallimore

reported the summary of the ASL L-2 committee's work which was done in Portland, Oregon last February 25-28, 1999. After getting feedback and input from the local forum of ASL -L2 teachers, the committee completed the second draft which includes introductory sections, principles, standards, and performance descriptors. The elementary level content is completed and the committee continued to work on the secondary level content during the whole day, Oct. 6th.

ASL- First Language Users (L1)

The committee met twice before the Rochester Conference. We met in Silver Spring, Maryland in March to work on the benchmarks and completed K-3 grade levels. The second meeting was held in Indianapolis, Indiana in June and completed the rest to 12th grade. Last month in Rochester reviewing and making changes were done but the portion of each area was not completed. The first

draft was presented to the ASLTA board on Sunday, Oct. 10th.

On Sunday early morning, Oct. 10th, Stone and Gallimore made the presentation to the ASLTA board. Presented were: President Leslie C. Greer, Vice President Barbara Ray

Holcomb, Secretary/Treasurer Janhane McCready-Johnson, Evaluation Chair Bill Newell, Chapter Affiliation/ByLaws Chair Laura J. Thomas, and Project Director/Liaison Lynn Jacobowitz. The roles and duties of the committee as well as the project director/

liaison were discussed for clarification including handling the logistics such as travel, lodging, and meal expenses. The co-coordinators are mainly responsible for the content of the framework. The board shared

their feedback on the given guidelines/standards drafts. They continue a strong support for the committee work.

On Sunday afternoon, Oct. 10th, Stone presented the report regarding the meeting with the K-12 committee. The items were presented as follows:

1. Both groups of the committee shared the summary of their October 6th progress.
2. Lynn Jacobowitz discussed her role and duties as a project director/liaison. She handles logistics such as travel, lodging, and meal expenses. Also, she is responsible for all finances of the project such as seeking grants, fund raising, etc.
3. The title of the framework booklet, "Handbook" needs to be deleted since the "guidelines and standards" are pretty much self explanatory.
4. The website regarding the project will be available sometimes in the late winter.
5. Individuals of the committee are required to obtain an ASLTA certification by July, 2000 during the NAD conference in Norfolk.
6. Based on the criteria for serving on the committee, the decision was made that each participant should remain on the committee as long as the individual's present employment involves teaching either L1 or L2 ASL; however, some participants stepped out due to changes in

their jobs and a search would begin underway to replace the individuals. A sincere appreciation goes to Brian Brizendine, Betsy Burks, Malcolm Peters, Beatrice Pfaff and Janice Smith Warshaw for their past hard work and dedication. Their contribution to the project is significant and should not go unrecognized for their great effort.

7. However, Warshaw and Peters will continue voluntarily to work with their respective schools and report to Stone in the progress.
8. The next meeting/site was discussed and the committee preferred to attend the working session sometimes in April or late July, 2000.
9. Several schools were named as possible sites for a pilot study. Contacts will be made to the selected sites soon.
10. We identified several individuals who may be interested in assisting with the project as consultants.
11. Lynn Jacobowitz will develop a flowchart of the ASL K-12 committee and other interested individuals.
12. Stone and Gallimore will write up a letter of appreciation including a summary of the progress and the future plans to the committee's agencies for their generous support.
13. An announcement will be made through Internet sometimes in January for the individuals who wish to serve on the K-12 project committee. Contact either Stone or Gallimore if interested. In order to service on the committee, the individual must have at least a certificate, either provisional, qualified, or professional, from the ASLTA Organization. Also, the individual must be in the current position of teaching ASL to any level in the K-12 setting, either L1 or L2.

If you have any questions about the project, please do not hesitate to contact Rachel Stone (DrRStone@aol.com) and/or Laurene Gallimore (galliml@wou.edu)



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Silver Spring, MD
20910-4500



Address Service Requested

Come and chat with other members
in the ASLTA Room at www.deafchat.com!

The text is surrounded by several decorative snowflakes of various sizes and orientations, scattered across the page.

*The ASLTA Board
wishes you a happy,
healthy, and enriching
holiday season!*