

Minutes
WCTELA Fall Board Meeting
Kathy Nelson, Secretary

Friday evening, September 22, 2006

Members present: Carol Conway-Gerhardt, Emily Tymus Ihrke, Lynn Aprill, & Kathy Nelson

Lynn opened the meeting by sharing the WAFLT's (Wisconsin Association of Foreign Language Teachers) State Convention brochure. Contrasting their 3-day convention with our 1-day one, Lynn noted that their breakout sessions had as many as 18 offerings. Apparently, they combine their journal with their convention publication.

This prompted a discussion on how we could increase the scope of our convention/our organization. Broadening the theme might be one way to attract larger numbers. Next we discussed the need and ways to heighten WCTELA's name recognition and enhance its reputation by increasing the contributions we make to our field.

We discussed the need to push for more technical writing. Carol suggested partnering with the tech schools to see what skills they needed in our high school graduates. We questioned the existence of a tech school instructors' professional organization.

Carol reported on the state superintendents' meeting she'd just attended. She stressed a need for teaching technical reading/writing ability. Lynn suggested students write directions for video games or how to use iPods, remote controls, and cell phones. We even considered pairing students with senior centers to write instructions for them.

We identified a target population of pre-service teachers to court for membership. We reasoned if we can fulfill a need for them at the pre-service point, they might continue with our organization. This led to the suggestion of a job fair (job coaching seminar). We suggested a gathering of student teachers, who would attend sessions on resumes—perhaps providing editing services for them; on dress for success; on interview skills—perhaps have our members role play asking potential job interview questions one-on-one with them. We identified a need to identify methods programs w/in the state. Lynn suggested charging a fee that included first years' dues for WCTELA to hook them into sustaining membership. We discussed hosting this at a college setting vs. a site they might want to see but not otherwise have access to. A January/February time frame was considered to be most desirable. We wondered if we couldn't pilot such a session yet this year in the Milwaukee area where more colleges might be included such as UWM, UW-Whitewater, UW-Parkside, Cardinal Stritch, Concordia, Wisconsin Lutheran, Carthage, and Carroll.

Lynn concluded the meeting with an overview of the summer's Affiliate Builder Sub-groups' goal setting reports'

Saturday morning, September 23, 2006

Present: Lynn Aprill, Gerhard Fischer, Ruth Wood, Emily Tymus Ihrke, Carol Conway-Gerhardt, John Zbikowski, & Kathy Nelson

We gathered and rehashed the work of the previous night on the foreign language state convention brochure.

John reported that only 5 had registered for the state conference so far despite his emailing 150 of 195 members on or about September 1st the registration materials. He also shared disappointment in the number of hits at the WCTELA web site.

Emily suggested we include the suggested reading list on our web site. Gerhard expressed reservations and said we can link to another organization's list. Perhaps we could have a book club-like list. John shared that Catherine Conover, Whitewater, used to have a session at our conference of books people are reading.

We discussed perhaps using our Wisconsin Literary Map poster as a source for our online attraction maybe include a Wisconsin Authors list. Gerhard shared several names.

Someone suggested we should invite CCBC (Cooperative Children's Book Center-Megan Schliesman) to our November convention.

John discussed needs for 2-4 more sectionals at the upcoming convention and suggested some for next year: Bookseller inclusion as a sectional.

We discussed the name change of our organization and decided to put the name change on the Thursday night agenda for November. Kathy offered her husband's legal service if one is needed to officially make a name change.

Carol shared regrets for not being able to attend convention; and Emily and Lynn offered to take over her awards presentation responsibilities.

Lynn reminded John and Kathy of attendance at WEA and WCA state conventions.

Next we discussed the adoption of a new mission statement as suggested by the sub-group from this summer's session. Lynn had floated a few suggestions to board members in August. The board members responding had favored: WCTELA – Promoting best practices in English/Language Arts through collegiality, mentoring and scholarship.

Ruth opened the discussion by questioning parts and the full original list was shared.

After some brainstorming we all agreed on: WCTELA strengthens the teaching of English/Language Arts through collegiality, mentoring, and scholarship.

We discussed amending the wording for both a slogan and a mission statement. Lynn will put it on the agenda for discussion at the November board and the voters' meetings.

Next the production of a WCTELA Brochure was discussed Ruth suggested including testimonial within it. John suggested using photos from the last newsletter. Most encouraged producing a tri-fold brochure before the November conference. Someone suggested the slogan: English Teachers Working Together be included.

Lynn next discussed her goal of surveying our membership about what they need? She asked for other ideas of what to ask. What do they use the Internet for to enhance their practice? What helps them do their job/what impedes them from doing their job better? What keeps them from joining? Emily reminded us that we were surveying current members. So Lynn said she might look for a way to survey non-members. Ruth suggested asking members to make copies and circulate the survey to their teaching peers. John suggested a \$5-10 discount on next year's conference fee.

Ruth mentioned she had an abundance of back issues of the journal. We discussed journal back issue sales and agreed that a \$5 charge including postage would be best.

John brought up the topic of online elections and noted the limit on boomerang. It was suggested he divide the state into regions and tally the totals from each. He thought that might work.

We readdressed the topic discussed the previous night—job fair for pre-service teachers. Everyone supported the idea of a February pilot in SE Wisconsin should include membership in the charge. It should be added to the agenda for the November meeting for further discussion.

John shared his recent discovery of the State English Teachers Convention to be sponsored by the UW system to be held Friday, October 6 at Pyle's Center in Madison—fee is \$18 inc. lunch. All expressed surprise and wondered why we couldn't join forces. Ruth was the only one to have heard of it and plans to attend. She had mistakenly thought it was being offered through the DPI. She agreed to report back to us on it.

John reported that our affiliate was envied because of our Endowments—Poole Fund. Someone asked about making known the ability to donate to it.

After a brief discussion of hotel room availability and the board meeting agenda, Lynn adjourned the meeting.