

# *RI Writing Project*

Special Edition Newsletter  
Spring Conference 2009

## **Marjorie Roemer Honored by National Writing Project**

The co-directors of the RI Writing Project took a moment to honor Marjorie Roemer by reading a proclamation from Sharon Washington, Executive Director of the National Writing Project. As many of you know, this year's spring conference was Marjorie's last as director, but surely not her last as a participant. Below is the proclamation as it was read:



*Whereas* Marjorie Roemer has dedicated thirteen years of her professional life to the Rhode Island Writing Project as its director and as a devoted, knowledgeable and inspirational leader, and

*Whereas* Marjorie has worked tirelessly to establish the Rhode Island Writing Project as a vital resource for teachers in all of Rhode Island's school districts, at all grade levels, and in all content areas, and

*Whereas* Marjorie has been instrumental in guiding the development of the Rhode Island Writing Project's many programs: the Summer Invitational Institute on Writing and Critical Literacy, Planning for Change, the Literature Institute, the Mentoring Program, Writing Across the Content Areas Institutes, the Literacy Leadership Workshop, the Embedded Institute, the Presenter's Collaborative Network and the Young Writers Program, and

*Whereas* Marjorie has promoted quality professional development initiatives for Rhode Island teachers by acquiring numerous literacy and school reform grants, and

*Whereas* Marjorie's unwavering belief in teachers' skill, knowledge and experience has challenged teachers to believe in themselves and to think well beyond the teacher's manual, and

*Whereas* Marjorie has inspired countless teachers to become leaders, researchers, and reflective practitioners, to approach the challenges of classroom practice with a sense of authority and professionalism, and to see themselves as advocates for their students, their colleagues, and their school communities, and

*Whereas* Marjorie has established the Rhode Island Writing Project as an integral part of the education network on local, state and national levels through her participation in state literacy dialogues and other policy making committees and through her participation in numerous NWP initiatives, and

*Whereas* Marjorie has dedicated a professional lifetime to promoting the National Writing Project principles, especially the principle that the most effective teachers of teachers are teachers themselves, and

*Now, therefore* I, Sharon J. Washington, Executive Director of the National Writing Project, do hereby recognize and honor Marjorie Roemer's wisdom, hard work, and extraordinary leadership from which Rhode Island's teachers and students have greatly benefited

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## *“The Day in Pictures and Words”*

“It always exceeds my expectations! The RIWP has a team of dedicated, creative and tireless individuals. This long standing team inspires all of us to ‘look beyond’ with our teaching. Thanks again”



“I found it informative and I’ll be able to use a lot of what I learned in my classroom”

“The conference was very informative and applicable to my future as a teacher.”



“It was inspiring to hear how writing is fun and accessible in the classroom. This was my first, but not last, conference”



“This conference energized my zest for writing.”

“Very well organized! G. Heard’s presentation on non-fiction was excellent... lots of good info – that presentation inspired me”

“Any opportunity to witness the passion for writing is fuel for teachers”

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## *In Marjorie's Words*

In the introduction to her book, *Writing Toward Home: Tales and Lessons to Find Your Way*, Georgia Heard writes:

Writing is made of voices. Our single voices may seem to be lost in the bitter wind. But if we listen hard enough we can hear hundreds of other voices trying to sing like us. Like threads weaving a cloth. Like the constellation patterns we draw to connect stars. Voices who have never dared sing before.

On March 7 in Donovan Dining Center over 125 of us wove such a cloth, listening to the voices of hundreds of school children singing in the poems that Georgia brought us from all over the country. We listed some of the places that writing hides for us, and we uncovered the beauty in ordinary things. It was a splendid day of discovery. As Georgia Heard says later in this wonderful book: "When we begin to speak in the language that is ours and tell our own stories and truths, we are surprised that this too is poetry."

For me, there was a wonderful poetry too in the proclamation given me by the National Writing Project (and clearly prepared by the people closest to me here), my luxuriant bouquet of flowers (which lasted a good week in my livingroom) and the unquenchable exuberance of this great Writing Project site which I leave with my heart full of love and gratitude for all that you have given me.

Marjorie Roemer



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## ***A Special Thank You to this Year's Presenters:***

**1) A Place for Wonder: Reading and Writing Non-Fiction in the Primary Classroom**

Georgia Heard

**2) Lifting Our Voices in the Great Turning**

Louise Dunlap

**3) Sequential Art, Writing, and Self: From Image to Text and Back Again**

Jennifer Cook, *Rhode Island College*

Michael Gianfrancesco, *North Providence High School, North Providence, RI*

**4) Casting Your Line in a Sea of Genres: Using Multigenre Papers to Promote Creativity and Voice in Student Writing**

Jeffrey Lawton, *Warwick Veterans High School, Warwick, RI*

**5) Book Talks: Putting Literacy Strategies into Practice Through Conversation**

Christopher Pariseau, *Central High School, Providence, RI*

Jason Ryan, *North Kingstown High School, N. Kingstown, RI*

**6) Make-It-Better/Make-It-Worse: Internalizing the Revision Process**

Susan Friendson, *Central High School, Providence, RI*

**7) The Lightbulb Is On**

Terri Bozigian, *Winman Junior High School, Warwick, RI*

**8) A Poem a Day**

Rebecca Limoges, *Scituate Middle School, Scituate, MA*

## ***A Special Thank You to Our Honored Guests:***

- Dr. Nancy Carriuolo, President, RI College
- Dr. Maureen Reddy, English Department Chair, RI College

## ***Embedded Institute Participating Schools:***

- *North Providence High School*
- *Ricci Middle School*
- *Pilgrim High School*
- *Burrillville Middle School*
- *Hope Elementary School*
- *Warwick Veterans High School*

***A Special Thank You to Claudine Griggs for her generous scholarships for students to attend. We thank you for your generosity and support.***