

# Pacific View

## Two-Year College Association Pacific Northwest Newsletter

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*Pacific View* is published twice a year in the spring and fall by Yakima Valley Community College in conjunction with TYCA-PNW Association, an affiliate of NCTE. All rights and title reserved, but feel free to share contents with colleagues.

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**Submissions:** We encourage submissions for four of our columns: "Practical Matters," which gives specific classroom activities; "Student Talk," providing a student's perspective on learning; "Guest Spotlight," addressing thoughts on theory or philosophy of teaching; and "Poetry," a spot where colleagues can exhibit their creative side. Submissions should be between 200-400 words and sent electronically in an attached document form (preferably Word). Be sure to include your school affiliation along with your name, address, phone, and email. The deadline for the fall issue is November 14<sup>th</sup> 2010.

### Conference 2010

#### "Imagine" Bellingham in 2010

The theme for this year's annual conference is "The Imagined \_\_\_\_\_." The conference will be held at Whatcom

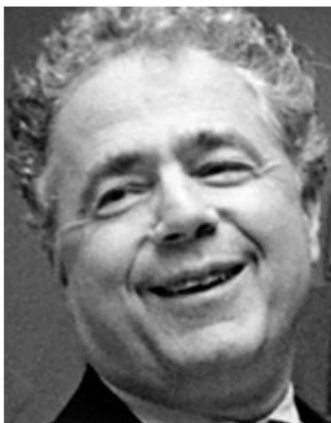


Professor Nancy Sommers

Community College, in Bellingham, Washington, on Friday and Saturday, October 8-9.

On Friday, the esteemed Nancy Sommers will lead a two-hour workshop tentatively scheduled to focus on "The Evocative Object," a workshop Professor Sommers conducted at the WPA Annual Conference in Minneapolis in Summer 2009 and presented on at the CCCC in March 2010. Her appearance at TYCA-PNW, as well as the "Evening Out," is through the generosity of Bedford/St. Martin's. The workshop is open to the first 50 registrants who indicate a desire to attend.

On Saturday, there will be a few key features. In lieu of an opening keynote address, a nationally



Professor Charles Altieri

### From the Editors

#### "Renewal" and "Imagine."

"Renewal" was the theme of last fall's TYCA-PNW conference and a renewal it was. The folks at PCC worked hard to get our regional back on track, renewing its former vitality. As Sandy's grandmother might have put it, TYCA-PNW had "a little hitch in its git-a-long" momentarily, but after the fall conference in Portland this past year, we are clearly "gittin' along" just fine now. We had a lot of Oregonians and Washingtonians as attendees and presenters, and we even had folks from as far away as Southern Nevada and New York!

Infusing TYCA-PNW with "new blood" is a part of the renewal. New people bring a fresh energy to any organization. Three year terms are up this fall for most REC members and some, like Samm and Kris, have "maxed out" at six years! It's time they got a well-earned sabbatical from shouldering the responsibility of keeping TYCA-PNW alive and well.

You'll hear from our in-coming chair, Jeff, in this issue, as well as from our outgoing chair, Samm. We have six new REC members, including *Pacific View* co-editors, Julie and Sandra. Sandra is a former co-editor of the newsletter (2003-2005) and Alexis – our national TYCA rep – is a former co-chair of TYCA-PNW (2004-2007). So while these two REC members are not shiny new, their former experiences on the REC can provide some historical context for the new folks. Imagine a better combination!

Which brings us to the theme of next year's conference: "imagine. . ." What an appropriate theme for the "new and improved" TYCA-PNW. Some of what the REC imagines is. . . a bigger membership, reaching across more areas of our region and reaching out more personally to English departments. We imagine even better

(continued on page 2)

## Conference 2010

touring Improv group, *DK and Morgan*, will be presenting and performing Improv, in support of current research on Improv and pedagogy and in the spirit of the conference theme. Also, Saturday after lunch, Professor Charles Altieri, a literary critic and theorist currently at the University of California, Berkeley will be the featured speaker.

Please join colleagues in Bellingham this fall! Online proposal submission forms, registration, and hotel information can be found at [www.tyca-pnw.org](http://www.tyca-pnw.org). Kellogg Rd., Bellingham, WA, US, 98226; phone: (360) 647-8000; fax: (360) 647-8094



Conference-goers browse texts

### Call for Proposals

“The Imagined \_\_\_\_\_”

October 8 & 9, 2010

Whatcom Community College

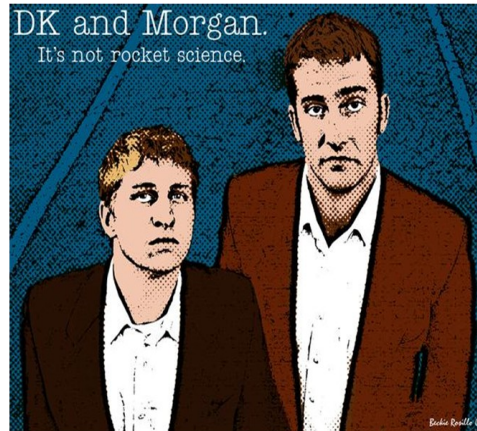
Bellingham, WA

**Deadline: May 28th**

For details go to [www.tyca-pnw.org](http://www.tyca-pnw.org)

## Editors (continued from cover)

attendance at conferences because of the top-quality presentations on practice and theory. We imagine improvement in those pesky details that keep any organization running, including keeping its coffers full. We want you to imagine, too. We still have a couple REC positions open and potential members will be nominated at the fall conference. Imagine yourself in beautiful Bellingham next fall; imagine doing



members will be nominated at the fall conference. Imagine yourself in beautiful Bellingham next fall; imagine doing

a workshop with Nancy Sommers, imagine the inspirational sessions you'll attend. Imagine yourself as an active organization. Imagine yourself on the REC? TYCA-PNW has been renewed and our imagined continued vitality is already becoming a reality.

### Sandy and Julie

#### Regional Executive Committee

##### Co-Chairs:

Jeff Klausman [jklausma@whatcom.ctc.edu](mailto:jklausma@whatcom.ctc.edu)

Samm Erickson [serickso@pcc.edu](mailto:serickso@pcc.edu)

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**National Representative:** Alexis Nelson [AlexisN@spokanefalls.edu](mailto:AlexisN@spokanefalls.edu)

**Publications:** Sandra Schroeder [sschroeder@yvcc.edu](mailto:sschroeder@yvcc.edu); Julie Swedin [jswedin@yvcc.edu](mailto:jswedin@yvcc.edu)

**Treasurer:** Kris Fink [kfink@pcc.edu](mailto:kfink@pcc.edu)

**Secretary:** Mary Dahlin [mdahlin@yvcc.edu](mailto:mdahlin@yvcc.edu)

**Member at-large:** Betsy Lawrence [BLawrence@scc.spokane.edu](mailto:BLawrence@scc.spokane.edu)

### *A Note From the Outgoing Chair*

As the outgoing chair of TYCA-PNW, I've been thinking of all the people I have had the good fortune to meet and come to know through the position. I came to TYCA because of the people - people who were the friendliest and most welcoming group I've met in professional circles - and I found a deep resonance with members' continuing commitment to teaching, despite the hurdles created by budgets, teaching loads, and the emotional demands of educating students from all backgrounds and ability levels. These challenges require a consistent renewal, something reflected in the theme of our 2009 conference in Portland. Many thanks to those of you who attended, presented, and gave your energy to a great conference. We're very happy to have Jeff Klausman as TYCA-PNW's new co-chair

and excited for the ideas he has for renewing the organization and integrating it as a regional hub for excellence in teaching. In closing, I'd like to thank all of our new board members and all the TYCA members that have made my tenure as chair so enjoyable and educational.

**Samm Erickson**  
Portland Community College, OR



Samm Erickson

### *A Note From the Current Co-Chair*

At the American Association of Community Colleges meeting held in Seattle in April, six community-college organizations pledged to increase student completion rates by 50% over the next ten years. When I hear that, I think about the crucial role writing courses have in student retention, which translates, of course, to student success and completion. Whether it's smoothing the transition from developmental English to college-level writing courses or protecting and enhancing our writing centers, we two-year college English faculty have a major voice in shaping the conversation about writing on our campuses. I'd like to see TYCA-PNW play a more central role in bringing together

our disparate conversations—possibly through a national list serve (I know there's a move to create one) or through SIGs at our conference. Part of that will be securing TYCA-PNW as a viable, strong organization. We have a great Regional Executive Committee and so we're well on our way toward that and I'm honored to be able to work with other members of the REC and with all of you. Send me any thoughts, questions, or concerns:

[jklausma@whatcom.etc.edu](mailto:jklausma@whatcom.etc.edu)

**Jeffrey Klausman**  
TYCA-PNW Co-chair  
Whatcom Community College,  
Bellingham, WA



Jeff Klausman

*“We two-year college English faculty have a major voice in shaping the conversation about writing on our campuses.”*

### News from National

All TYCA members started the day early at a 7 am breakfast on March 20 at the CCCC, which coffee rendered almost as lively as the cocktail hours. The March meeting of the Executive Committee saw lots of action and participation from PNW. Associate Chair Carolyn Calhoun-Dillahunt reported that the *TYCA Guidelines for the Academic Preparation of English Faculty* is being revised and updated, and the committee hopes for feedback from members; in addition, another of her committees is working to ensure that the brochure about TYCA membership is worded to clarify the relationship between national and regional affiliates.

Bradley Bleck, the TYCA web tender, will become a member of the CCC editorial board once NCTE overhauls the website. Bradley's celebration of National Poetry Month on the TYCA website features two-year college teacher/poets reading their original work. Howard Tinberg's committee is revising the 2004 brochure, *Research and Scholarship in the Two-Year College* to include scholarship published since the original.

NCTE Executive Director Kent Williamson described some of the changes in the website that will help members feel better connected to the organization: an interactive directory, discussion boards, a wiki for our issues, a resource library, and targeted messages; moreover, *The Inbox* will be customized to reflect readers' areas of interest.

Legislative Liaison Barbara Cambridge discussed DC's new interest in and legislation attentive to two-year colleges, and she noted that the Dept. of Education's proposed "Blueprint for Reform" suggests significant increase in dual enrollment programs, particularly in writing and composition with the goal of creating "work ready" high school graduates. Marilyn Valentino, CCCC chair this year, has lobbied the conference to NOT schedule so many sessions by two-year college faculty on Saturday when the EC meets.



#### Alexis Nelson

Spokane Community Falls Community College  
April 26, 2010

### Poetry

**On the First Night of Class Karelys Beltran,  
Who Wants Me to Say Her Name Right,  
Whose Name I Will Learn to Say, Asks *What  
Do You Want to Be Remembered For?***

I stumble and fuck up  
my answer about teaching.

Get thrown and come up empty  
when I talk about home.

I wish I'd said don't speak my name for a year  
after I'm gone.

I wish I'd said bring strong coffee and  
sagebrush to my grave.

I wish I'd said the true teacher knocks down  
the idol.

I wish I'd said don't look at the finger  
pointing to the moon.

I should've said I hope my children remember  
a warm house.

I hope they remember me being around.

I didn't get the answer right because  
I'm a beginner. A slow learner.

Too much hanging on.

Because I'm in denial.  
Because I remember Tom Pier.

Because Karelys surprised me.  
Because it's none of my business.

All of this comes to me late.  
Early the next morning. Not too late.

#### Dan Peters

Yakima Valley Community College  
From *Down the Road the Children Go*, Blue  
Begonia Press, 2009

### ***Student Talk***

I have a PhD in Physiology that brought me to the States from Bulgaria for a postdoctoral fellowship and I have been involved in medical research in the US for the last ten years. Currently, I am in my second term of involvement in the US higher education as a student. The general structure of the US higher education deviates a little from my expectations. However, I feel like I am getting an education to be a good writer and may one day be able to publish articles in popular magazines either in the form of reader commentary or as a professional journalist.

I signed up for English composition classes as a prerequisite to apply to a bachelor degree program. In contrast to other subjects, learning in English classes is achieved through practice activities rather than memorizing theory. The inclusion of different types of writings allows students to shine in at least some of them. I've learned that the revision of writings is an important part in the learning process. As feedback from a teacher is highly subjective, involving classmates is a wonderful approach to get diverse opinions on our writings. Because English is a second language for me, I feel that even if I discontinue pursuing another degree, English composition classes could serve as a form of self-improvement.

**Diana Dimitrova**

Student

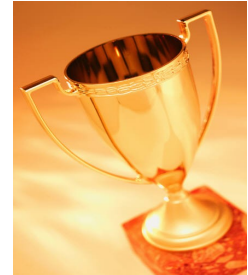
Portland Community College

### ***TYCA-PNW outstanding teaching awards 2010-2011***

TYCA-Pacific Northwest would like to recognize and encourage two-year college teachers in our region who exemplify innovation and creativity in the teaching of English, who have demonstrated outstanding teaching strategies that motivate students to excellence, and/or who have made a contribution to the field of English instruction at the two-year college level through professional development, publications, or service.

**Who is eligible?** Any two-year college full-time or adjunct instructors in English, composition, literature, technical writing, and/or closely-related disciplines are eligible. Nominees should currently teach at a two-year college in the Pacific Northwest region (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan). Nominations by colleagues are preferred, but self-nominations are acceptable. Nominations may be made by students, alumni, faculty, departments, or colleges.

**The Award:** Two individuals (one full-time and one adjunct English teacher) will each receive a \$500 award and will be recognized for outstanding teaching and/or scholarship at the 2010 TYCA-PNW annual conference in Bellingham, Washington, on October 8-9 "Imagine \_\_\_\_\_." The award winners will be chosen by the TYCA-PNW REC and will be recognized at the annual TYCA-PNW conference luncheon. Nominees are expected to attend the conference. Previous winners are not eligible for the award.



***Nominate a colleague for the Lisa Ede Outstanding Teacher Award!***

**To apply for the award, please go to [TYCA-PNW.ORG](http://TYCA-PNW.ORG) and fill out the [Lisa Ede Teaching Nomination Form](#) online. We've streamlined the process considerably, so that less time is required out of your busy schedules to nominate a worthy candidate.**

## Practical Matters

### **Discovering Student Voices: Discussion Strategies to Sustain Student Engagement**

In the words of a Chinese proverb, “Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll understand.” What a powerful statement to take to heart! Learning is truly a social and involved activity. In fact, according to educator Jim Burke, “studies consistently find groups, if used effectively, are one of the most powerful instructional strategies for improving comprehension and increasing engagement” (Effective Instruction 12). The more students are given opportunities to observe, listen, and engage with one another, the more they will be able to deepen their understanding. Nevertheless, our students often come to class with the mistaken belief that learning takes place in isolation, or they believe that what they have to say is irrelevant or incorrect. They want to have the “correct” response, and they are hesitant to speak up and look ignorant in front of their peers.

Students need to know they can easily join the “conversation” about what they see, read, and hear, but how do we, as instructors, propel and sustain passionate student discourse and learning? Discussions are key opportunities for us, as instructors, to demystify what students might believe is beyond their comprehension, such as unraveling a challenging writing prompt. According to Joseph McDonald, et al, we can plan well-known moves or procedures or “protocols” to clarify the difference between talking and listening, between describing and judging, or between proposing and giving feedback (The Power of Protocols).

The more explicit and complete we are in our descriptions and demonstrations, the more we can call attention to the role and value of each step—learning becomes clear and repeatable. The following are some examples of some different protocols to structure and elicit student discourse and engagement.

There are many ways to group students, but my favorite protocol of the moment, from the book The Power of Protocols, is called the “**Wheel within a Wheel.**” There is something magical about just getting students out of their seats and moving around the room, and this protocol fulfills this design. *Directions:* I usually draw on the board a diagram of



one circle within a larger circle. I then explain that students must organize themselves within two such circles. Each student will be facing another student. It takes a few minutes to get situated, but it is worth the

effort. Once students are facing one another, I explain that the inner circle (or the outer circle) will be moving student-by-student clockwise, but the outer circle will stay stationary. Students will have the opportunity to talk to everyone in the class, depending on your time constraints. The “Wheel within a Wheel” is a great way to get students to share out their paper drafts in a non-traditional manner.

Another great discussion protocol, also garnered from the book The Power of Protocols, is called “**Postcards.**” *Directions:* I usually say, “without looking at it first, take one of the picture postcards from the stack going around. Next, imagine why it represents your work, or how it describes your feelings about starting or ending the workshop today. Be prepared to show and tell.” Black and white cards are terrific since more is left to the imagination and more is open for interpretation. Another option would be to give the same card to two students. The objective is to find the person with the same card and discuss his/her different reactions. End the protocol with a “Go-Around,” or a sharing out of everyone in the room. Lastly, give all the students a minute to share out their thoughts and discoveries. A final great way to elicit student participation is to conduct a quick “**whip-a-round.**” Students share a quick thought at the beginning or end of class. The “whip-around” helps to build or keep momentum going and also helps to clarify what your class is learning for them and for you, as the instructor. The more students share, the more they feel empowered, and isn’t that what it’s all about?

**Julie Swedin**

Yakima Valley Community College, WA

### ***Guest Spotlight***

When I was seven, I won our “Back to School Night” cakewalk—three times in a row. That’s how it felt to be presented with the Lisa Ede teaching award. There was the same flooding sense of chance and luck, this time because I’d been singled out in a community full of amazing teachers, and because I get to spend my days among such colleagues and with our exceptional students. In fifteen years of teaching, I’ve logged some time and learned some tricks, but I find that I keep coming up with more questions about teaching than answers. A big ongoing question: how do we find a balance between being compassionate and supportive of our students, and challenging

their ideas and their level of commitment to the hard work of learning? I have one teaching compatriot who freely expresses that he loves all his students; I have another who announces on the first day that she is not there to build anyone’s self-esteem. These approaches are not necessarily at odds, but I am sometimes stumped by the moments when I’ve leaned to an approach that doesn’t work for a student. In the absence of a time machine to transport me back to address my missteps, I feel fortunate for my fellow teachers who will speak to me so candidly and wisely about teaching, and for the opportunities to keep learning from each other. Thanks to TYCA for giving us all such a great forum to do this.

***“A big ongoing question: how do we find a balance between being compassionate and supportive of our students, and challenging their ideas and their level of commitment to the hard work of learning?”***



Whatcom Community College,  
Bellingham, WA

***“Use technology as a route to a learning outcome-not a route to the “cutting edge.”***

#### **Catherine Landwehr**

Lisa Ede Award winner, Adjunct  
Portland Community College

In the trainings and presentations I’ve done on using technology in the classroom, I emphasize three points which colleagues appreciate. 1) Add to your practice in layers, over a series of quarters or semesters. Maybe just try using a discussion forum. Then, a quarter or two later put your handouts online. It doesn’t need to happen all at once. 2) Using technology in the classroom is less about being a tech guru or knowing every facet of how a technology works before using it with students. It’s a willingness to make mistakes, big ones, in front of your students-and even asking your students to help you figure it out together. 3) Use technology as a route to a learning outcome-not a route to the “cutting edge.”

#### **Danielle Gray**

Lisa Ede Award winner  
Whatcom Community College

**TYCA-PNW 2010-2011 Membership Form**

\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check for US \$20 payable to TYCA-PNW for a one-year membership.

\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check for US \$10 payable to TYCA-PNW for a one-year student membership (students, part-time faculty, retired faculty).

My membership includes discounted conference fees at TYCA-PNW's annual conference.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Web page: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one area you'd like to be active in:

- Membership
- Program
- Newsletter
- Regional representative

Are you currently a member of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Thank you for your membership. Are there other comments you'd like to make?

\_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Justus Ballard  
 Chemeketa Community College  
 4000 Lancaster Drive NE  
 PO Box 14007  
 Salem, OR 97309

**Please Print Clearly**



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