

George - Full. Still waiting to hear from Rich Rehlman about whether we can do CAM in July at NCTE. Jan Johnson

November 20, 1993

NETWORKING NOTES FOR THE HEADS AND TALES NOVEMBER 94 STORYTELLING IN EDUCATION CONFERENCE -- from Larry Johnson

1. A wonderful PR committee formed at the Nov 6 Northlands board meeting in Madison. Headed by Tim Sears (830 E. Briar Ridge Drive, Waukesha, Wisc., 53186; 1-414-789-7361), this committee includes Larry Johnson, Marsha Valance, Jennifer Munro, Marie Ringenberg, and George Nelsen. Tim has already sent his notes to the committee. Since I am sending this to the entire board and all regional networkers, I am including Tim's memo only to persons who need to get brochure info to Tim by Feb 15, and to state reps who are asked to help get organizational addresses and mailing lists to Marie Ringenberg ASAP. Those state reps are Tim Sears and Kathy Prestidge (Wisc), Jennifer Munro and Supe O. (Illinois), Jan Irving and Betty Husted (Iowa), Alan Atkinson and Harriette M (Minn) George Nelsen (So. Dakota), and Cindy Guthrie (Michigan).

Again, to try to stem the paper mill, I am assuming that people getting this have their own listing of Northlands board members and/or the membership list that appears in the Grapevine. If you need any of this, you may request it from me by leaving a message on my answering machine, or in writing along with a list of addresses (I'll forward them to Marie) or with some news of a wonderful contact you've made for the conference. Remember, call for proposals are due to Mark Wagler in Madison by December 15, and structured word of mouth is almost always a best way to interest people. (My address and phone is Larry Johnson, 315 Georgia N Golden Valley, Minn, 55427; 612-546-1074).

2. I'm enclosing a full-page copyable flyer (updated from the one Iris sent out with the board agenda). Feel free to copy and distribute in person, or by mail, or . . . think about having places like school systems or library systems send it thru inter-institution mail with the new Northlands Directory of tellers. I'm doing that here because the libraries frequently get requests for tellers and appreciate having our list. This raises another board discussion and budget item relative to finding how to do this kind of event -- I heard Cynthia say at board meeting to copy the directory yourself and send her the receipts for reimbursal. (Cynthia Sorenson, treasurer, 308 West 22nd St. #101, Mpls, Minn, 55404-2304. TRUST and SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL have been the guidelines and watchwords of Northlands since its inception. Will planning an event like this get so big that we need some systems of who can approve and spend money?

Another thought as we move toward planning Elkader -- how can promotion of Elkader dovetail with promoting the conference and vice versa? Might the two events be mentioned in each others flyers and news releases, etc as as Jerry Wellik's St Cloud conference mentioned the Heads and Tales in their brochure in exchange for Northlands support of that conference. (A wonderful one)

And finally, I invite the PR committee to supercede the current half-page flyer with a flashier one if that fits into their plan.

3. NOW REGIONAL NETWORKING and the Networkers phone meeting held at the Nov 6 board meeting. When Mark asked me to take this on almost a year ago, I viewed it as a way to early promote the conference thru existing "networks" like various storytelling and related organizations, as well as thru committed storytellers working in the various educational communities we've identified (storytellers, e.g. like Craig Roney and Jerry Wellik, who know the university systems and organizations and are willing to interpret the conference thru their contacts to people who might not otherwise be interested because they don't view themselves as storytellers or having anything to do with it)

See next page

Certainly this effort will always be related to PR and should be linked with the work the PR committee is doing, but more than that, its about the USING STORYTELLING IN COMMUNITY-BUILDING AND CULTURAL WORK that Northlands has always mostly been about. For me, since Elaine and I are on the advisory committee for the Cultural Environmental Movement George Gerbner announced in the keynote at the 1990 NAPPS Congress in St. Paul, its about Gerbner's statement that sadly today, "the stories arent being told by caring parents, teachers, clergy, teachers,. etc but by distant business conglomerates with something to sell via TV" (I've enclosed the CEM summary, entitled 2nd American Revolution). Our conference and the regional networking is about finding, supporting, and/or building the networks already in the region and the country to ENCOURAGE ALL PEOPLE TELLING THEIR STORIES "EDUCATIONALLY" IN THE COMMUNITIES WE'VE DEFINED -- schools, libraries, nature centers, historical museums, religious institutions, universities, and therapeutic learning environments. Perhaps we should have included parents, but almost everyone in these communities are parents or grandparents and we need to highlight that storytelling connection to education in the empowering parts of our conference. (You should know that Marieli Rowe of Natl Telemedia Council is hosting a half day first regional organizing meeting for CEM either just before or after our conference or just before or after the NCTE Media Education conference in Madison in July. The idea is for like minded persons who come for one to stay on for the other, and however it gets decided, there will be cross-promotion).

Some of the regional networkers have talked about a newsletter to pull their communities together (Carol Soth has already done one for naturalists out of the NAPPS CONGRESS in Seattle, and Elaine and Julie are talking about one for therapeutic types). Since Jay Stailey responded to the Nov 6 phone meeting with contacts (entire letter reproduced for a few who should have it) and news of his work with NAPPS to have them support this effort, I'm going to suggest Carol's idea of each area having a regular space in the Yarnspinner (the Naturalist Storyteller's corner) or as we rethink the Northlands Grapevine, maybe we should build these columns into what we do. This year as we move toward the conference the Grapevine only could go free to additional people identified by the regional networkers (so they'd get the column and so whole new newsletters need'nt be created right away). After the conference, this could be re-evaluated, and/or all freebies could be asked to join if they wish to continue receiving.

Now, so people can communicate with each other, here are addresses and phone and notes in the different areas:

SCHOOLS -- I'm serving as regional schools person (address above) and am enclosing our video exchange writeup (if you already got one, please pass it on; Misterogers Neighborhood Production team just called because someone did) but I'm adding Jay Stailey, Principal, Storyteller, NAPPS Board Member, and chair of NAPPS Education Initiative; 723 E. Shore Drive, Clear Lake Shores, Texas, 77565; 713-334-1430. Mark is the local schools person (Madison) and can be reached at 519 Orchard #2, Madison, Wisconsin, 53715; 608-258-8833. Since Mark is experimenting with E-mail networking, you should know Tim Sears is playing around with Internet, which is a major educational computer network.

UNIVERSITIES -- Jerry Wellik, Special Ed Dept and Storyteller at St. Cloud State is regional person and can be reached at 18483 Dover, Clearwater, Minnesota, 55320; 612-588-6894 (h). St. Cloud conference was wonderful and they ended (Nov 13) discussing how to do the second annual at a different time so as not to conflict and how to continue helping to promote. David Schaafsma is Madison contact at 413 Clemons Ave., Madison, Wisconsin, 53704; (h) 608-242-1953 and (w) 608-263-5980. I'll include Craig Roney in Michigan because he's actively promoting by word of mouth thru NCTE, IRA, and many others. Jay Stailey also connected here.

NATURE CENTERS -- Carol Soth has agreed to be the regional contact, all the way from 1125 Cherry St., Missoula, Montana, 59802; 406-721-5068. Carol is an environmental education consultant and storyteller, and started doing this networking after the NAPPS Congress when she agreed to keep the environmentalist tellers connected. I'm going to list Susan Gilchrist here (2222 Rusk St., Madison, Wisconsin, 53704; 608-249-3795) because her work most closely aligns her to nature center area, but also she chairs the program committee which encompasses that as well as therapeutic environments, libraries, museums, and religious educators. The Madison Nature Center site coordinator is Molly Murray at the UW Arboretum, but for now communications in most of these areas are with Susan.

THERAPEUTIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS -- Regional chairs are Elaine Wynne (same address and phone as Larry, so in some cases you might save postage or phone calls) Julie Kallio at 11200 - 36th Place No., Plymouth, Minnesota, 55441; 612-559-5157 (h) or 612-377-8800 (w). This is under Susan's Community Program committee, but there was discussion at the meeting about the important connection with the schools, so this is perhaps a bit of a maverick area. Also, personal connection is already made with Elaine and Melinda Bailey, the local site coordinator for this area, so I'll list Melinda at 2545 Marshall Parkway, Madison, Wisconsin, 53713. 608-251-4655

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS -- Regional networkers are Sarah Meybaum, 3522 Harriet Ave. So., #205, Mpls, Minn, 55408; 612-825-3965, and Cindy Guthrie, 2737 Military St. Port Huron, Michigan, 48060; 313-984-5512. Unfortunately, both Sarah and Cindy missed the phone meeting at the board meeting, but Sarah reports handing out 700 copies of her newsletter that day with a prominent article about the HEADS AND TAILS CONFERENCE. Local site coordinator is Bill White at Bethel Lutheran, but communication presently thru Susan. David Berg in Madison is committed programmatically to this area and was at first organizing meeting in Elkader -- Box 45238, Madison, Wisconsin, 53744-5238 (don't have a phone #)

LIBRARIES -- Judy Busack, 821 Walnut St., West Bend, Wisconsin, 53095; 414-334-7868 is regional person, and Barb Huntington is Madison site coordinator.

MUSEUMS -- Still don't have a solid regional commitment, but have talked to Will Hollnagel. Local site person is Monica Brei at State Historical in Madison.

4. A new network or one that runs throughout revolves around Maren's contacts to bring international storyteller educators. This also became defined as GLOBAL/MULTICULTURAL. Maren Hinderlie is at 4344 Colfax, Mpls, Minn, 55409; 612-825-9479. For those who've been concerned that we don't have a fund-raising committee, Maren has initiated one to help defray expenses of such guests coming from a distance, or perhaps from nearby with a financial need and a background that the program committee and/or board really wants represented at the conference. Thanks, Maren, and I'm sending this to Madeline Uranek at Intl Studies at UW-Milwaukee. She can't get into helping to plan or work, but she has good contacts that may spring from her office.
5. Final notes -- Anne Pryor is Madison PR contact, but is on leave till January. Nancy Lanyon, 177 Division St., Madison, Wisc. 53704; 608-249-0788 (h) or 608-246-4692(2) is chair of hospitality and will have much info for brochure. Maggie Felker is either officially or unofficially co-chair. If I missed anybody or anything that should be here, I'm sorry. I didn't get any lists from the committees that met in Madison, except for PR, so some detail could be missing, but I think the key areas are all here. NOW LETS WORK AND TALK IT UP.

The Second American Revolution

Recently, a small group of concerned citizens gathered in a borrowed Washington, D.C. conference room to launch what they called the *Cultural Environmental Movement*. Their intention: to address the problems of an increasingly centralized, globalized and mass-marketed media environment, and move toward a more democratic cultural policy.

by George Gerbner

Our cultural environment is the system of stories and images that cultivates much of who we are, what we think, what we do, and how we conduct our affairs. Until recently, it was primarily hand-crafted, home-made, community-inspired. It is not that anymore. We have just begun to take the measure of that transformation.

Now, for the first time in human history, our children are born into an environment of images and messages independent of their home, their school, their church, their neighborhood, and often even of their native country. Stories about life, the world and the values we seek are now largely mass-produced and mass-marketed. The most frequent storytellers are no longer parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, teachers, friends or clergy with their own stories to tell, but a handful of distant conglomerates with something to sell. These startling developments have changed the way we learn, grow up, and relate to each other.

For many people these developments appear to be an enrichment of local horizons, a sense of involvement in the mainstream culture. For most of us they also mean a greater common outlook: homogenized and detached from other views of life. For media professionals these changes mean a growing compulsion to present life in salable packages. They still enlighten and entertain, occasionally even challenge, but, on the whole, only as long as their stories fit marketing strategies and priorities.

This media condition did not emerge spontaneously. Yet its consequences were never anticipated or publicly deliberated. In fact, it was a radical departure overriding sig-

nificant public opposition, a fact little noted in our history books. Its worldwide fallout and human implications have only recently been studied and are just beginning to be understood.

The new cultural environment means the blurring of diverse outlooks and interests, the blending of perspectives into a cultural mainstream, and the bending of that mainstream to the service of global investors and sponsors. No longer are media separately produced and selectively used local communications. As electronic technologies erode traditional markets they further consolidate ownership, content, reach and power. They integrate into a system transcending local and national boundaries. They animate our imaginations, cultivate our conceptions of reality, guide the shaping of public policy, and define life's choices as effectively as the physical environment decides life's chances.

As consumers we pay for this. The price of most goods includes an amount that exceeds the cost of selling them. This "levy" finances the media market-place wherein advertisers buy our time and attention and sell their wares and values. The price of a bar of soap includes the cost of the "soap opera" that tells us about both the soap *and* a way of life.

We pay this extra dividend for the products we buy even if we've never read or watched the ads.

For advertisers, this is a business expense, tax-deductible whether it is useful or not. For example, the largest single influence over most media is the market-power of tobacco-money-driven global conglomerates whose cultural clout is protected and supported by the public

treasury. This is taxation without representation. To society it is a way of preempting alternatives, divorcing payment from choice, and denying public participation in media decision-making. Taxation without representation triggered the First American Revolution. The same process on a larger scale and with a deeper human impact inspires the Cultural Environmental Movement.

The Movement is concerned with these distortions of the democratic process. Their damaging consequences, the problems that marketing priorities cannot resolve and often exacerbate include the cultivation of mentalities and behaviors that drug, hurt, poison and kill thousands every day: portrayals that stereotype and dehumanize. Media violence creates a cult of desensitization, intimidation and terror. This drift leads us toward the inevitable environmental crunch, the silent crumbling of our infrastructure and the neglect of vital cultural and social systems. Make-believe media politics corrupts the democratic process and perpetuates the growing siege mentality of our cities.

How can we heal the wounds of all the stories that hurt and tear us apart? How can we build on our strengths and break these debilitating constraints? How can we work toward a freer, fairer, and more liberating cultural environment?

We must reclaim the rights gained through centuries of struggle, the U.S. Constitution, democratic law, and the basic principles of liberal education and self-government. We must mobilize Americans to act as citizens as effectively as commercials mobilize us to act as consumers.

Individual effort, local action and national constituencies acting in concert can help to begin that long and difficult task. We invite further suggestions to our proposals for specific lines of action. These include:

- Building a new coalition involving: international media councils; teachers, students and parents; human-rights groups concerned with the rights of children, women and the elderly; minority groups and religious organizations; environmental and legal associations; consumer groups; creative voices in the media, arts and sciences; and others committed to broadening the freedom and diversity of the media mainstream.

- Opposing domination and working to abolish existing censorship, public or private, both of and by the media. That includes

exposing the media's use of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment as a shield for power and privilege, extending rights and facilities to interests other than the most powerful, profitable and popular. Including those people most in need of a decent voice in cultural decision-making.


- Extending cultural liberation to other nations by cooperating with national and regional groups working for the integrity of their own decisionmaking and against outside cultural domination. Helping local movements, especially in the most vulnerable countries, to invest in their cultural as well as economic and political development; opposing coercive trade policies that make such development more difficult.

- Supporting journalists, artists and other creative workers who are struggling against presenting life as a commodity designed for a consumer market. Working for diversity in employment and media content.

- Promoting media literacy, awareness, critical viewing and reading as educational objectives at every level. Collecting, disseminating and publicizing information, evaluating relevant programs, services and teaching materials. Helping educators and parents' groups to install teacher training in these areas and commit school officials, textbook and audio-visual companies and media executives to meet media education objectives.

- Placing cultural policy issues on the socio-political agenda. Supporting, and, if necessary, organizing local and national media councils and other forums of public discussion, policy development, representation and action. Creating and experimenting with ways of community and citizen participation in media policy-making. Sharing experiences, lessons and recommendations and, finally, moving towards a realistic democratic agenda. ■

Those who wish to join the Cultural Environmental Movement are invited to contact professor George Gerbner at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, 3620 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, U.S.A.



*We must
reclaim the
rights gained
through
centuries
of struggle.*

To George Benson

Kryptopyrroles--biochemical markers for violence

What would you do if you knew there is a biochemical "marker" that shows in children's and adult's bodies and indicates a predisposition to violence? Would you advocate that we identify and treat the persons? Would you say that it is medical fraud and we shouldn't pay any attention to it?

Richard Kraus is a psychiatrist who was as skeptical as any of you when he was called to consult in the defense of a man who killed two children, then seven women in upper New York state. He was known as Oddie, compulsive, violent, unresponsive, even before his first crimes against persons. Someone told Dr. Kraus of a country scientist--Dr. Bill Walsh--who had found an overabundance of kryptopyrroles in the bodies of other multiple killers. In his usual practice, Dr. Walsh had been having success treating people with poor impulse control and other behavior disorders. Dr. Walsh suggested Shawcross's blood be analyzed for a variety of conditions including urine kryptopyrroles. Kraus could hardly find anyone who had heard of kryptopyrroles at the time but he ordered the tests. The Smith-Kline Labs collected specimens and sent them to Norsom Medical Laboratories in Harwood Heights, Illinois. Shawcross's kryptopyrroles were 200 where anything over 20 is cause for concern. Later results from other labs were 87, 25 and 122.

Kryptopyrroles--"markers" that indicate a predisposition to violence when found in excess in the urine--were discovered in Canada in the 1950s. Dr. Carl C. Pfeiffer suggested kryptopyrroles would produce a severe B₆ deficiency (since pyrroles bind to aldehydes, and pyridoxal (B₆) is an aldehyde). Dr. Bill Walsh, founder of the Carl Pfeiffer Treatment Center in Naperville, Illinois, states that this condition, called pyroluria, is caused by an overproduction during hemoglobin synthesis of kryptopyrrole, which chemically combines with vitamin B₆ and zinc, resulting in their excretion and a severe deficiency of both of these essential nutrients. Approximately 20 percent of all schizophrenics have pyroluria as their primary imbalance. However, most pyroluric individuals never develop schizophrenia symptoms. Mark Vonnegut, the son of Kurt Vonnegut, wrote *Eden Express* after recovery from pyroluria.

The story of Arthur Shawcross is chronicled in *The Misbegotten Son* by Jack Olsen. The word "misbegotten" refers to the extra Y chromosome Shawcross had as well as the excess of kryptopyrroles. In the book, psychiatrist Kraus states:

"Law and punishment were insufficient remedies for his violence. Shawcross's 'latent projected homicidal intent' was recognized and documented before [the two children] died. That he is 'a real danger to the welfare and safety of society' was also recognized and documented before the serial homicides. The very earliest warning signs of future anti-social conduct and violence occurred in his childhood. The recommendation I am attempting to make is that early recognition of future dangerousness by itself is obviously not a sufficient safeguard. But early recognition combined with a careful diagnostic evaluation of all risk factors for future dangerous behaviors and a realistic plan of corrective action/intervention offers, in my view, the best opportunity for protecting both the individuals at risk and the community.....My biggest hope is that people will learn from this case."

Medics at the Sullivan Correctional Facility in Fallsburg ordered extra Vitamin B₆ and zinc for their newest lifer, and after a few months, Shawcross claimed that the therapy was helping to "calm me down in temper." But in the hurly-burly of the crowded prison, the supplementation was soon cut back, then eliminated. The killer wrote that he was feeling angry again.

Since the Carl Pfeiffer Treatment Center opened in June, 1989, over 2000 persons have been treated under the system. Treatment effectiveness has been approximately 90% for behavior, 80% for learning disorders, and 85% for depression and mental illness.

Suggested readings: *Nutrition and Mental Illness: An Orthomolecular Approach to Balancing Body Chemistry*, by Carl C. Pfeiffer, Ph.D., M.D., *The Schizophrenias: Ours to Conquer*, by Carl C. Pfeiffer, Ph.D., M.D., Richard Mailloux, B.S. and Linda Forsythe, B.A.

By Louise Bouta, Well Mind Association of Minnesota, 4003 Pillsbury Avenue, Mpls, MN 55409. 823-8249.

VIDEO EXCHANGE

World Peace Through Video Exchange

by Larry Johnson

Shortly after World War II, Dr. Harry Skornia, who later became a driving force behind establishing PBS, proposed that the networks (then radio) donate a weekly most-listened to half hour, and that the top writers and producers put together a regular top-notch program to teach people how and why to establish world peace. The idea was written up in *Variety* and elsewhere, but it never happened. Instead, we have even more foreign exporting of popular TV, often laced with excessive visual violence and advertising to proliferate products which may be fine as occasional "treats" but in regular and frequent use are blatantly harmful to people and the earth.

I was inspired to "socially conscious" approaches to TV by reading Harry Skornia's "*Television and Society*" when I was in broadcast school in the 60s. I actually started in international broadcast, but moved out because I wanted to involve young people in making TV and couldn't see a connection with that and international TV. For years I've taught young people to tell stories and make their own video because both give them and every other "ordinary person" a voice that expensive commercial TV doesn't. Making video also makes one a more critical thinker about what they view on TV. I'd like to think it makes children perceptive enough to grow up and offer to the entire world, more popular TV that teaches conflict resolution rather than violent problem solving.

Anyway, in the early 1980s, I found myself applying this "children making video" to the idea of international video exchange, and I realize that my staying with my love of working with children had brought itself full circle back to international television. It also led to my being able to meet and spend two full marvelous weekends with Dr. Skornia before he died in 1991, and I hope that through more of us exchanging video letters internationally, we can reach the weekly TV or Radio for Peace idea that he proposed in 1947.

What is Video Exchange?

An important part of building bridges toward peace comes when people can visit and see each other's similarities and respect each other's differences. But what if you can't visit? A video exchange is an inexpensive way to visit a place you can't afford to go in person and where a written description is inadequate. Writing to pen pals is great, but how do you show in a written letter who the people in your school are, how they sound, and what things and ideas they care about the most? How do you tell in written words, as we were asked by students from Uganda, "How can you go to school in Minnesota in the winter?" The students here responded by showing on video a Minnesota snowstorm and then by showing how they dressed for the cold.

How Do You Do It?

First, find a teacher or youth leader in a state or country you wish your students to visit with. Ask if they would look at a video letter from you and respond by sending one back. Your own contacts are a possibility (as long as they feel they can get at a camcorder and make a tape) or for a small fee, you can get contact schools around the world through VIDEO PALS (call 1-800-VID-PALS).

Then roll camera. Fifteen to 20 minutes is plenty; begin by letting students introduce themselves one at a time, speaking clearly and directly into the mike. People shots should be fairly close up, and pay attention to what's behind the person talking. Students actually could choose some favorite place or thing in the school and stand by that as they talk with their friends overseas. Next, show some things in your school and community that you care about - school garden program, students telling stories in a nursing home, homes in the

neighborhood, your Peace Site Ceremony, and how you resolve conflict in the school. Finally, study and learn some things about the place you're visiting with, and ask them to show you some things you'd like to see.

If you're not editing (few schools have the time or the luxury), plan your shots in a classroom discussion and take them in order, either using the newer camcorder's ability to nearly put shots together, or by fading to black between scene changes if you have an older camcorder. **Ideally, the students learn to do the taping themselves,** but even if logistics and time dictates that the teacher or another adult do the taping, don't get locked into creating a "professional" (by broadcast standards) product. It's too time consuming, often squeezes the children's real participation out, and more often intimidates the receiving group into not responding because they can't compete.

A video exchange should be likened to a neat, handwritten, loving note to a friend. Certainly you don't want a sloppy video that can't be heard or seen, but beyond that it's mainly to communicate. The video is for a small group you're in personal contact with, not a national TV network of channel flippers.

Any Questions?

If you have questions about language differences, tape conversion, or any other aspect of video exchange, I'd be glad to try to respond if you send a SASE to Larry Johnson, 315 Georgia Ave. N., Mpls., MN 55427. Or you can call at (612) 546-1074.

I'm available to do residencies where students and teachers learn to exchange videos by actually doing it, and I teach a St. Thomas University graduate course for teachers called **Storytelling In An Age of Television**, which includes video exchange. Also, I've written the video exchange chapter in a book called *Linking with Diversity* (all wonderful linking projects by innovative educators), available from Zephyr Press, 3316 N. Chapel Ave., Box 13448-J, Tucson, AZ 85732-3448. Phone is (602) 322-5090. ♦