President’s Message

Dear CT COLT colleagues,

This is an interesting time to be an educator here in CT. There is a lot going on at the state level, and there have been changes at CT COLT. Nevertheless, our mission in this organization remains the same: we work to support World Language teaching and learning. We support and recognize teachers, we encourage and celebrate student success, and we advocate for our profession. Our membership campaign is ongoing because we know that our strength comes from our members, and the stronger we are, the more effectively we act for the benefit of all. Membership in CT COLT is still relatively inexpensive, and it is now required for participation in all CT COLT activities. This decision was made in order to encourage a higher percentage of teachers to belong: the greater our numbers, the stronger our voice.

As you know, the whole framework of teacher evaluation is being transformed, and the removal of the CEU requirement is only one piece of the new design. In addition to these changes, curricular reforms and new requirements continue to make for a dynamic landscape. CT COLT played a crucial role in the commitment to the language requirement in the reform bill, and we will continue our advocacy. Given that there is no longer a World Language Consultant at the State Department of Education, our collective voice needs to be unified and strong.

Our Fall Conference had to be rescheduled due to Hurricane Sandy. We are grateful to the CoCoKey for their flexibility and assistance in this. It was a hard decision to make, but once the Governor declared the state of emergency, it was clear that we had to postpone. Fortunately, the new date worked for most people. We made every effort to contact all who had registered with the new details; it is exactly for such situations that we asked for your email address when you were registering. We thank co-chairs Vincenza Mazzone McNulty and Jan Picerno for their hard work and dedication to the conference.

Please mark your calendars for our annual Poetry Recitation Contest which will be held at Choate Rosemary Hall from 2-7 p.m. on April 26, 2013. It is now required that all teachers taking or sending students to the contest be members of CT COLT. There are slates of required poems for some languages; all rules and information will be found on our new and improved website at ctcolt.org. Please do check all this information carefully even if you are experienced with the contest as some rules and procedures have changed. Thanks to MaryLouise Ennis, Carol Chen-Lin and Beth Lapman for their guidance on this.

There will be other exciting events in the spring: the Poster Contest deadline is 3/1/13 and the deadline for the Essay Contest will be 3/1/13. Both of these contests are opportunities for your students to shine! The Rhyme Celebration will be held 3/21/13 at Western CT Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School in Danbury. This will, as always, be a joyful event. Do check our website (Events Listing on the Main Page) for information about registering for the CCSU Spring Conference on 3/9/2013.

Please take a moment to check the website from time to time to see what is going on. There are always opportunities for you to get more involved in CT COLT, whether you present at the conference, write an article for this newsletter, help with a Technology Seminar, sit on a committee or serve on the board. The amount of work CT COLT has to be done always exceeds available resources of time and energy, so we encourage you to see how you can contribute.

I wish you all a Happy New Year!

Michaela
In Memoriam

Janet L. Picerno
September 16, 1942 – January 1, 2013

Janet L. Picerno, 70, of New Britain, was born in Buffalo, NY on Sept. 16, 1942, where she attended local public schools. She graduated as a French major and Spanish minor with high honors from the State University of New York at Binghamton (Harpur College). She received her Master of Arts degree in Romance Languages and Literature from UConn and her sixth-year teaching certificate from CCSU. Janet began her teaching career as a foreign language instructor in the Williamsville, NY public school system in 1966 and continued teaching Spanish in the Wethersfield school system until her retirement in 2006. Janet was a member of several academic organizations, among them the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers, whose annual Fall conferences she continued to chair for many years, the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, and the UConn and Harpur College Alumni Associations. Janet was a dedicated communicant of the First Lutheran Church of the Reformation in New Britain, as well as a member of its vocal and bell choirs, its Altar Guild, and its Outreach Committee. She was a gifted ballroom dancer and a devotee of art, music, and the theater. Janet is survived by her loving husband Richard, her cherished children Alisa M. Gaudiosi of Simsbury, and Dr. Matthew R. Picerno of Bristol, RI, as well as her adored grandchildren Saffron Marie and Sebastian Lewis Gaudiosi, and Sophia Grace Picerno. She also leaves three brothers and several nieces and nephews. She will be forever remembered, missed, and loved by everyone she touched.

Calling hours were held on Friday morning from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Square, New Britain. Funeral services followed at 11 a.m. at the First Lutheran Church, 77 Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051. Burial was in Fairview Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First Lutheran Church or The American Heart Association, 5 Brookside Dr., Wallingford, CT 06492. Please share a memory or note of sympathy at www.carlsonfuneralhome.com.

Advocacy

Make Language Advocacy a Resolution in 2013!

Greetings to all our present and future CT COLT members. Hope the New Year has gotten off to a great start.

First, I encourage you to visit the ACTFL website to learn how you can prepare for Heritage Language Month in February. You can partner with your ESL Department in your school system to organize an event highlighting the many cultures and languages represented in your district. Even if you have students visit and present in your classes by sharing their culture and teaching a 10 minute lesson in their native language, invite parents, town dignitaries, BOE members, guidance staff and school administrators. Invite the press and if they are not able to attend, take pictures and send a short article for them to print. ACTFL's celebration of heritage language month is also a perfect opportunity to request to be placed on the BOE agenda. Board members are eager to meet with students and administrators are happy to highlight the positive. Hope you will take the opportunity to report WL activities to the BOE at a critical time when budgets are being presented and deliberated.

Second, as the legislative session gets under way, the CT COLT leadership team and the Coordinators of Foreign Languages in CT (COFLIC) members will keep track of the developments regarding the WL two year requirement that was written into law in 2010. If you have not already done so, this is the perfect time to work with school administration and guidance to implement this requirement. At our conference in December, we started our advocacy campaign by having all attendees write to their legislators urging them to sustain the requirements written into law. If you have heard from your legislator, please pass on this information to our president, Michaela Volovsek. We will need to thank our legislators who respond to our call for action.

Finally, in these trying economic times and budget constraints, reach out to neighboring districts as you plan your professional development activities to share costs and resources.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding your advocacy initiatives and other ideas to improve our world language programs in Connecticut.
Why get involved? Here’s why!

By Lisa Urso, Southeast Regional Director

Even as I was a student in grad school, earning my certification, my professors all stressed the importance of giving back to our profession. As our days are filled with creating lesson plans, grading, and learning about Common Core, we need to consistently think about how we, as teachers, serve our fellow colleagues.

This was something that especially struck me last year, as I stood on the front lawn of our state Capitol, rallying with my fellow teachers, to ensure that our voices for education reform were heard. Educators have continually stated, over the media, that policy makers should not be the only ones deciding what to reform, and how. How should a teacher’s job performance be measured? How do we best assess our students? How do we ensure that we develop and engage the whole child, as opposed to solely using standardized test scores as an indicator of growth?

Last year, I found my voice. For too long, in my career as an educator, I had let others speak for me. Usually, I let my older, more experienced colleagues articulate the bigger concerns. I was afraid, quite frankly, to speak up. I felt that I didn’t have the wisdom, or the maturity, to express what I was feeling. But last year, after learning about the original proposals for educational reform, I could not be silent any longer.

This, in part, led to my getting further involved with CT-COLT. When I learned that the two-year requirement for graduation was in jeopardy, I had to speak up. I started by becoming a member of the Fall Conference Committee. My experience with the CEA Membership Training Committee led me to pursue this opportunity. I enjoy helping to plan the conferences because it gives me an opportunity to learn what kinds of professional development opportunities they really need. Do our members need to learn more about how Common Core aligns with our content areas? Do they need more practice in technology in the classroom? Do they simply want to network with other colleagues?

The opportunity to network with other world language teachers was also what led me to get more involved with CT-COLT. Up until last year the only time I was able to do this was at the Fall Conference. One of the best ways to learn about the latest developments in my profession is to simply spend time with my fellow colleagues. This helps me gain ideas into improving my teaching, and to advocate for my content area.

Advocacy is the last reason why I became more involved with CT-COLT. This is one of the reasons why I decided to run for Southeast Regional Director. Last year, the elementary school language program was in danger of being cut from my school district, and my colleagues and I worked together to create a presentation for the Board of Education. In our presentation, we justified why it is so important for world language education to start in our youngest students. Fortunately, our program was saved, but I know not all school districts are able to do this. I recently started a binder of articles related to the advocacy of world language programs; I know this is only going to grow the longer I serve as a teacher.

My one regret about these developments is this: I wish it didn’t take so long for me to find my voice. It is never too early to speak up about world language education, and there are so many things you can do to get involved. Write an article for the newsletter. Serve as a judge for the Poetry Contest. Have your students enter the Poster Contest. Make sure that YOUR voice is heard, loud and clear—or someone else will do the decision-making for you.

Methods and Motivation

Para Tod@s: The Symbol “@” and the Spanish Language

By Aileen Dever, Ph.D.

Please join me in singing the praises of a little, unobtrusive symbol born of the computer age that is quietly addressing sexism in written Spanish while remaining faithful to the basic structure of this beautiful and poetic language.

Teaching Spanish for me has sometimes meant struggling against masculine generics in which females are linguistically erased. For example, if there are one-hundred women in a room and one man, the grammatical rules of Spanish lead to using the third-person, masculine plural pronoun ellos/they to refer to the group. Thus the one-hundred females vanish into the masculine generic.

I have heard some contend that masculine plurals actually “contain” both males and females and are not, therefore, discriminatory as in los niños/children (boys and girls). Yet the masculine generic has also been conveniently ignored when the objective was to exclude women. For instance, Costa Rica repeatedly denied the vote to women that the 1871
Constitution ostensibly guaranteed because politicians refused to accept that the masculine generic ciudadanos/citizens also encompassed women. It was not until 1949 that women in Costa Rica could vote.

More and more we have come to understand that inequities are not the result of a natural, divine order, but of ideas that are subject to criticism and change. Nowhere are our ideas and attitudes as a society more transparent than in the words we use.

It was at a recent conference of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (CT Chapter) at Fairfield University that female Hispanic poets discussed the liberation that has come with this amazing little “at” symbol that is both an “o” and an “a”!

If there are one-hundred women in a room and one man, I can now write on the board ell@s for my students as the plural pronoun. Children are l@s niñ@s and citizens, l@s ciudadan@s.

¡Viva @!

References


Educator Effectiveness: The Journey Forward

By James E. Zavodjancik

Educational practices, laws, and expectations are in times of change all around the country. Almost weekly you can open the newspaper or read an article on the newsstand regarding education. Although reasonable people may argue over whether the reforms are good for our students, they are happening all around the State of Connecticut. As you talk with your colleagues in different districts you are bound to notice the variety of things each district is implementing anew. For better or worse, we as educators are in times of change. With these shifts, a critical lens is examining what is working and why. There may be no other time in education where the spotlight has been shined so brightly. We, as educators, must seize this opportunity to illuminate the great things we are doing while attention is focused.

One reformation law that the legislators and leaders at the State Department of Education have passed are new teacher and administrator evaluation practices. The State of Connecticut has led this reform with guidelines each and every district must commit to follow. Before I begin a short summary, I would like to direct you to two links which can provide more robust information for you to read, examine, and learn. If you have been unaware of the changes it would be beneficial to peruse the websites and engage in discourse with your colleagues. First is the PEAC website (Performance Evaluation Advisory Council). Go to the State Department of Education website (http://www.sde.ct.gov/), click teachers and administrators, and find the PEAC hyperlink. At this location you will find the advisory council’s meeting minutes, in addition to being able to access the actual legislation that was proposed and passed on a variety of topics and legislation. Second, please visit the SEED (Connecticut’s System for Educator Evaluation and Development) website at
www.connecticutseed.org. This website will provide the model for teacher evaluation in regard to the guidelines. You should become familiar with these two documents, handbooks, and sites as they delineate the practices that each district will follow and implement.

There are some characteristics of the new plan which are worth mentioning as outlined in the SEED document (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2012). Please remember that this is not an exhaustive list, in fact, it simply scratches the surface, yet the SEED website will guide you to more in-depth information with examples (including administrator evaluation and the matrix of performance levels). Some of the notable characteristics are:

- A matrix of four performance levels upon which teachers will be judged (e.g.: exemplary, proficient, developing, and below standard).
- Whole school learning indicators (i.e.: parent and student surveys and feedback).
- Yearly SMART goal setting with check-in points. The teacher will set goals and collect data and it will be included in the final performance rating by the teacher’s supervisor.
- 45% of the teacher’s yearly evaluation will be based on attainment of academic goals of student growth. Twenty two and a half percent of the plan is based on student growth measures such as standardized tests and the other 22.5% can be based on another standardized test or non-standardized indicator (lists are available on the website).
- 40% based on teacher practice and performance.
- 5% based on whole school learning indicators.
- 10% based on parent or peer feedback (such as surveys, focus groups, etc.).

There are several fundamental differences between our current practices and the newly passed practices with which we will all engage. In the past, or in some cases currently, you may be on an evaluation system where some years you are formally evaluated and other years you are not. In addition, and possibly the most fundamental shift in evaluation is a system that evaluates teachers and administrators based on students’ learning (although one can argue over the indicators). You most likely have never, in the past, had student test scores or feedback factored in your formal evaluation. In other words, supervision is for learning.

Districts are submitting their intentions and plans for the new year’s deadlines. Other districts are currently piloting the new plan and are well aware of these changes. What will your
district decide? Will it go with the SEED model, an alternate model, or a combination? Are you wondering about more details or what some things can look like, such as the surveys? If so, again, I would go to the SEED website as they have a model plan including what the student surveys and feedback forms.

On a final note and since you are reading this, you are most likely a member of CT COLT. I would encourage you to talk to your world languages’ colleagues and encourage those who are not current members to join the organization. As the State of Connecticut and your district mold the new evaluation practices, the new expectations are clear and will contribute to your effectiveness as an educator. How does one evaluate a world languages teacher? World languages do not have a standardized test for all our enrolled students. The Executive Board of the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers is thinking about and discussing these issues at their level. However, we need to band together to have a powerful voice in the education of our students of which we will and should be evaluated. In closing, I challenge each of you to encourage your world language colleagues who are not members to join the organization, become active, and have a voice in the education of your students.

Technology

Adina’s Technology Corner

By Dr. Adina Alexandru

The Wall Street Journal recently published an advisory that MIT, NBC and Dell have partnered together to discuss the influence of technology in learning and how to cultivate new, innovative learning models so that every American is provided with an opportunity to achieve the best education possible. Even though this program targets mainly parents, policy makers, educators, teachers and students who view tomorrow’s education achieved through new and exciting technologies, the message is clear: people will learn to educate themselves with teachers acting as mentors and guides. While this is not a fresh idea, the means to achieve this goal, clearly, experts say, will shake the foundations of educational institutions.

Personally, I think that we are indeed heading in this direction. This summer I travelled a lot and attended as usual, several professional workshops and conferences. Below I will share with you some of the cutting edge approaches to teaching and learning through new technologies as they apply to the foreign language class and the CCSS. You will see that some of these practices that emphasize the use of new technologies are indeed challenging the way we currently understand education but they certainly help us get a glimpse of the future.

Below I propose four new free technologies for you classroom that might help you create new activities to develop two of the CCSS skills: listening and reading.

- Vialogues – or “video dialogues” (https://vialogues.com/) is a free, extremely powerful discussion platform sponsored by Columbia University. The American Association of School Librarians declared this as one of the 25 best websites for teaching and learning in 2012. What can you do with “vialogues”? …well, you can upload a video, (one from YouTube, or somewhere else), you can pre-post questions (as quizzes or simply as thoughtful conversations), that students need to respond as they view the film. You can add polls and reply to students’ comments. They can reply to each other’s comments as well and all comments are recorded and stamped in real time. You can even embed a Vialogue into your website, LMS, or blog! This is truly an amazing tool toward developing listening skills in the target language.
Calling All...

Past Members of the Board of Directors
Past Contest or Committee Chairpersons
Members of CT COLT

Please help us reconstruct the history of CT COLT from 1968 to the present.

Are you cleaning out your files and closets?

If you come across anything related to CT COLT past activities or contests, please contact Linda Dalpe at lindald001@aol.com. We have reconstructed a considerable amount of CT COLT history, but we still have more to do. We could use any documents, photos, newsletters, etc. in completing this very important task. Thank you for your help!

- Socrative is a smart student response system that empowers teachers to engage their classrooms through a series of educational exercises and games via smartphones, laptops, and tablets. Forget about expensive “clickers”! All you need is a free account at http://www.socrative.com/. You can establish an account as a teacher. It only takes teachers 3 minutes to set up a virtual classroom. You can then accept students in your classroom in 20 seconds. Teachers initiate an activity by selecting it on their main screen (e.g. Multiple Choice, T/F, and Quick Quiz). It is easy and fast. Try it now. You can get amazing instant results. It is a great type of formative assessment!

Another cool free technology that reinforces foreign language reading skills is “cloze passage builder”. This amazing technology is sponsored by the University of Quebec and it offers BUILDER routines to create cloze passages of different types. Some allow links to learning resources (dictionary, audio file, video file) on user specification while others simply allow you to upload a passage and tell the software to remove the 6th, 7th, etc. word and create a cloze exercise in a target language. You can save this as a personal file from a text or video source.

TubeChop - anybody knows by now that Zamzar is no longer an option to use it for you class room needs. However, TubeChop allows you to easily chop a funny or interesting section from any YouTube video and share it. You no longer need to save, record and show an entire video to make a point in your lesson. All you need to do is show the essential! How does this work? 1. Find the video you want to chop. 2. Select & cut interesting part of the video. 3. Share it with your students! http://www.tubechop.com/

Please check this website for appropriate technology activities in order to align your teaching to the CCSS guidelines and standards:

http://www.k12.wa.us/WorldLanguages/pubdocs/CCSS_WL_Standards HO.pdf

I hope you have a blast this year and that you truly discover the way to empower your students with 21st century technology skills! Since we are all concerned now with the CCSS requirements and are very nervous perhaps as to how to move on with these new standards I encourage you to try three new cutting edge approaches. Until next time, à la prochaine!

It’s time
to renew
your membership
if you haven’t already done so.

If your membership expired on December 31, 2012, consider renewing your membership now

by mail
(www.ctcolt.org/pages/renew_by_mail.asp)

or

by PayPal

Please encourage your non-member colleagues to join this professional organization which advocates for World Language Study in the State of Connecticut.

Please be advised that membership in the organization is required for YOU or YOUR students to participate in any CT COLT activities.
DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR TOMORROW’S LEARNERS
In World Languages and ESOL
The 60th Annual Northeast Conference
March 7-10, 2013 in Baltimore, MD

Arlene F. White, Salisbury University, Conference Chair

NORTHEAST CONFERENCE
on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE!
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ALL CONFERENCE INFORMATION AND FORMS www.nectfl.org
COOKING WITH COLT

CT COLT is interested in your favorite recipes for our 2013 cookbook!

Do you have:
  family recipes?
  international/cultural recipes?
  recipes from your travels?
  regional recipes?
  recipes you make with your students?

If you have a favorite recipe (from appetizers to desserts) consider sending it in to CT COLT along with a few words to tell us about its personal significance to you (ex. found during your travels, cooked with your grandmother every holiday, traditional picnic fare in Spain, etc.).

**Deadline for submission:** March 1, 2013

**Please submit recipe as email attachment to:**
Christine Dombrowski
CT COLT Board of Directors, Member
cristinedombrow@aol.com
**CT COLT World Language News Exchange Fall/Winter Issue**

**CT COLT Fall Conference 2013**

**Conference Theme:**
World Languages: Are You Connected?

Monday – October 21, 2013
CoCo Key Water Resort, Hotel & Convention Center in Waterbury, CT

**We Need Your Help!**

Please consider sharing your world language expertise with your colleagues by submitting a proposal to present a workshop at this conference.

Please visit the following page on the CT COLT website to propose a workshop: [www.ctcolt.org/pages/for_presenters.asp](http://www.ctcolt.org/pages/for_presenters.asp).

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**CT COLT News**

**Linda Dalpe and Jaya Vijayasekar Receive DSA Award at Fall Conference**

By Michaela Volovsek

At our fall conference in December, I had the honor of recognizing two extraordinary women who have contributed enormously to CT COLT. We do not give out the Distinguished Service Award every year; this is reserved for when a member has truly stood out for his/her dedication to the organization. This year, we were thrilled to recognize two such deserving members.

Linda Dalpe was CT COLT President from 2010-2012 and currently serves as Immediate Past President. Anyone who has ever worked with Linda knows how passionate, energetic and devoted she is to World Language education. In addition to her strong leadership, she has been the driving force behind several initiatives and projects, including the beautiful baskets we raffle off at the conference and our current membership campaign. As IPP, she continues to be deeply involved in all we do, including (but not limited to) making sure we get a new banner with our new Pegasus on it to warehousing all our archives to working on fall conference. We are extremely fortunate to have her.

Jaya Vijayasekar was CT COLT President from 2008-2010 and continues to be active at all levels of our work. She has spearheaded and run our COFLIC organization, which offers the opportunity of collaboration to World Language leaders from around the state. This is vital work at all times and even more so now that we do not have a coordinator at the State Department of Education. Jaya has also been tireless in organizing people to contact legislators when there have been issues relating to WL education before the legislature. She has played a crucial role in the campaign to keep a two year world language requirement in the high school reform bill. We are grateful to Jaya for her energy and expertise.

**Sophie Depelley, New Coordinator at CTF at Yale**

My name is Sophie Depelley and I am the new coordinator of the Center for the Teaching of French at Yale.

I studied at the University of Toulouse (Toulouse II-Le Mirail) where I majored in linguistics and in English literature and history. I then entered a Masters program in teaching French as a foreign language. I taught French in Toulouse and later in the Alliance française des Seychelles before applying...
for the position of coordinator of the Center for the Teaching of French.

The Center for the Teaching of French aims to improve the quality of education and to encourage the exchange of information, knowledge and educational expertise between France and the United States. More specifically, my role here is to develop and strengthen the educational exchanges between the state of Connecticut and the Académie de Toulouse. Teachers usually get in touch with me, send me information about their students and explain what kind of exchange they are wish to undertake (letters, emails, Skype, blog, school trip, project around a specific topic…). Then my role is to find correspondents who have the same expectations in the other country. If you would like to set up a correspondence, or to develop and work on a particular project with a class in France, please contact me: sophie.depelley@yale.edu

I also manage, together with Fabrice Jaumont (Education Attaché at the French Embassy), Linda Hanssler (French Embassy) and Marie-Virginie Vollmer (English teacher in Gard, France) the internet platform My Transatlantic School. This platform enables schools in the United States to connect with schools in France. It allows students in both countries (under the supervision of a teacher) to communicate through various media directly available on the platform: e-mailing, blogging, chatting or putting up pictures or even videos. These tools stimulate learning and change class dynamics by allowing the focus to shift towards a genuine interest and curiosity of the other: who they are, where they live, what they do, etc. Additionally, it enables teachers to establish and develop common pedagogical projects.

I represented the Center for the Teaching of French, along with former director Sharon Straka, at the CT COLT fall conference on October 29th. We will be there throughout the day as exhibitors to answer any questions you might have about the Center’s activities.

**Who could have known?**

By Linda L. Dalpe

What an incredible worry, challenge, fear and disappointment it was to finally make a decision to cancel our fall conference after a year’s worth of planning. The phone calls bouncing around the state in panic were lengthy and intense. We use the analogy to compare the planning of our conference to that of a wedding. So many people are involved to try to cancel or reschedule, with so many deposits made, exhibitors traveling from a distance, presenters having flown in from various parts of the country, key note speaker engaged, programs printed, family plans made, lesson plans left behind for substitutes and so many untold details that go into holding a conference. Behind the scenes ….month after month of planning, all volunteers who are committed to promoting our passion of the teaching and learning of language and culture. Who could ever have imagined after suffering snowmageddon last fall, with the impossibility of being able to cancel without incurring a financial disaster for CT COLT, that on that very same weekend of our 2012 conference, exactly one year later, we were faced with Sandy? Fortunately the management from the CoCo Key worked with CT COLT to not only postpone our conference with no financial penalty, but indeed, worked with us to be able to accommodate our new date. While we unfortunately had to cancel several workshops, we had a number of new workshops offered as our members stepped up to fill the slots.

As with any new venue, we learn from our committee members, from our exhibitors, from our presenters, and from
our participants what went really well and what challenges we face to be able to improve our conference. There was a wide variety of workshops offered this year, including technology, methodology, professional responsibilities, and hands on activities and learning materials that are easily adapted to a variety of classroom applications. This year there were over 30 exhibitors, 45 workshops and an inspiring keynote speaker, with 347 participants. The exhibitors particularly loved the entrance to the hall directly behind the registration area, which allowed for a lot of traffic in the exhibitor hall. Sometimes our participants don’t realize their importance to the success of our conference. Teachers are always looking for new materials and new realia to bring back to their students and at the same the exhibitors help to keep the cost of our conference the best professional bargain for our CT teachers. We are confident that our colleagues left the conference renewed inspired and re-energized to return to their students and the teaching of WL.

Thank you to the participants who kindly gave us their input through survey monkey. Our winner the drawing for next year’s free conference registration is Kathleen Marchetti from Newington High School. Because of the sudden unfortunate passing of our co-chair Janet Picerno, we have had to postpone our debriefing meeting until later in the month of January. However, plans are already underway for the fall 2013 conference. We sincerely hope you will consider presenting at the 2013 fall conference to be held on Monday Oct. 21st at the Coco Key Resort in Waterbury. If you aren’t able to present please encourage your colleagues to share some of their talents in a workshop as this is key learning time for all of us in our disciplines. As we are now more responsible for our own professional development, our goal is to provide you with up to date information and resources in the teaching of world languages. We also encourage you to visit website often to stay current with the latest news and to get involved in some of the activities that CT COLT offers. There are many opportunities long term and short to offer your service, with the conference committee meeting once a month from 4-6 pm in West Hartford. Get involved in our powerful organization to make a difference in our profession. There are so many ways for you to help in big or small ways. We look forward to meeting you at one of our events.

2013 CT COLT Rhyme Celebration

Approximately 200 children will recite rhymes and sing songs in world languages on Thursday, March 21, 2013, for the twenty-second annual CT COLT Rhyme Celebration. The event will take place at Danbury High School in Danbury, CT at 3:30 P.M and is sponsored by the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers (CT COLT) and co-hosted by the Western Connecticut Academy for International Studies Elementary Magnet School and the Danbury Public Schools. The Rhyme Celebration is an opportunity for children from kindergarten to sixth grade to promote an early love for world languages. Participants represent approximately 20 towns, over 10 school districts, and about 35 schools (both public and private) from around the state. Over 30 world language teachers and world language administrators are supporting the children in their recitations.

Some groups will be performing in world languages learned in school, while other performances will represent languages learned at home. Some of the languages represented will include Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Karen, Polish, Portuguese, Nepali, Vietnamese, Russian, Spanish, and Tulu.

This year’s theme is “World Languages Bridges of Peace”. The rhymes, songs, poems and tongue twisters are chosen by the world language teachers and are presented by students with costumes and props. The students and teachers practice for months. Each elementary student receives a certificate of participation printed in the language of the recitation, an illustrated souvenir program booklet (with all of the rhymes), a button (designed by a student from the Western Connecticut Academy for International Studies Elementary Magnet School and chosen from a school-wide contest), a “goody bag” and snacks.
The Western Connecticut Academy for International Studies Elementary Magnet School co-hosts, Maria Finnerty and Maria Sorrentino, believe that children who attend the Rhyme Celebration develop their 21st Century Skills by building their language skills and their appreciation of world cultures. CT COLT Rhyme Celebration Chair, Kate Krotzer, encourages children to perform on stage in languages other than their own because they not only develop communicative skills, but also gain understanding of language diversity.

For registration information, guidelines, and directions, please visit www.ctcolt.org. Rhyme Celebration registrations are due on January 15, 2013. Please contact Rhyme Celebration chair, Kate Krotzer with any questions at kate.krotzer@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you there.

Organizational News

National Meeting of the Fédération des Alliances Françaises USA in Providence, Rhode Island

The annual meeting of the Fédération des Alliances Françaises USA was held in Providence October 11-14. Ninety-five attendees came from New England and as far away as Florida, Colorado, South Carolina, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Sharon Straka attended as delegate from the Alliance of Hartford. The group was very cordially welcomed by Providence President Dominique Gregoire and Director Flavien Collet along with other local members. Thursday evening a ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the new residence of the Providence Alliance where speeches were given by French Ambassador Francois Delattre and Filipe Savagado, Ambassador to the Francophonie Organization at the United Nations. The program was followed by musical selections of the Providence Alliance French chorus.

Many informative sessions were held Friday and Saturday at the Westin Hotel. The highlight of the conference was the luncheon on Friday where Pulitzer Prize winner David McCullough was awarded the Prix Charbonnier for his book The Greater Journey. After accepting the award, Mr. McCullough shared his experiences in France where he was warmly received during his research, revealed the subject of his book and read the first page of his new book which also focuses on France. Saturday evening, participants were treated to a special event at the Providence Art Club where they enjoyed a wonderful meal and cabaret featuring the singer/actress Irene Jacob and her band. Ms. Jacob won an award as best actress at Cannes for her performance in La Double Vie de Véronique and is also a very talented singer.

On Sunday, attendees had the option of a visit of Providence including French tours at the wonderful museum of the Rhode Island School of Design or an excursion to Newport with visits to Marble House and The Breakers where audio guides were available in French. The group had lunch at the Tea House of Marble House and was accompanied by members of the Alliances of Providence and Newport.

Next year’s meeting will take place in Chicago beginning either October 17 or 24.

Kate Krotzer, NNELL Northeast Regional Representative!!!

Kate Krotzer is an elementary Spanish teacher in Glastonbury, CT. She works in her district teaching Spanish to students grades 1-5. She is active in planning district wide foreign language events such as International Night and the Foreign Language Literacy Showcase. She serves as the CT COLT (CT Council of Language Teachers) board as the NNELL representative and as the Rhyme Celebration chair. The Rhyme Celebration is a statewide event for grades k-6 to recite rhymes, poems, and songs in different languages. Kate also coordinates the elementary foreign language summer camps in Glastonbury. She is looking forward to working with NNELL as the northeast rep and expanding her knowledge of and supporting elementary language learning in the region.
ConnTESOL News

By Dorothy Mulford

ConnTESOL held its 42nd Annual Conference at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum in Ledyard, CT. on Saturday, November 3, 2012. The theme of the Conference was “Language at the Core.”

Although one presenter and several pre-registered participants had to cancel due to the effects of Hurricane Sandy; nevertheless, there were 383 participants in attendance. Because of the large number, the Museum’s facilities’ director provided a live hookup from the auditorium to another seating area in order to accommodate all registrants.

Dr. Stephen Krashen, Professor Emeritus at the University of Southern California and Dr. Faye Shin, Professor of Teacher Education at California State University gave the keynotes. In all, the keynoters made four presentations. As part of the “Welcome Session”, Krashen, in his “Comprehensible Input and Second Language Acquisition”, discussed two major hypotheses in language acquisition: The Comprehension Hypothesis and the Skill-building Hypothesis.

For the second presentation, Krashen stayed in the auditorium and was joined by Shin. They discussed the “Summer Reading Program”, wherein, sixth graders when given the time and place to read books they were interested in, showed significant improvement in their reading scores.

Krashen’s luncheon keynote was entitled “The Common Core: We Are Backing the Wrong Horse”, in which he argued that our schools are not broken; the problem is poverty. Poverty means poor nutrition, inadequate health care and lack of access to books.

Shin’s final presentation was “Design Principles.” Here she discussed integrating language instruction with content instruction.

In addition to the keynotes, there were twenty-one other workshops with titles ranging from “What Does the Common Core Mean for Beginners” to “Best Grammar Practices” to “Teaching ESL to Adult Learners with Special Needs.”

Sixteen exhibitors displayed their wares to delighted customers who stopped to purchase items on the way to and from the “Breakfast Hall”, where there was a copious supply of fresh fruit, danish, muffins, fresh juices, coffee and tea.

Prior to the first keynote, all four scholarship winners were on hand to read their essays for which each was awarded $1,000.00 for the coming spring semester. The theme of the essay was “A different language, a different vision of life.”

A buffet luncheon was served. Comments made on Survey Monkey regarding both the food and the events of the day were highly positive.

In an effort to bring the conference to different areas of the state, next year’s conference is tentative scheduled to take place at Sacred Heart University, located in Fairfield County.

Russian Language News

By John Rook

Startalk Russian Language Program

This coming summer (2013), Glastonbury will once again be hosting an immersion program in Russian language and culture, from July 1-- July 26. The curricular focus of the program will be a four week trip to Russia, concerning cross-country travel, transportation and geography. Student will make a mock, Trans-Siberian train trip, beginning in Vladivostok, ending in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

AATSEEL Newsletter and Teaching Resources

Visitors to the AATSEEL website can also read their latest and archived newsletters and learn about any of their publications. http://www.aatseel.org/publications/newsletter. On the following AATSEEL link (http://www.aatseel.org/resources/resources_teaching/), there are resources for teaching Slavic languages, cultures, film, literature and linguistics.

Davis Center at Harvard University
(http://daviscenter.fas.harvard.edu/outreach/events.html)

Teacher Workshop: Human Rights in Putin’s Russia

February 8, 2013 - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location: Harvard Campus, Cambridge, MA

This workshop will examine the track record of human rights and democracy in Russia since Vladimir Putin was first elected to the Presidency in 2000. It will examine the roots of the democratic transition under Boris Yeltsin, and discuss whether Russians are better off now than they were 10 years ago.

Hollywood Remakes a Russian Classic Novel

On November 17th, Hollywood released another remake of the Leo Tolstoy classic novel, Anna Karenina, set in late-19th century Russia high-society. The aristocrat Anna Karenina enters into a life-changing affair with the affluent Count Vronsky. A parallel sotry within the novel is of Levin, a
country landowner who desires to marry Kitty, sister to Dolly and sister-in-law to Anna's brother Oblonsky. Levin has to propose twice before Kitty accepts. The novel details Levin's difficulties managing his estate, his eventual marriage, and personal issues, until the birth of Levin's first child.

The Hartford Stage stages "Man in a Case", based on a short story by Russian writer, Anton Chekhov.

- February 21 -- March 24
- Adapted from the story by Anton Chekhov
- Adapted and directed by Annie-B Parson & Paul Lazar/Big Dance Theater
- Choreographed by Annie-B Parson
- Featuring Mikhail Baryshnikov

Anne-B Parson and Paul Lazar, the team behind the internationally acclaimed Big Dance Theater, bring their signature style -- fusing theater, movement, music, and video -- to this world premiere adaptation of Anton Chekhov's 1898 short story, "Man in a Case." In a tale both witty and haunting, a shy, reclusive man's courtship of a carefree young woman forces him to stare down his own rigid nature. Mikhail Baryshnikov with Jess Barbagallo, Tymberly Canale, Chris Giarro, and Aaron Mattocks.

**News From CT Schools**

**CTF Director Conducts Workshop on Exchanges**

Sophie Depelley, Director of the Center for the Teaching of French, organized a workshop on school exchanges on October 17 at Irving Robbins Middle School in Farmington. IAR French teacher Silvia Bettega hosted the CTF and French teachers in the school library where she connected via Skype with Laurence Aygleng, her exchange partner in Toulouse. Laurence spoke with the teachers relating the positive aspects of the exchange which takes place several times per semester. She cited the spontaneity and naturalness of the exchange between students which promotes cultural understanding and international friendships. After questions from the teachers, Sophie presented several options to teachers for exchanges including matching through the platform which she helps to administer which is My Transatlantic School, teacher exchanges, and hosting student teachers from France. Teachers enthusiastically shared their experiences with exchanges and inspired others to explore new possibilities.

**French Students Visit Farmington**

On Oct. 26, Farmington students and families welcomed 32 students from the Lycée Dumont - D'Urville in Caen, France to Farmington. French student spent several days in Boston and New York before their arrival in Farmington. The visit was arranged by FHS teachers Linda Zabor and Rick Mulcunry, and was the second half of the Farmington-Caen Cultural Exchange. Although volcanic eruptions in Iceland and terrorist strikes in Europe have halted the exchange in past years, many of the French students enjoyed a couple of days during storm Sandy to become more familiar with the American way of life. The visitors enjoyed spending time in FHS classes, touring the Stanley-Whitman House, carving Halloween pumpkins, and walking through the corn maze at Lyman Orchards. Many new friendships were made and the French classes enjoyed some lively discussions about cultural differences and stereotypes. A final farewell pot-luck allowed the families to celebrate their week together and say good-bye to their guests.

**Farmington High School Société Honoraire de Français**

Students of the Société Honoraire de Français organized several activities to celebrate National French Week – November 8-14. Students in all French classes were invited to wear blue, white and red, shirts with French logos or writing and dress up as a famous French person. On the final day, members of the honor society wore their SHF tee-shirts. The week also included a successful crêpe sale with money being donated to Save the Children of Haiti.
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Upcoming Events

Poster Contest
Theme: World Languages: Are you connected?
Deadline for submission: March 1, 2013

Essay Contest
Deadline: March 1, 2013
For more information, please visit www.ctcolt.org/pages/essay_contest.asp

Rhyme Celebration
Date: Thursday – March 21, 2013
Location: Danbury High School
Theme: Bridges of Peace Rhymes, Songs and Tongue Twisters about Peace and Brotherhood

Annual Fall Conference
Date: Monday – October 21, 2013
Location: CoCo Key Water Resort, Hotel & Convention Center in Waterbury, CT

Newsletter Submissions
Please send documents in MSWORD (Times New Roman, 10 pt, single spaced) and please send photos as separate files (preferably jpeg or gif).
Please do not embed photos in your articles.

Deadline for Submission of Articles for the Spring Issue of CT COLT World Language News Exchange is March 15.
Please send articles for the next newsletter to Stephanie Duchesneau (sduchesneau@simsbury.k12.ct.us) and to Paul St. Louis (pmsaint@verizon.net) by March 15, 2013

Help us keep our membership records updated!
If you have moved or had a name change, please visit the CT COLT web site (http://www.ctcolt.org) and click on the “Services” button. Then, under “Membership,” click on the link to the “Information Update Form,” fill it out and submit it.