

Community Works Journal™

A Resource Journal of Learning Experiences That Build Community

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Vermont Community Works is a 501-C3 nonprofit educational organization.

OUR MISSION is to promote exemplary teaching practices, programs and models that help students become caring, responsible and active members of their communities.

ABOUT Vermont Community Works

VCW serves as an educational resource for innovative community-based and service-learning teaching strategies, models, and professional development.

We believe that learning opportunities grounded in the local community are critical to promoting a connected, purposeful and positive school experience that contributes directly to the development of young people as healthy, caring, informed, and active citizens.

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ABOUT Community Works Journal

We publish *Community Works Journal* quarterly in support of teaching practices that build community.

Since 1996 the *Journal* has served a crucial need for dialogue, connection and models—a resource that inspires by example. *Community Works Journal* is distributed across North America and beyond, both in print and electronically, to educators, schools, programs, and networks.

Community Works Journal showcases innovative strategies and practices that involve educators and students in important work within their communities.

We welcome unsolicited article ideas; they will be reviewed and their authors contacted promptly. Guidelines are available on our Web site.

Managing Editor: *Joe Brooks*

Senior Editor: *Susan Bonthron*

Contributing Editors: *Megan Camp, Jen Cirillo,
Greg Sharrow, David Sobel,
Fern Tavalin, Erica Zimmerman*

Editorial Assistant: *Cynthia Fairbanks*

Accounts: *Traci LaMarche*

Contributing Artists: *Mary Azarian and Dede Cummings*

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HOW TO REACH US:

Vermont Community Works
ATTN Community Works Journal
PO Box 2251, S Burlington, VT 05407
tel: (802) 655-5918

email: journal@vermontcommunityworks.org
Web site: www.vermontcommunityworks.org

IN THIS ISSUE...

Our Featured Essays include: **Educating for Sustainability**, with Jennifer Cirillo writing on “**The Power of Food**”; **Discovering Community**, by Gregory Sharrow; **Of Place And Education**, by David Sobel, who is joined by Julie Bartsch of the Rural School and Community Trust. Their essay “**Beyond Academic Achievement**” focuses on the relationship between place-based learning and testing.

The issue also includes a wonderfully diverse collection of contributions. **Pooling Knowledge in the Collaborative Spirit** takes a look at the powerful spirit of collaboration present at this year’s Community Works Summer Institute at Shelburne Farms. **Redeeming Place: A Letter from the Mississippi Delta** shares important efforts going on in the Delta region to connect students to their culturally rich heritage. **After the Asphalt** profiles a San Francisco alliance that is sowing the city full of green school yards.

Further afield, two contributions come to us from Cairo, Egypt, **A Fourth Grade Plants Hope in the Egyptian Desert** and **Together We’re Better**. Educator and innovator Fern Tavalin is interviewed in **Learning through Collaboration. A Student-Town Partnership** provides a look at a highly successful collaboration between high school students and local community members and organizations. **Portrait of a Rural Teacher** gives us insight into the work of an educator who has made exceptional use of both technology and local primary resources—in the interest of connecting her isolated students to themselves and to the world. **Getting Started with Primary Resources** is an excellent primer on using the historical gems available right at your doorstep. **Building Community: A School Fire Provides a Unique Opportunity** is an account of what can happen when teachers and community members join together.

This issue’s **Featured Resources** include, **Youth Planning Charrettes**, designed to help offer creative and inspiring activities for children while imparting the value of planning in our everyday lives. We also feature **Community Lessons** A collection of promising service-learning instructional practices from teachers across Massachusetts. Finally, **Literacy Corner** shows us an example of the rich themes that can be found in children’s picture books—themes appropriate for nearly any grade level or program. In the back of this issue you find information on the **2005 Community Works Summer Institute at Shelburne Farms**, which will take place the week of August 1-5. We can’t emphasize enough the importance of registering early as the event has booked solid the past few years. This year’s Institute promises to be better than ever with the addition of several new highly talented full time faculty members.

We also wish to express our gratitude to all of you who have subscribed to *Community Works Journal* over the past year. The breadth of the *Journal's* readership continues to both fascinate and inspire us.



Fifth graders at Cairo American College K-12.

As always, we truly appreciate the feedback you give us. In some cases (with permission) we like to print letters that we receive because they underline our connection to a community of learners and colleagues. Letters like the one below illustrate the diversity and shared convictions of this community that we are. □

Dear Community Works Journal,

I have two boys, ages twelve and nine, that I have always homeschooled—our community has over 100 families active together as the Bellevue Home School Association. We are also part of the larger Middle Tennessee Home Education Association.

I was online last night looking for a printable "Nature Journal" format—we have "by accident" started observing our backyard "critters" nightly. We have two toads and two spiders that caught our attention. I started snapping photos and trying to keep track of their patterns, and determined I wasn't recording information as consistently as I would be if I had something easy to maintain. Sooo, that's how I somehow stumbled onto your Summer 2004 issue. (Volume 6, No. 3)

Each article I read was so informative. I printed one to ponder how to use in our pursuits, and then realized I really wanted all of the articles in print! I haven't had the chance to look into your other issues.

Most interesting to me was the "community" theme. Here I have been, on my own this fall, guiding us in studying Civics, Community Service, Nature Study, etc, never realizing they all are interrelated until I read those articles!!! It was like a lightbulb went off in my head. It makes so much more sense to experience all of those "topics" integrated rather than so piecemeal. I am expecting your resources will help me to do that. I usually go off on my own rather than follow curriculum, but I am learning there really can be wisdom in finding already made resources others have proven are helpful rather than creating everything myself.

Thank you! I look forward to staying in touch,

*Marcia Carneal
Nashville, Tennessee*

[Readers may email us at: journal@vermontcommunityworks.org]

EDUCATING FOR SUSTAINABILITY



The Power of Food

by Jennifer Cirillo

Jennifer Cirillo is the coordinator of the Sustainable Schools Project, sponsored by Shelburne Farms. She supports the Project's work with teachers at Champlain and Barnes Elementary Schools in Burlington, Vermont. Jen is also a full-time faculty member with Community Works Summer Institute on Service-Learning at Shelburne Farms.

Chop! The cleaver comes down hard against the wooden board. Hack! Loredana cuts through the bone as she begins to prepare dinner for the guests arriving for a traditional Tuscan meal of roasted wild boar.

“*Andiamo!*”— the forlorn cry of the shepherd calls his flock in from the pasture. They leave the rustic chestnut gates and swarm into the confines of the narrow stonewalled lane, long tails swinging. Lambs stay close to their mothers. Long-time inhabitants of this land, these sheep are being bred as part of “Noah’s Ark,” a rare breeds conservancy program.

“*Nini, vieni qui!*” Tergo gestures for me to come closer. He is showing me how he and generations of Italian farmers tend the land, plant and care for crops, and most importantly, the best way to eat the fruits of our labor: straight from the earth.

I became part of this landscape in the winter of 2002 as a gardener (*una ortolana*) for an estate called *Tenuta di Spannocchia* in the rolling hills outside of Siena, Italy. Thinking about, growing, harvesting, washing, preparing and eating food was the job I shared with many others on the estate. Here, every meal was a team effort. Each day we would rise, gather to decide on our day’s work, and break to begin our jobs—all about making dinner. Our best event was Pizza Night. We all collaborated to create a rich masterpiece from the land, each of us thinking about the sustainability in our choices.

First, Angelo and Angelino would walk deep into the forest to collect *corbezzolo*—a hot-burning wood. All trees on the estate were sustainably harvested and managed for both food and fuel. Rusty would then build a fire in the old brick oven in the courtyard and tend it all day until the coals were white hot. In the early morning, before the heat of the day, Polly, John and I would harvest organic heirloom vegetables and herbs from the terraced gardens to bring to

Graziela and Gaetana, the cooks. They would prepare them along with meats from our herds of Tuscan pigs and cows, also part of the “Noah’s Ark” program. Tables made of locally harvested wood by Ruggiero, the resident furniture maker/restorer, were set in the courtyard adorned with vases of sunflowers. Bottles of red and white wine from the organic vineyard tended by local men and a cadre of young interns from the U.S. were scattered along white tablecloths.

Guests arrived and were served pizza made by Stefano, a local baker/vintner. He first tested the fire’s temperature by making *focaccia* (bad fire) and then a plethora of divine creations. Diners capped off the evening with Daniela’s homemade *gelato* and *limoncello*, an aperitif made from our lemon trees. On any given night, farmers, artists, professors, local children and guests would sit together to enjoy good conversation and great food under the rising moon. Perhaps they thought about sustainability and collaboration — as each person at Spannocchia had—or they reveled in the ancient beauty of this eleventh century farm estate.

I have seen the power of food as a theme for discussing sustainability both at home and abroad. The first unit I worked on with Shelburne Farms’ Sustainable Schools Project was “Sustainability and Food” with the fourth and fifth graders at Champlain Elementary School in Burlington, Vermont. Students explored food: the environmental impacts of growing, harvesting, and transporting food, its relation to the local economy, and food security or an equitable food system. Students explored the unique collaboration that it takes to get food to their plates. They met with farmers, the food shelf director, and a soil scientist to better understand each person’s perspective on the food system. For their culminating product, students were asked to make “the most sustainable pizza.”

First, students created a paper version, detailing ingredients in the ideal world, and then presented their choices based on human and environmental health and community and personal cost. Next, the real challenge began: actually making a pizza that they would eat. Students were asked to bring in an ingredient (sauce, dough or toppings) and then to explain why this was the best choice. Some brought in jarred sauce from a locally owned restaurant, others organic jarred sauce from a chain grocery store, while others made sauce from their garden’s tomatoes. As they discussed their choices, students realized the complexity of making a decision that

Sustainability, cont'd. on p. 33

DISCOVERING COMMUNITY

by Gregory Sharrow

In his regular Journal essays Greg ponders the connections between community and curriculum. He is a former classroom teacher and now Director of Education at the Vermont Folklife Center, with a Ph.D in Folklore. Greg has done extensive field research, and is author of a number of publications, including the multicultural textbook Many Cultures, One People. His current work focuses on the interplay of folklife and personal identity and the role that culture plays in our construction of self. Greg is a full-time faculty member with Community Works Summer Institute.

The past has always seemed real to me because of my mother's stories. She was born in 1916 on a lakeside farm and was raised by her widowed grandmother. Grandmother Kidney, for that is how she was known, was a dairy farmer, but like all farmers of the era she also kept hens, sheep, pigs, and bees. Resourceful and self-reliant, she farmed with horses and in the 1920s augmented the farm income by developing a fishing resort with cabins and a boat landing. All of this came to a crashing halt on a blistering August afternoon in 1931 when a spark from a threshing machine ignited a straw stack. With drought conditions and a strong west wind the fire quickly spread from building to building, leveling the entire farm in a matter of hours.

Grandmother Kidney chose not to rebuild and left to join her sisters in California. The land was rented to a tenant and in 1949 sold to a developer who cut roads, laid out lots, and promptly went bankrupt. My first memories of the farm were of abandoned fields crisscrossed by empty roads, all growing up to brush. But even in this state of decay the farm had a magnetic fascination, coming to life holographically in the few surviving photographs, dishes, and personal mementos saved from the burning farmhouse, but evoked most intensely by the interplay of my mother's stories and the landscape itself.

We would make pilgrimages to the farm, my mother and I, to dig myrtle and iris around the foundation of the farmhouse or pick mulberries in the overgrown fields. My mother would talk about her life with Grandmother as we sat under the catalpa trees that Grandmother had planted for solace and protection after a brief homesteading foray into western Kansas.

I knew the room in which Grandmother's father had died, when my five-year-old mother had insisted that Grandmother telephone God. And I knew the spot where my mother sat to crack black walnuts, a headstone Grandfather Kidney had plowed up on the farm and set face down outside the milk

room door. Imagine my amazement one summer afternoon when we dug down through the accumulated debris and found it still in place: "Mary A. Wife of C.G. Robertson died April 30, 1859." Who was this mysterious Mary A.? Why was she buried on the farm and then so completely forgotten?

We visited the foundations of each of the outlying buildings—hen house, granary, outhouse, barn—and the stone piles on the field margins. The snakes were still there sunning themselves, just as they had in my mother's youth. And we went prospecting in the greatest treasure trove of all, the farm dump, where I found links from a chain drive that I imagined having come from that fateful threshing machine.

My mother conjured this vanished world as deftly as Shahrazad spinning her tales for the thousand and one nights. Not that my mother is necessarily a gifted storyteller. Rather it was the interplay of my mother's memories with an actual place that I could see and explore, coupled with the fact that she was evoking a world complete with characters and a setting that I could come to know as though I were reading a really great novel. There was also the element of discovery, because I wasn't simply a passive receptor—I asked questions, we dug up artifacts, I drew floor plans, we went exploring. It never occurred to me that this was history. It was just plan fun.

This childhood experience is my touchstone for introducing kids to history—not history as names and dates in a book, but history as discovery, history as an opportunity to enter into the living, breathing worlds of the past. This perspective shaped my approach to history as a fourth and fifth grade teacher and it informs the materials I produce and the point of view I advocate as education director at the Vermont Folklife Center. Here's one way in which it translates into action:

When I visit a classroom to introduce students to oral history, I often start out with two objects—a mouse from a computer and a slotted rod with a handle that was used to tighten rope bedsteads. The mouse, of course, is a contemporary object and is totally familiar; the bed tightener is from the farm world in the age of horsepower and is utterly foreign.

I ask students to identify the mouse and to explain how it's used, encouraging them to talk broadly about the role that computers play in their lives—where they encounter them, what they do with them—as well as the ways in which they observe other people using them. This is a vast topic and it's so familiar and blatantly obvious that kids often think it's almost silly to talk about it.

Discovering, cont'd. on p. 33

OF PLACE AND EDUCATION

Beyond Academic Achievement

by David Sobel and Julie Bartsch

David Sobel, a contributing editor for the Journal, is the Director of Teacher Certification Programs at Antioch New England Graduate School. He also codirects the Community-based School Environmental Education Program (CO-SEED). David is the author of a number of books including Children's Special Places. David's coauthor this issue, Julie Bartsch, is a steward with the Rural Schools and Communities Trust and is the author of Community Lessons.

One of the problems with the No Child Left Behind legislation is that it sets our sights too low, as if the primary goal of schools is to produce higher test scores. And further, that higher test scores somehow translate into greater equity of opportunity and a higher quality of life for American students. We don't think so. As Marty Neill of the National Center for Fair and Open Testing says, "Under NCLB, education will be seriously damaged, especially in schools with a large share of low-income and minority children, as students are coached to pass tests rather than to learn a rich curriculum that prepares them for life in the 21st century."

For example, consider my 17-year-old daughter's first round of SAT test scores: 710 Verbal, 550 Math. Obviously we were pleased with the verbal, and a bit disappointed in her math score. But would you know from this score that she's a whiz at balancing the books and cashing out the register when she closes up the coffee shop by herself two nights a week? That she won the Freshman math/physics award? That she's the only student member of the mayor's Cities for Climate Control committee where she's involved in figuring out how to reduce the carbon dioxide output of city vehicles and businesses? Do we get an understanding of how her math skills and her civic participation have an impact on the community by glancing at her SAT score?

Schools aren't just about test scores, and schools don't exist separate and apart from the communities they serve. In truth, schools can and should serve as the focal point, the source of renewal in their neighborhoods and communities. From this perspective, we should expect schools to:

- engage students in rigorous work that develops academic skills
- ensure the development of civic engagement skills in students and teachers

- engage parents, community members and businesses in the life of the school
- design programs that engage students in solving community problems and contribute to the quality of life and the environment.

Marty Neil advocates that, "Opponents of NCLB should not oppose all forms of accountability. Instead, they must press to develop genuine accountability that supports improved student learning and better schools and that provides rich information to parents and communities. The federal law should be transformed from one based on threats and punishment to one that supports teachers, students, parents and communities in their efforts to improve schools." Place-based education, a reform effort underway in schools across the United States, provides this kind of healthy alternative pathway to school and community improvement. The national Rural School and Community Trust (RSCT) programs and the Community-based School Environmental Education (CO-SEED) program of Antioch New England are two of many organizations helping schools and communities work together to improve each other. We believe that if we just focus on test scores, we ignore the deeper mission of schools as laboratories for democracy.

Place-based education is rooted in what is local—the unique history, culture, environment and economy of a particular place. The community provides a context for learning, student work focuses on community needs and interests, and community members serve as resources and partners in many aspects of teaching and learning. In reform efforts based on place-based education, students do sustained academic work that leads to schools and communities getting better together. In this way, the benefits of place-based education show up not just in students' academic performance, but also in increased community vitality, greater parent engagement in school and community events, and in the improved quality of the economy and environment in the local area. We contend that we can raise test scores, cultivate the civic responsibilities of students, and improve the quality of life in the community simultaneously. In fact, it's the school–community synergy that makes learning compelling.

To assess and understand the critical features of place-based education efforts, the Rural School and Community Trust has developed a Portfolio-based Assessment System. This system integrates a number of separate goals and pro-

cesses not currently addressed in state and national standardized assessments but critical for improving teaching and learning. These include connecting schools and communities, pairing intellectual content knowledge with real world applications, measuring the full impact of learning inside and outside the school, and using the evidence these strategies yield for program improvement. The Learning Portfolio is designed around three complementary themes and related aspects with corresponding rubrics to assess the work of students, teachers and community members:

I. Student Learning and Contributions prizes student learning that is rigorous, connected to the community and reflective of student voice and leadership.

II. Community Learning and Empowerment focuses on what the community has gained and how it has changed as a result of place-based learning.

III. Deepening and Spreading Place-based Learning examines whether place-based approaches have become sustainable in the school and sustaining to the community.

To better understand the three strands of this portfolio-based assessment system, we'd like to share two school-community projects, one in Louisiana and the other in Massachusetts, and invite you to consider how these goals apply to both.

East Feliciana Parish School District, Louisiana

Located in southeastern Louisiana, East Feliciana Parish School District serves approximately 3000 students, 2400 of them in grades K-8. In a parish where African Americans comprise only 47.1% of the population, they represent more than 80% of the public school students; most, 84.8%, qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Only 31.8% of the parish's adult population had completed high school and fewer than 5% were college graduates. At the dawn of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 55.8% percent of the district's K-8 teachers were not fully certified to teach and 80% of its students were performing below average in at least one core subject.

Although most East Feliciana Parish children live in poverty (26% of the parish's children live below the poverty level), they are surrounded by a landscape with tall forests, streams and rivers, rolling hills, and diverse wildlife. It is in this environment that an initiative dubbed Project Connect was launched in 1999, to address the parish's historically

low test scores in science and math. Before Project Connect, science at the elementary and middle level was taught on a very limited basis. Teachers worked in self-contained classrooms and had little direct guidance in how to impart scientific concepts. Student learning was entirely classroom centered.



Courtesy East Feliciana Parish Schools

Project Connect initially focused on improving K-8 science instruction by using the environment as context for place-based learning. Students studied local soil, rocks and minerals, ecology, topography, weather, biodiversity, and water quality. Nature trails and butterfly gardens were built. Over time, place-based work has expanded to include other disciplines — local geography, history, mathematics, and language arts. Teachers, who had never used the outdoor environment as classroom, participated in three consecutive summer trainings focused on content knowledge and place-based learning. A number of local community partners from a wide range of organizations and agencies, including the Watershed Alliance, the Extension Service, and area universities, stepped forward to support Project Connect.

Science classes at Clinton Middle School can now walk from their building to nearby Pretty Creek, part of a regional watershed that eventually flows into Lake Ponchartrain. During the last two years, supplementary trails have been built for Clinton students to study the creek from at least three access points. They measure and analyze water samples, net insects, larvae, and minnows, and assess the impact of seasonal and environmental changes on the stream and its surroundings. A group of eighth graders, presenting their water-related research at the Lake Ponchartrain "Water Watch" Sym-

Place, cont'd. on p. 34

POOLING KNOWLEDGE IN THE COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT



“In those few days in Vermont, other people’s kindness and strength, their commitment to community service learning and the Institute that brought them all together renewed my faith in human power. We were all working on things that mattered.”

Sherine Hafez,
Cairo American College
Cairo, Egypt

who came from as far away as Bulgaria and Cairo. The presence of educators who had come so far to join us lent a particular excitement and intensity to the week. The morning continued with two different workshops for experienced and novice practitioners of service-learning and concluded with Marc Chabot’s inspiring presentation about his ongoing high school physics project at Thetford Academy. In the afternoon, we took a field trip around the Farm, led by Jen Cirillo and Erica Zimmerman to “Encounter Sustainability.” Jen is the coordinator of Shelburne’s Sustainable Schools Project, and Erica the coordinator of Vermont Education for Sustainability. They led us on

a hike to Shelburne’s Farm Barn for a lesson in understanding natural cycles (“Sun to Cheese!”) and to explore the living ecology of a local pond.

“Every participant... came to feel ownership of an ultimately satisfying experiment—a week of good work—that achieved a valuable end of planned and proposed programs reaching many corners of the world, and that claimed all of us as contributing members of a community of scholars and activists.”

Beverly Maddox Moon, Delta State University
Cleveland, Mississippi

No matter how thoroughly planned, the success of a week-long Summer Institute is never created or sustained by the faculty alone; it is fed by the passion and dedication of the participants themselves. An amazing synergy among all of us carried us through a week of learning and discovery at beautiful Shelburne Farms in late July. The thread that connected us throughout the week became clearer each day: We began to experience ourselves collectively as partners, pooling our knowledge in a week-long collaboration, modeling how we all strove to work with our students—not as experts with all the knowledge, but as learners ourselves who can facilitate learning by others.

“We need the work of this Institute week to reclaim intellectual endeavor, separate from the constant company of students, and the predictable dynamics of a staff working together through the years.”

Sharyl Green, Jericho Elementary School
Jericho, Vermont

Our Summer Institute on Service-Learning week began with the usual information-packed morning meeting that each day required, highlighted by our introduction to participants

Place is the Context, Sustainability the Goal, Service-Learning the Strategy

Along with service-learning, the Institute’s shared theme this year was education for sustainability—expanding student awareness of the interconnections between the environment, the economy, and social equity, so that they learn to care about and become involved in making their communities and the planet a healthier place now and into the future.

“It made a lot of sense to me once Jen said, Service-learning is the vehicle through which you can help students to understand the interconnectedness in their world, the place where they live and their awareness of their ability to make a difference.”

Stacy Weinberger, The Bellwether School
Burlington, Vermont

Monday evening, we looked at a different aspect of sustainability through Tim Kahn’s film, *The Last Link*, which tells the story of Basque shepherds who moved to the American West in an effort to sustain their culture and heritage. The film has become a catalyst for future work in teaching for sustainability through a project called The Next Link: Building Sustainable Communities.

From Fundamentals to Folklife

“The daily readings and morning reflection exercises reinforced the concepts and Best Practices of Service-Learning.”

Amelia Ross-Hammond, PhD,
Norfolk State University,
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Each day the energy grew. Tuesday began with representations of the places we’d come from, which we draped around the Coach Barn—so many talented artists in the group! Along with workshops in the fundamentals of service-learning with Joe Brooks and site level best practices with Martha Rich, (head of school at Thetford Academy), we created beautiful reflection journals, explored ways to connect students to their



future with Jen Cirillo, and examined the nature of collaboration with teaching librarian Susan Hessey. Pat Haggerty shared ways to help students find their own voices and values through service-learning, and introduced us to some new ways to inspire student reflection.



“Shelburne Farms...modeled a community that kept its best components of land, products, economy and people who believe in what they do. It was just the perfect setting for such a theme.”

Dr. Jailan Abbas, Cairo American College
Cairo, Egypt

Also on Tuesday, we delved into community ethnography as service with Greg Sharrow of the Vermont Folklife Center and Larry Burns, a fourth grade teacher, who talked about empowering students as folklorists. Learning to listen to and understand each other, to “enter the experience of other people’s worlds,” as Greg put it, has become increasingly important in the face of ongoing cultural collisions caused by factors such as economics and immigration. Honoring diverse voices and experiences is a lynchpin of both service-learning and sustainability.

“I love what Greg Sharrow does. I have always found oral histories to be interesting and important. He will be a resource for me with my first project.”

Laurie Sullivan, Goffstown High School
Goffstown, New Hampshire

Pooling Knowledge, cont’d on p. 12

REDEEMING PLACE

A LETTER FROM THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA

by Beverly Maddox Moon, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of English
Faculty Liaison for Service-Learning
Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi

Five years ago, I came to the Mississippi Delta to teach at Delta State University, a regional institution. “Why,” students in my first composition class asked, “did you choose to come here? It’s so flat!”

“It’s so flat!” What could their indictment even begin to mean?

I have come to believe that question, that derogation, was not so much a dislike of the flatness of the land, which to me has a beauty all its own—the all-encompassing sunsets, for example, stretch from the eastern horizon to the western, an inverted bowl of color covering the landscape. Rather, I understand that they wondered at my “choosing” to be at Delta State University, when so many of them despair of the flatness of their lives in the Delta.

This Delta they disparage is a place of unique landscapes and culture, rich in history, but it has vastly underdeveloped human resources, and these students in the Delta see very little in their futures. Of course, the ones at university have some hope that their education will serve them—their priority is to get a degree so they can get a job, preferably outside this flat landscape.

This seemingly irredeemable place, the setting of some of William Faulkner’s most imaginative, evocative works, is also home to or the focus of the work of various artists and luminaries such as B. B. King, John Lomax, Ellen Douglas, Eudora Welty, Robert Johnson, Morgan Freeman, Tennessee Williams, William Alexander Percy, Mulgrew Miller, Thomas Harris, Lester Young, Son Thomas, Fannie Lou Hamer, Hodding Carter, Muddy Waters, Shelby Foote, Judge Lucy Somerville Howorth, Clifton Taulbert, Joe—the tamale guy in Rosedale . . . the list goes on.

I certainly don’t want to discourage students from venturing out into the vastness of the world beyond the Delta, but the challenge for me has been how to interest students also in learning to revere or at least appreciate their cultural heritage. Lately, trying to develop a hook to engage the stu-

dents, I’ve been doing lots of reading on teaching and learning strategies, especially place-based education. Much of my reading has been generated by an ever-increasing interest in the subject “teaching versus learning,” and how best to serve our students’ educational needs.



Jazz great Lester “Prez” Young, courtesy of Mississippi student, Hashim Welch, who authored a Young biographical Web page for The Mississippi Writers and Musicians Project of Starkville High School.

The articles I’m particularly interested in have not been those focused on service-learning

so much as on methods of instruction that will help educators do a better job of what they do (or are supposed to be doing)—help students learn.

Service-learning as a strategy of good instruction is often implied, folded into the presentation, or is certainly inferred by me to be there, admittedly because that is my field of interest. What I have found, however, to be recurrent explicit themes in virtually all the articles that capture my attention are that teachers will do well to start with what students know, engage students in meaningful work, and encourage students to understand that they have made and will continue to make valuable contributions to communities in which they can claim citizenship.

That engaging, meaningful model of helping students learn also describes exactly what transpired recently, what many of us have marveled at, the camaraderie and community that developed at Shelburne Farms during Community Works Summer Institute 2004. On the same note I made over and again in written reflection and in talking to others, I suggest that the faculty facilitated for all of us an almost utopian service-learning experience. Every participant, I hope, came to feel ownership of an ultimately satisfying experiment—a week of good work—that achieved a valuable end of planned and proposed programs reaching many corners of the world, and that claimed all of us as contributing members of a community of scholars and activists.

Why would or should an institute work so well? Allowing for human nature, we have to accept that everyone won’t

love everyone else, and always in the mix will be some who grouse and grump about policy or procedure or particulars, but for the most part, the Institute (the whole) achieved its goal—helped us all with personal and professional goals. The Institute worked because simply, or magnificently if you will, it modeled a magical paradigm of the ultimate service learning experience. We served, we learned, we reflected, we were—we are—community.

Back in the Delta now, I have been determined to maintain that intense commitment to a scholarship and pedagogy of community in my own backyard. As countless educators across the nation complain regularly, our students are coming to us ill-prepared for higher education, and to my personal dismay, the students I teach in college are often recent graduates with little concept of the connection between education and their lives and community. For us to be successful in preparing university students for fruitful lives that benefit their communities, specifically in the Delta for me, we must do more to reach the secondary students.

In several years of teaching before coming to Delta State, I had always included a few community-driven assignments. I continued that practice at DSU, soon “discovered” service-learning, and knew that I had found the curriculum model that would serve my students and energize my own instruction. After these past few years of using service-learning in my composition classroom and simultaneously serving as faculty liaison for service-learning on our campus, I have begun to imagine that taking these experiential learning practices out into our secondary schools, and ultimately to all of K-12, will energize our education system in the Mississippi Delta.

Who can and will be involved in such an ambitious endeavor? Teachers, of course, and teachers’ institutions are prime resources with which to begin. Delta State University was in its beginning a teachers’ college, as was Mississippi Valley State University, an historically black institution about forty miles away, with both institutions maintaining a strong emphasis on teaching and on training teachers. The universities share a recruiting area that encompasses the several counties of the Delta, so both schools have a vested interest in preparing K-12 students to succeed in higher education. Why, then, aren’t both schools doing more to reach out to the often less-than-adequate, poorly-funded school systems of their major recruiting area?

Because I have seen how well experiential learning works in my classes, I am proposing a pilot program for a local high school considered by many teaching professionals to be sub-standard. Dropout rates are high, a low percentage of

graduates go on to university, and those that do are often ill-prepared for higher education. Limited community interest and parental involvement are cited as reasons for educative failures, as is inadequate funding.

In the program I’m proposing, the curriculum planning will take place with a coalition of college teachers and eleventh and twelfth grade English teachers. As of this time, I have secured commitments from DSU professors in English education, literature, German, theatre, and speech, and from the incoming MVSU Chair of the Department of Fine Arts. The curriculum, structured around the somewhat flexible state frameworks, will incorporate the culture and history of the Delta into the eleventh and twelfth grade requirements. University students’ involvement will be an essential service-learning element of the program, as will field experiences for all involved. High school students in turn would become involved in their communities with service experiences.



Beverley and Anne Young critiquing their plans during the Institute.

My objective at the Summer Institute was to write a proposal for a curriculum plan that will present possibilities for improvement in secondary and higher education in the Delta. That’s what I achieved at the Institute. A subsequent goal is to apply for major grants to fund the program. I foresee that such funding will enable us to provide continuing training, in the way of summer institutes, weekend retreats, and continuing education credit, for secondary and college professionals. I can only hope that any such continuing education projects and sessions will be as successful, rewarding, and helpful as the 2004 Summer Institute was for me. It’s a model to emulate, for sure. □

Information on the 2005 Community Works Summer Institute at Shelburne Farms can be found in the back of this issue.



Study Groups: Pooling Shared Knowledge and Learning from Each Other

"I found the study group to be a very valuable part of the week, sharing programs, philosophies, ideas and opinions. The members of my group...were very supportive of each other, interested and respectful of each other's plans, contributing valuable insights, ideas and experiences."

Peggy Adam, South Side High School
Fair Oaks, Pennsylvania

Study groups gave smaller gatherings of Institute participants a chance to delve deeper into our questions and dilemmas around the practice of service-learning at our different institutions. We each had a chance to describe a challenging issue and ask for help. By collaborating as partners,



we looked at our work from different perspectives and were able to think in new ways about what we were trying to accomplish. We learned that although our issues were different, we all had knowledge to bring to our collaborative discourse, regardless of our level of experience. We all worked on plans that we intended to implement during the course of the following year.

"The assignments were so useful. I liked that the work we were required to do was directly linked to our job site and proposed project."

Lissa Knauss, Barre Town Elementary

"Needs and Service" and an ESL Partnership Project

On Wednesday, Kevin Mann moderated a panel discussion with invited guests that inspired us to think more deeply about what it means to meet a genuine community need. Later, two of the panel guests, Beverly Scofield and Elaine Harrington, encouraged us to examine cultural assumptions that can lead to misunderstanding. They went on to describe a partnership that connected service-learning to a course on immigration, identity, and English as a second language, during which their students helped local teenage refugees adjust to new lives in Vermont.

My thinking about the role of service-learning in education has changed in that I now understand much more about the "ease" with which it fits within all curriculum areas."

Kathy Schaefer, Gates Chili High School
Rochester, NY

Co-Motion to Student Empowerment, Participation to Assessment

"I met educators from all over the world who are interested in and devoted to quality, real world, lasting educational reform. In one week an educational strategy was laid out, explained, explored, and implemented by twenty-five participants from all levels of the educational community. It wasn't just ideas, it was action."

Abbie Andrew, Goffstown High School
Goffstown, New Hampshire

Jean Berthume of Harwood High School offered a captivating look at his work with high school students in service-learning and sustainability. Joey Hoffman helped us

“cultivate the soil for student participation” and—with Pat Haggerty—gave us the benefit of their experience in facilitating youth-run advisory boards. Kevin Mann of New York’s Shoreham-Wading River School District presented a thought-provoking hands-on workshop in student empowerment. Susan Hessey and Susan Bonthron teamed up to explore issues in how to assess what students are learning through service.

“The high energy, hope and promise of what Jean Berthume offered were simply delightful.”

Abbie Andrew

Time for Reflection

“There are all these great teaching, assessment, evaluation and reflection strategies I was exposed to, and I plan to make most of them part of my teaching practice.”

Roumyana Ivanova
The American College of Sofia
Sofia, Bulgaria

Every day after lunch, we engaged in a variety of reflection activities to illustrate the many ways reflection can deepen student learning and help students understand their own experience. We drew paths to our goals, we chose objects that embodied what we were learning, we took walks with a reflection partner, and we learned why reflection is so essential an ingredient in service-learning. In a final group reflection activity, each study group was asked to encapsulate what they felt was their own most significant learning which, when shared, reinforced our need to keep students at the center of all we do. Each day also offered a chance to reflect on assigned readings or express our thoughts on the day, in addi-



tion to daily evaluations that enabled the faculty to make responsive adjustments.

“Another revelation was the idea of involving students in planning and organizing every stage of the project, from the preparation to the celebration... to ensure they will own both the process and the product while encouraging them to explore new roles and relationships.”

Roumyana Ivanova

Our annual Summer Institute BBQ on the lake mid-week, hosted by the Inn at Shelburne Farms, provided a chance to meet each other’s families, children, and in one case, reunite with a participant from last year, Ray Dumais, who will now be joined in his efforts at Goffstown High School in New Hampshire by two of this year’s Institute participants. And so the energy flowed, continuing right into the last day when we had a chance to share with a new partner the plans we worked on so diligently all week. We faculty members felt awed and humbled by our experience with this group of motivated educators from Florida to Egypt, Mississippi to Bulgaria, whose energy and interest in each other’s work created a collaboration that we hope will continue long into the future. □

Whether it was a nurturing presence, good advice from past experience, or a sense of humor that lightened the mood ... every person seemed important to the whole group process.”

Lissa Knauss

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AFTER THE ASPHALT

A SAN FRANCISCO ALLIANCE SOWS CITY FULL OF GREEN SCHOOL YARDS

by Sharon Gamson Danks



Photo credit Tamar Cooper.

By fall 2000, the founders of the Tule Elk Park Child Development Center, a pre-K through third grade school in San Francisco, should have been pleased. In just 5 years, they had completely transformed a bleak schoolyard blighted by chainlink fences and cracked asphalt. Students could now explore a playhouse, edible garden, wooden totems, sandbox with water pump, and shaded pathways meandering through native poppies, manzanita shrubs, and white alder trees. A garden coordinator had been hired to help teachers bring children out to dig in the dirt, smell magnolias, or taste chard, rosemary, or ground cherries. The landscape had become the medium for academic assignments; in one math lesson, students made bar charts to record a taste test of the garden's herbal teas. Parents and neighbors, too, sought out the space for off-hours relaxation, picnics, and birthday events.

Yet the school founders were not satisfied. "We had a conviction that this kind of program shouldn't be limited to children at Tule Elk," said Nan McGuire, an original member of the school's advisory board.

That thought was the genesis of the San Francisco Green Schoolyard Alliance (SFGSA), a loose collection of stay-at-home moms, garden coordinators, teachers, parks advocates, funders, school yard designers, non-profit agencies, and city representatives who set out to make San Francisco the first large city in the country to green all of its school yards. The alliance has no office of its own, no money to pay staff, and no official standing with the city. But it does have about sixty members, including twenty-three member organizations, and a vision: Tule Elk Parks for every school yard within 10 years.

When the alliance was founded in March 2001, McGuire and her colleagues knew it would be no easy task. Foundation and donor funding totaled no more than a few thousand dollars annually. The San Francisco Unified School District, whose priorities ran more to leaky roofs than edible gardens, had no mandate or provisions for greening its roughly 150 school yards. About thirty-five school gardens were scattered throughout the city, run mostly by overworked parents and teachers.

"Nobody knew about Tule Elk," recalled Arden Bucklin-Sporer, an alliance member and parent who had scraped together \$500 to create a garden abutting the Alice Fong Yu Alternative School in 1996. "Our garden started in a complete vacuum."

The Green Schoolyard Alliance ended that kind of isolation. Within a year-and-a-half, it had raised more than \$65,000 for a range of efforts—including site improvements at eight schools—and helped secure another \$2 million in state bond money for greening projects at seventeen others.

By the end of 2003, the school district had amended its facilities master plan to declare green school yards a priority, and hired Arden Bucklin-Sporer full time (she had to raise her own salary, but got an office and title: Director of Educational Gardens).

The district also cosponsored the alliance's regionwide 2002 conference, where two hundred teachers, parents, and others received training while building ecological improvements at three host schools. With money left over from the conference's budget, the alliance later awarded minigrants for projects at five more schools. A postconference network,

with a listserv for everything from the availability of compost to grant deadlines, has grown to three hundred members.

“There were all these lone voices out there,” said Bucklin-Sporer, “and we knew we could speak much louder with one voice.”

The alliance benefited from the lucky confluence of two popular ideas: open space and environmental education. In 2000, while Tule Elk was expanding its horizons, neighborhood-park advocates were campaigning to ensure that a successful \$110 million state bond for parks would fund imaginative play areas for children. One advocate, Rosey Jencks, recalled that a trail of research led her to Tule Elk, where she was quickly invited to help organize the first “visioning” meeting of the alliance, in March 2001.



“I think that play is the most important work that children do and that we owe them stimulating, creative, and beautiful environments,” said Jencks, now vice-chair of the alliance. “Creative play in wild places exercises all parts of the mind and body. It helps children solve problems creatively, entertain themselves without a consumer product, and have greater comfort with the natural world.”

But these play areas would not just benefit children. “If you were to green every school yard in San Francisco,” Jencks said, “that would put every resident of San Francisco within walking distance of a neighborhood green space.”

The planning meeting aired a roomful of such overlapping goals, and explosive optimism. “We all thought, ‘this is going to happen,’” recalled one participant. “There are going to be Tule Elk Parks all over the city!”

Given an average annual cost of \$20,000 per school for a part-time garden coordinator and supplies, the vision would require a major commitment from the district. The alliance is laying the groundwork to secure that commitment, helping parents and teachers establish new projects as templates for other schools. This October, SFGSA will build more demonstration projects at three schools hosting its regional conference.

The SFGSA wants to influence how the district spends the \$2 million in state bond money, and is raising matching funds to create community-designed master plans to replace portions of asphalt at seventeen or more city schools. According to Bucklin-Sporer, more than 95% of San Francisco’s school yards need fresh pavement; the alliance’s successes with school yard greening show the advantages of alternatives.

Parent Diana Samuelson can attest to those benefits. In 2000, she led the charge to rip up large portions of asphalt surface at the San Francisco Community School, replacing it with a vegetable garden, a greenhouse, pathways, play areas, and native plants. “The kids love it, they love the garden,” she said. “If I come out here with a shovel,





The gate to the Cobb School garden in San Francisco.

I'm swarmed by kids who say, 'Can I help? Can I help?' One third- through fifth-grade class built the earth oven over here," Samuelson said, pointing to a frog-shaped oven made of cob. "They had this whole yard covered with tarps, and they were mixing with their bare feet: the clay, the straw, and the water. It was a big mess, but they loved it."

Samuelson, an SFGSA member, got a hand when participants at the alliance's 2002 conference built a willow-branch tunnel and other improvements at her school. "We did this so that teachers can start projects at their schools," she said in a video of the conference. "I'm hoping that parents will drive by our school and say, 'Hey, our school doesn't have to look like a prison yard!'"

Gardens on school grounds have been around for decades. And San Francisco is not the only major city aiming to green 100 percent of its school yards. The governments of Boston and Chicago have entered into public-private partnerships to do the same thing—Boston is focusing on neighborhood open space and outdoor classrooms, Chicago on schoolyard gardens. But SFGSA is taking things a step further. Alliance members envision a city full of "ecoschools," with all the elements of a fully integrated outdoor learning environment: wildlife habitats, water conservation and purification, energy conservation and generation, the use of waste as a resource, sustainable building elements, as well as the more common edible gardens and creative play with natural materials. Children, staff, and parents help design, build, cultivate, and maintain ecoschool grounds. Only a handful of ecoschools exist worldwide, including one in Milwaukie, Oregon, and another in Exeter, England.

But even steps toward the ecoschools vision involve public resources, and that requires clout. SFGSA counts among its ranks some of San Francisco's most seasoned organizers, and rarely misses a meeting or lobbying opportunity.

"It's our job to convince the district that this is really the right way to educate children," said Bucklin-Sporer. "If they observe children, it's self-evident." □

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The author Sharon Gamson Danks may be contacted at: San Francisco Green Schoolyard Alliance, c/o S.F. Beautiful, 564 Market Street, Suite 709, San Francisco, CA 94104, sharon@ecoschools.com, www.sfgreenschools.org.

REGISTER EARLY
Community Works Summer Institute
at Shelburne Farms
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A FOURTH GRADE PLANTS HOPE IN THE EGYPTIAN DESERT

by Dr. Jailan Abbas

Dr. Abbas, along with two fellow faculty members, came all the way from Cairo to attend Community Works Summer Institute at Shelburne Farms this past summer. Cairo American College is an American K-12 school in Cairo Egypt with a student population of more than 1200 students from more than 59 nations.

Eleven years ago Community service and service-learning were adopted as part of the school's strategic plan. In the Egyptian Culture department they were already doing service-learning projects as an activity to introduce the students to some aspects of the culture. Each grade level in the elementary school has at least one major project each year. In addition different classes choose to do more. Co-curricular activities also supplement and support service learning as an integral element in the school's culture. Last year fourth grade agreed to pilot a new project in addition to the one they have been involved with for several years. The new project is called "The Health and Hope Oasis." Community Works Journal asked Dr. Abbas to tell us about the project and other service-learning projects at her school.

June 6th was an extremely hot day of Egypt's summer. The sun was positively active that day when ninety-eight fourth grade students from the Cairo American College set out to the Western Desert in Egypt. Together with their five classroom teachers, members of the Egyptian Culture (host country culture) department and many parents, we started out our long one-and-a-half-hour journey to the Health and Hope Oasis. The trip was one of many service-learning projects and opportunities at CAC.

The Oasis is planned and aimed at serving children with cancer during their healing and recovery periods, and between chemotherapy sessions. The donor of the ten acres of land for the project aims at building a complete, well-equipped, self-sufficient place for the children and their families in the needed times.

The fourth graders piloted the project. It was a combination of their Egyptian Culture service-learning projects, environmental awareness studies, science hands-on activities, and character education. The students were prepped in different classes for this project: In their classrooms, the teachers explained the project and the reality about children with cancer and the hope of healing they all share. In the science lab, the specialist, Ms. Khattab, spoke about the different kinds of trees suitable for the weather of Egypt in the western desert. On Earth Day, they practiced planting some trees around the school to get the "know how." In the Egyp-



video clip courtesy of Cairo American College

gian Culture class, I shared with the students a map and plan of the site, and the need of such a project in Egypt. I gave a historical and geographical introduction to the western desert. As part of the unit on contemporary Egypt, I explained the economic challenges of Egypt and the need to reclaim the desert to enlarge the agricultural land, and provide cleaner air. I then asked the students "If you were to design this project for a child what would you like to add to it?" They came up with a list of ideas and questions, which I encouraged them to share with the representative of the project, and the Association of the Friends of Children with Cancer. In addition we had an open-ended discussion about how could we contribute to a better world wherever we are.

When we arrived at the Oasis, the students were briefed on the plan of the day, and had a question-and-answer session with the association representative. The students' questions were very comprehensive and varied. "Why did you choose this area? Did you check the pollution level here to know if it would affect the children with cancer? How long can a child with cancer stay in the oasis? Why don't we see a library in the plan? How long will it take you to finish the project? How much does it cost? Do you have the money? Can we come and visit the place if we're ever back in Egypt?"



At top, fourth grade teacher Cabby Tennis demonstrating how to plant a bush, and later students planting the hedge around the oasis.

video clips courtesy of CAC

Having all the questions answered, we set out to the worksite. Adults handed out gloves, baskets, axes and shovels for all the students and themselves. Cabby Tennis, a classroom teacher and a member of the Green Club and the Service-Learning and Citizenship Committee, explained with the science specialist the steps for planting the different kinds of plants. We then divided the students into groups to rotate among different stations. In each station they practiced different planting methods. We planted a total of 500 *Dadonia* trees, 300 *bougainvilleas*, and endless *portulacas*. Each class then planted one *jacaranda* tree. Caregivers surrounded us while we were working to sprinkle us with water to deal with the severe heat.

Students of each of the five classes put up signs in front of the planted areas. On the signs, they wrote their names and class code. Representatives of each class got together and planted one big tree labeled with the school's name "Cairo American College, June 6th, class of 2012." Putting up the sign gave them a feeling of ownership and belonging to the place.

On the way back students asked, "Can we come again and see how our trees grew?" This is the real hope — that they get connected to the place and find different ways to contribute to its community. Meanwhile I was thinking, 'will they really come?' I rested my head back and said "I wish they do."

This year we expanded the scope to plan an overnight camping in the oasis to have more time to observe, work and reflect on the project. The fourth grade students are now in fifth grade. I started the year asking them to reflect on the experience. One of them (Justin) wrote "When we went to the health and hope oasis I felt happy. At the beginning I only wanted to help the kids with cancer. But it was very different and exciting. I thought it was great to plant trees and other stuff. That will help the nature have more fresh air for the children with cancer and a better environment. It will also help many young people to find jobs."

As I read his reflection, I immediately thought about sustainability. The oasis will provide a better and healthier life for its guests and residents. It is planned to be self-sufficient with organic food, it will help create a better environment and economically, many job opportunities will be provided.

Justin's reflection was pointing to the perspective of balance between what the oasis will supply the community socially and economically, and what we need to do to serve and keep it. With this perspective in mind, could I now take this service-learning project a step further? Could it be a place the CAC faculty uses to plan and implement activities on "Education for Sustainability?" □

TOGETHER WE'RE BETTER

by Jailan Abbas, Ph.D.

For the past eleven years, K-5 students at CAC (Cairo American College) have been engaged in ongoing community service-learning projects. Each project is designed to reinforce core subject concepts as well as Egyptian culture themes. Each grade level in the elementary school has at least one major project each year. In addition, different classes choose to do more. The grade level teachers and the Egyptian Culture department sponsor the projects together. Co-curricular activities supplement the service-learning activities and take them a step further, reinforcing service learning as an integral element in the school's culture. In the Elementary School, we chose a title for our service-learning projects: "Together We're Better."

Our kindergartners raise money for health and hygiene supplies for children's orphanages, babywash programs, and gifts to the custodians' children.

First grade sponsors an annual rice drive project associated with a unit on healthy food. First graders prepare posters, visit classes to explain the project, and make a bulletin to announce the amounts collected. At the end the rice is donated to a church that the first graders visit as part of their Egyptian Culture curriculum. The church in turn distributes it to needy families. Three years ago, first grade adopted a paper recycle project to enhance environmental awareness.

Second grade adopted a school supplies drive project. Third grade raised funds for projects that ranged from building bathrooms in a public school to restoring foster houses and orphanages. Three years ago they adopted "The baby-wash program" that trains Egyptian young mothers in the villages to properly bath their children. The fourth grade worked with different schools and orphanages, such as a school of African refugees. They sponsor the "Pound for Hope Project." The raised funds supply the refugees with many of their school and daily life needs, and they have now piloted the new "Health and Hope Oasis" project.

By fifth grade, our students have established a strong ethic of serving the community. They run two of the most successful service projects, the Ramadan Iftar meal and Ramadan boxes. The two projects involve raising funds (through readathons, walkathons and sponsored running), preparing a menu, making a budget, shopping in local markets and stores, donating the boxes, and preparing an actual



Fifth graders help the breadman prepare for the community Iftar during Ramadan.

meal in school and finally joining in a community meal with custodians, parents, teachers and administration.

We also focus on developing awareness of diversity among our students as well as the recipients of the services; for example, through book donation programs, environmental awareness murals collaboratively painted with, and donated to, children from a local orphanage or donated to the children's ward of a cancer institute.

Whether our students collect needed items, sponsor fundraising projects, produce artwork, plant trees, or cook a meal, they always spend time after the project to reflect on their achievements. Reflections are done through pictures, charts, letters to families and pen pals and reflection journals to instill in them the ethic of service-learning. Projects are celebrated in schoolwide assemblies, and published in the school newsletter to commend the students' efforts.

As a developing country, Egypt offers endless opportunities to our CAC students to learn to serve, and serve to learn. This helps to develop their personalities and creates an early awareness of responsibility, not only towards their immediate communities but also towards the human community at large. □

LEARNING THROUGH COLLABORATION

AN INTERVIEW WITH FERN TAVALIN

In August 2004, Community Works Journal interviewed Fern Tavalin, Director of Special Projects for the Flow of History, Inc, a history education network based in the Connecticut River watershed of Vermont and New Hampshire. Through a federal Teaching American History program, third through tenth grade teachers and partner organizations are investigating how the experiences of their small towns reflect national history. They have been participating in collegial discourse through book groups, the Flow of History Summer Institute, and at hands-on workshops. Flow of History is a major partner in a second three-year grant that will continue to support a growing network of teachers who are exploring and interpreting primary documents and other local and national resources to enhance their own and their students' understanding of American history. Among other activities, Flow is building a "History Harvest"—a database of local primary resources (documents, historical artifacts, places and people)—that will be searchable by students and teachers. We were especially interested in how Tavalin looks at collaborative learning.

CWJ: You have brought tremendous energy and funding into expanding teacher professional development in the teaching of American history here in the Connecticut River Valley. What drives you in this work?

Fern Tavalin: My background and interest is in history, economics, and civic engagement. I have always been somebody who contributed to the society I live in. I come from a long family background of people who believe in service to community.

When I started teaching seventh and eighth graders in the 1980s, I saw that my students needed something that was active. I felt like they needed to learn by doing, so that when I brought in abstractions, they had experience to hinge to it. This idea didn't come from some theoretical belief about good pedagogy; it was just common sense. So, we went into our community to do things and to learn about the local connections to American history topics. Getting out into the community was an exhilarating way to learn and to feel a sense of accomplishment. Doing community projects meant that I was learning new things, too. As a natural part of the process, we



took feedback from the people in our town about how to improve what we were doing.

When I was teaching, I was also working on my doctorate at the University of Massachusetts. UMASS had had problems with racial tensions and other issues of social justice. The international education folks got Paulo Freire to come and work with them and that led to a reshaping of the UMASS curriculum. So while I was at UMASS in the 1980s, they were using processes of inclusion as instructional techniques. Almost all the courses I took had a star next to them that indicated "equity-based." These courses were ones where a multiplicity of voices and perspectives was included as a natural way of structuring the classroom. I internalized these techniques because they were used from class to class.

Structuring a classroom so that everyone gives input underscores how much we can learn from each other. It's the basis for how I think of collaborative learning. Over the past 15 to 20 years, I've been able to refine my understanding and approach by using the lessons I've gained from a myriad of educational projects.

As a teacher getting a doctorate in the UMASS program, I thought, "This would be fantastic to modify for use with my students." So that's what I started doing in the last 5 years I taught middle school—looking for ways of distributing who held the knowledge and who asked the questions. To improve my skills at doing this, I worked with the Prospect Center and learned to use the descriptive

processes of Pat Carini, participating in some study groups both locally and in Bennington. Not only did I see an increased interest and improvement in my students for reading and writing, but when you have a good management system going, collaborative learning can ease the “homework burden” on the teacher, too.

CWJ: And you used those processes...?

Fern: When I started teaching at Putney Central, I started using some of the things that were natural to me, plus the things that I was learning from being in equity-based courses at UMASS Amherst, from Pat Carini, and from conflict resolution (Fern started and managed a “Students as Mediators” program in her school). Those were the things I started using as tools, along with courses and workshops on group dynamics and social justice.

I adapted them, and combined them with the work of Project Zero (Howard Gardiner’s group at Harvard), which did a lot to get the arts field thinking about reflection and critique of work. They initiated the “ARTS PROPEL” project in Pittsburgh. What I learned from talking to some of the PROPEL teachers was that they were not generalizing their experience, so they weren’t seeing reflection and critique as a natural way of doing business. They were distinguishing between their PROPEL classes and their other classes. This red flagged for me that there are differences in how big experimenters and dreamers and metacognitive thinkers see the world compared to how teachers, going about their daily business, might see the world.

There were lessons in that for me in how big picture thinkers should work with other people. The most important lesson for me was to figure out ways of embedding new ideas into the existing work of schools.

It’s okay that not everyone is aboard with the same dream. That goes back to Freire—if you’re talking about participatory democracy and collaborative learning, you don’t have to be on the same page with the same vision. It helps to be headed in the same direction, though, with overlapping and intersecting goals. Finding those meeting points is what makes for successful collaborations. The goal of having a common direction versus a common vision is the difference in my mind between democracy and totalitarianism. Getting everyone to have the same vision is a coercive act.

I believe that you don’t set out to foster collaboration; you foster collaboration by setting out to do a concrete, focused task that’s mutually shared; then the collaborative sense of group and ownership comes. A sense of community

develops when people get together to try to accomplish something.

A lot of this is learning to listen. I started learning to listen when I lived in Belgium and couldn’t speak their Flemish language. It was 2 or 3 months before I could be in a fluent conversation. As a good teacher, you learn to listen. There are times for action and decision-making, too. Some of the teachers I’ve worked with have given me tips about when to assert and be directive. In the 1990s, I directed the WEB Project, whose goal was to use multimedia and telecommunications to improve student learning in the arts and humanities. I discovered that if you are trying to create something that has never existed before, ideas have to be made tangible. This is a perfect time for collaborative learning. No one is expected to know what a new idea looks like, and reflection and critique are great ways to build and improve on new things.

Collaborating around a grant is a particular type of collaboration that brings out the need for a balance between wanting to create a collaborative network and having to set and reach the goals of the funder. The challenge for me in directing grant initiatives has been to learn when to listen and when to take actions based on funding obligations. I tend to write the grants that I direct, so “funding obligations” are not onerous; they are the rationale for the projects and I take my responsibility to achieve the grant goals very seriously.

CWJ: What are some of the techniques you use to encourage collaborative learning?

Fern: There are some formal and informal techniques that I find myself using most of the time. I never really thought about having a set like that, though, until you asked the question. As I already said, having a common task is essential. If you’re creating something new, then having everyone read and respond to a text will root the discussion. Back in the days of the WEB Project, I worked with Nick Boke, who was with the Center for the Book at the time, on an initiative called Civic Discourse. We brought scholars and teachers together to discuss a common set of readings online during the summer. The idea was to then transfer that process to students in the fall. We convened the students in the fall so that they could decide on a discussion focus and create a common website. The students came up with the topic of “Leadership.” Creating the website gave a common task and while they were making the site, they began to talk to each other informally and came up with more ideas. The upshot of the initiative was that the topic was too general and so the online conversation became unfocused. The next year, we

Tavalin, cont'd. on p. 30

A STUDENT-TOWN PARTNERSHIP

by Sam Hooper Samuels

According to Town Manager Jason Hoch, Littleton, New Hampshire has a lot to be thankful for, especially to its children. As Hoch explains, this town of 5,800 has over the last few years adopted an innovative new policy. Almost all its public projects, from rejuvenating Main Street to constructing an educational nature trail to setting up a comprehensive GIS mapping system, use public school students to do a significant amount of the planning and execution. The program of town-school partnerships has been made possible in part by Project CO-SEED, a program of the Center for Place-based Education at Antioch New England Institute in Keene, NH.



Students from the Physics class that worked on the project, along with teacher Bill Church, and Town Manager Jason Hoch.

“There are certain things where if I had to pay a consultant to go gather a certain amount of field data, I’d pay them X number of dollars,” said Hoch. “When I use student interns, I pay a quarter of that.”

Since starting to do projects with students, Hoch has found it to be a win-win situation. Not only does the town save money, but it’s enhanced the quality of education offered in the public schools. Students get many more opportunities for practical, hands-on learning. They see first-hand how town government works and how the latest technology is used to provide services like water quality, law enforcement, and snow removal.

Winters in Littleton are fierce, with ice and snow a perennial problem and expense for the town. Between equipment, materials, and staff, the town spends an average of \$3,000 per storm. Not to mention the ecological impacts of running heavy equipment, consuming fuel, putting out emissions, and spreading harmful salts that make their way into the Ammonoosuc River. When Littleton High School physics teacher Bill Church approached Superintendent of Public Works Larry Jackson asking for ideas for a project his students could do that would benefit the town, Jackson immediately suggested heated sidewalks.

Now an innovative group of high-school students under Church’s leadership is testing their own invention to clear the white stuff off Littleton’s downtown sidewalks by capturing escaped heat from chimneys.

“Sidewalk and street and driveway heating existed already,” Church said. “Our idea was to power it with alternative energy.”

Working with a \$10,000 InvenTeam grant from the Lemelson-MIT Program, Church and his students considered many alternatives, including a few fanciful ones. They contemplated capturing the heat that rises from steaming sewer drains. Another plan considered setting compression pads in the street that would generate electricity when the weight of cars passed over them.

Eventually, a practical answer came from above.

“Go into Littleton on any cold day,” Church said. “Your horizon is lined with chimney smoke from all the buildings on Main Street. That’s heat, just going into the atmosphere.”

Church paired his students up with community mentors, including Hoch, Cathy Conway (then Town Engineer), George Broeder (project administrator for the high school’s \$6 million renovation), and numerous other town officials, engineers, and contractors.

Because the high school was already slated for renovation, the students had a perfect laboratory in which to test their ideas. The sidewalk in front of the school was slated to be ripped up. Before the pouring of a new sidewalk, the students installed their experimental system of radiant-heat pipes filled with a heated anti-freeze solution. The students are gathering data from this winter’s snows that will be used to

project the actual square footage of downtown sidewalk that could be melted using the available supplies of heat from chimneys. The plan is to install a working system in the sidewalks on Main Street as part of its upcoming renovation.

The project is providing Littleton with a cost-effective, energy-efficient alternative method of snow removal. It's also getting kids fired up about learning. When they see their own ideas turned into reality, physics suddenly becomes fun. "As one student told me, 'This is the first winter break where I've wanted it to be cold and snowy,'" Church said.

All of which raises the question: What's the catch? Is the quality of all this inexpensive student labor really up to the level of the services that could be provided by paid consultants? According to Hoch, the answer is a resounding yes.

"I want to see real results, not just make-do because it's students and cheaper," Hoch said. "My expectation is the same. I think it's important not to have a separate frame of reference for students and outside consultants. It's not a real-world situation if I'm expecting and accept a watered-down product."



Lab testing the heated anti-freeze solution.

The one area in which Hoch does adjust his expectations is time. Paid consultants work a full day on a project or problem, while students must fit the project in among their other studies. So if a project requires a fast turnaround, Hoch will consider leaving students off the team. "I have a different time horizon, but in terms of product I expect the same thing," Hoch said.

For example, recently the town of Littleton had to consider the best way to get a fiberoptic telecommunications



An aerial photo of Littleton, New Hampshire.

network. One option was to have the town build its own network, and another was to put pressure on Verizon, the local telephone carrier, to do the work. Littleton hired a Massachusetts-based consultant to study the question, but the contract required the consultant to use students from the marketing department of the local vocational school. The students conducted a citizen survey and collaborated with the consultant on developing his final report.

These kinds of partnerships don't spring up out of nowhere. Littleton has been carefully developing closer relationships between school and town management for years. It started in 1996, when the town experienced major setbacks in getting both town and school budgets voted in. Littleton had just changed over from the traditional town meeting system to the SB 2 town meeting system. Under the old system, the votes took place at the town meeting itself. The new SB 2 system broke the process up into two steps: a deliberative town meeting, and a vote at a later date. The change made it tougher to pass town and school budgets. Those who wished to vote against budgets could do so anonymously without attending a meeting.

"The first 2 years in a row, school budgets were defeated," Hoch said. "It forced us to reevaluate how we were going to operate. Before that, 100 would people come to vote at town meetings. Now, 1200 to 1500 people would vote without having attended a meeting."

In an effort to get budgets passed, the town and school began to pool their resources. They looked at expenses that could be shared. They merged their two budget committees into one. And they began presenting combined budgets that allowed voters to see exactly what the tax increase would be for a complete package of services. It worked. "There were no prior models for that in New Hampshire," Hoch said. "Cities do it in part because they don't have the town meeting. That was my first year of announcing a budget at town meeting. We survived, and the wheels started turning."

Later, the town/school partnerships got a boost when Littleton was selected to be a CO-SEED site. Under project CO-SEED, a school or school system enters into a 3-year partnership with Antioch and with a local environmental learning center, in this case the Appalachian Mountain Club. Then the school goes through an intensive process of changing to become more environmentally “green” in its curriculum, in its policies, and in its school grounds. Also, the program strives to build stronger connections between the schools and their communities, to involve kids in service-learning projects that benefit the community, and to get teachers to use the community’s outdoor and historic features as teaching resources.

“That was the key to what to do next to pull all these pieces together,” Hoch said. Littleton had to compete to be selected as a CO-SEED site. “We met several times, lobbied Delia [Clark, a CO-SEED project manager] very hard. We told all of our wonderful stories that we had up to that point. We begged, groveled, and pleaded. And lo and behold, we were chosen.”

While the Main Street sidewalk experiment is perhaps the flashiest student project in the works, many other school-town projects came immediately out of CO-SEED’s involvement. Students and road workers together cleared boulders



ABOVE and BELOW: Students learning and applying the basics of pipefitting with local experts.

about and preserving the natural environment. And students organized a special evening activity that included a model solar system, with planets placed in the store-front windows along Main Street.

During the 1970s, Littleton was devastated by the loss of approximately 800 manufacturing jobs. Today, citizens walk with pride in a vibrant commercial district. Last May, Littleton was one of only five towns in the nation to receive a 2003 Great American Main Street Award from the National Trust for Historic Places. It would be hard to attribute that solely to the various public works projects that have been accomplished with the help of students. But all over town, both students and adults are taking greater civic pride because of the work they do together to make their town a better place.

There’s nothing Hoch would like better than to see other towns follow in Littleton’s footsteps. “For the past 3 or 4 years, we’ve gone to different places around the state and heard people say, ‘Wow, what a great idea.’ But how does this get replicated? There’s a set of people that say, ‘We want to be like Littleton.’ That’s what I look at all over the state. While I appreciate the accolades, I want to know what are you going to do about it?”

Hoch has his own answer, simple to state but not so simple to implement: “You can be sure everything we communicate here is, ‘How can this have a school and community benefit to it?’” □



to create the Pine Hill Trail, learning physics concepts like leverage, pulleys, and mechanical advantage in the course of moving the big rocks. A piece of wilderness land was designated the Town Reservoir Outdoor Learning Lab, or TROLL, and is now a largely student-run site for learning

PORTRAIT OF A RURAL TEACHER

by Susan Bonthron

Recently *Community Works Journal* interviewed Troy School middle school teacher Paula Ranciato, sixth, seventh and eighth grade social studies teacher in a very small rural school near the Canadian border in North Troy, Vermont. We first learned of her through the *Flow of History Project*, for which she developed a unit on migration and settlement during their summer institute in 2003. As you will read, Paula is deeply committed to connecting her rural students with the larger world.

Paula Ranciato teaches social studies to sixth through eighth graders at Troy School, a K-8 school of about 170 students located one mile from Canadian border in Vermont's rural Northeast Kingdom. "The local community is very supportive of the school. Last year the town acquired a local building and put a new library in it. A section in the library will be dedicated to Troy school. This year we'll have one of the grades each month demonstrate what they are doing. We have great teachers, and Dwayne Before, our Principal, is very supportive of the staff developing and implementing new ideas and strategies. My fellow teachers are also extremely supportive."

Life in a Rural Town

Some of Paula's students come from farm families; other parents work in the logging industry or at local furniture factories. "These families are still involved with the land in Vermont," explained Paula. "In recent years, we've gone to a subject-oriented teaching curriculum, which means I am the social studies teacher for sixth through eighth graders. Every year we do something in place-based education.

"About 3 years ago, the language arts teacher and I worked with Nancy Allen from the historical society to find out what was in town and what had previously been here. When I wrote my migration unit—"To Move or Not to Move: Let's Walk in Someone Else's Shoes!"—the information I gathered from Jan Albers' book, *Hands on the Land* was absolutely perfect. That book is a very valuable resource. Our science teacher can use it for science, and you can use it for social studies, to study how industries have changed over time, for example. It's great for interdisciplinary lessons in several subject areas."



Migration and the "Flow of History": Finding Resources on the Internet

Paula created her unit on Migration as part of her course work for the *Flow of History* 2003 Summer Institute, whose theme was Migration and Settlement. One of the *Flow of History Project's* aims is to help teachers use primary resources in teaching history. "I got wonderful information from the Summer Institute. I couldn't have written the unit without that type of support. Access to resources is difficult where I live. But you can do so much on the Internet. It takes time, but it's worth it. You have to keep checking to make sure the links you find are updated and the information is still there. There are a lot of interactive sites, and with middle school kids they like to be interactive. Technology at home means TV and games, and they're used to interactive modes and having fun."

Embedding Art in the Curriculum: The Human Rights Tree

Paula connects her students to the world of art using websites sponsored by the Guggenheim museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. "I try to use art all the time. I expanded this more when I migrated to Vermont" (from Connecticut,

where she used to teach). “I had to find resources for sixth, seventh and eighth because now we’re studying all these different geographical locations. The Supervisory Union has a plan for what you’re supposed to teach. In sixth grade it’s Latin America and the Middle Ages; in seventh grade it’s Ancient Civilizations and Africa; in eighth grade it’s U.S. History until Civil War. In each class I try to find as much material as I can to give them a broad base before they go on to high school. I try to cover archeology, anthropology, sociology—the basics of the social studies discipline. Art is embedded when you teach these disciplines. I do a lot of artwork with the kids. Middle school kids are great artists. Debbie Johnson is our art teacher and she’s wonderful. She does interdisciplinary art, coming in three times during each term, and whatever unit I’m doing, we figure out how we’re going to incorporate some artistic piece.

“For example, I always start eighth grade discussing human rights in depth.” Paula feels that eighth graders are mature enough to handle this issue. “We look at the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.” Paula described how the students will create a “Human Rights Tree” that will display basic human rights. They examine questions such as, ‘What makes a person human?’ and ‘What kinds of things happen to a person that can threaten their rights?’ Because she taught these students in sixth and seventh grades, she can build on their understanding of Latin America and the ancient civilizations they studied, scaffolding new learning on previous studies.

“With the seventh grade class, we investigate prehistoric man, how man has developed, and we look at cave paintings in an interdisciplinary way. We talk about the cave paintings, the animals they portray, and then they make their own cave paintings. They also look at the six elements of geography, and they use National Geographic to analyze and investigate a chosen element and analyze how it’s connected. In eighth grade, when they construct the Human Rights Tree, they’re going to match the articles in the UN Declaration of Human Rights to a list of violations from around the world, connecting what’s happening in the world now. The class discussion will focus on how it is different in the United States. Our classroom is heterogeneously grouped. Art serves as the hook, and for the kids who aren’t writers, it allows them to show what they know.”



Students holding the Great Depression Quilt they completed after their interdisciplinary study of the Depression, which incorporated history, literature, art and music.

“In eighth grade, we study Beringia” (the ancient land mass that once connected Asia to North America) “using textbooks, other materials from history texts, and by using folk tales.” Paula has done a lot of research on native peoples. She received a Fellowship with the National Endowment in the Humanities in Washington State, spending 6 weeks of study in Western Washington University in Bellingham. “It was worth it! I learned how to incorporate literature into my history class—we investigated literature written by the Native Americans. It’s important to use history written from the perspective of those who experienced it. When my students study the migration experience in eighth grade, we use an autobiographical book about a family of migrant workers by Francisco Jimenez called *Breaking Through*. Francisco’s family migrated illegally; when he was in eighth

grade, the border police went to his school, seized him, placed him in jail and escorted his family back to Mexico. There are migrant workers in Troy, too. It's not easy for migrant children. Jimenez got a PhD at Columbia—you get to send a message about education being open to everyone in the U.S.”

Paula went into more detail about her study of migration with students. “National Geographic has wonderful images and stories. Why do people migrate? U.S. history can support this theme throughout the whole year. We look at push/pull factors; people always migrate for a reason. When I wrote the migration unit, I wanted to focus on North America. The kids will know something about European migration to here, but I wanted to focus on migrations that begin and end in North America—why do people move here? At first I was going to leave out Latin America, but it connects so well to what’s happening today. As to diversity and multiculturalism, we have French Canadians and Abenakis in Troy as well as Hispanic migrant workers.

“I didn’t want to focus on only one period in history. Ella Bailey was a North Troy girl who went to the Lowell Mills to find work. Her father had been killed in the Civil War, and her family needed income.” Paula found letters from Ella to her friends and family from the Morgan Cultural Center at UMASS, Lowell, with supporting material from other books, websites, and teaching packets. “A lot of migration is about income, finding a better life or work. When I divide the class, and each group studies migration for a different population—African Americans, Native Americans, Mill Girls—they will each investigate the causes and hopefully understand ‘his story, her story, our story.’

Connecting Students to their Past

“History is not the past; it’s every single day of your life. It’s about continuity throughout life and that makes it real. Students don’t see the importance of history if you can’t make the connections with what is happening now. There is so much that you can do now—the Vietnam boat peoples and those in the Dominican Republic, for example. If I give them the basis this way, I’m hoping they will see the connection. We always use primary documents. When I do Captain John Smith, I’ll bring in books about Pocohontas, and we’ll laugh about it being “Disneyed.” This shallow view of history has to be straightened out—we’ll read something that John Smith himself wrote about the Jamestown experience.

“I always taught about the push/pull factors in migration, but I learned through Flow of History to cover more, to have groups teach each other about their specific periods and their research. This year I attended the Flow of History

Book Group with Nick Boke, and now with this unit I have the kids read first and second grade picture books. With the right pictures, that’s the hook. A lot of the Book Group was based on using historical fiction in the classroom. Prior to this, I had a problem using historical fiction; there are some books that aren’t factual, and you can learn through that process, but now I feel more confident because I know there are better resources out there.”

Teaching History Through Literacy

Paula teaches a reading class, as does fellow teacher Marilyn Mientka. “Last year we taught an interdisciplinary unit together. We try to make writing carry over. We loved the book *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor about an African American family in the South who own their own land during the Depression. We wanted to do something on the Depression, which we don’t cover in history. We put a unit on the Depression together. The students created a giant mural, and we used books and the Internet for resources. We



The B&D Grocery Store, located on Main Street, North Troy. There has been a business at this site for over 100 years. Students took oral history notes after interviewing the store owner.

showed them *Grapes of Wrath*. The principal supported us. The students loved the film, and that was our overview. We read Karen Hesse's *Out of the Dust* (about a white family during the Depression) and *Angels in the Dust* by Margot Theis Raven. American Memory is an online resource for teachers—they have pictures from the 1920s and 1930s that you can print and use with kids. The kids found photos of the heroine and her siblings in the dry dirt. That's how we bring history into reading, with genuine, heartfelt accounts that people lived through.

"I take the kids out in the beginning of the Migration Unit, using a worksheet to get them to know their town." Filling out the worksheet, which Paula adapted from a Hands on the Land Workshop, the students learn to identify physical, geological and historical features of their town. "We go



Students investigate the railroad overpass (still in use) and the remnants of the hydroelectric power house which supplied electricity to the Blair Veneer Company. This was one of only three factories in the U.S. that produced piano sounding board fields, as well as chair seats, and furniture panels. It began operation in 1903 and remained in operation during the Great Depression.

out and look at foundations. North Troy was a vibrant community once; it had a race track, two hotels, big Victorian houses, a train station, and a big mill in the 1920's and 1930's. That's the footprint. They look at me and ask, 'What happened?' The mills closed, technology developed in the cities, and you had a migration from rural to urban areas. I ask them, 'What can we do to make this town more vibrant again?' Some will answer, 'Start a business here,' or 'Become a doctor.'"

The subject of sustainable development came up. "I wrote a unit on history of whaling, and we talked about sustainability. How can we help kids understand that these questions require a complex answer? They need to learn there's no yes/no answer, and that's okay. People who are geniuses have trouble figuring this out." □

For more information on her curriculum or the resources that she uses, contact Paula at: cassie@together.net.



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GETTING STARTED WITH PRIMARY RESOURCES

by Fern Tavalin

Where to start? The idea of using primary resources in a classroom sounds fine—even fantastic. But anyone who has to work with 45-minute modules knows that there is a real gap between this ideal and the practical reality of day-to-day schooling. Dot Gorenflo, a sixth grade teacher from Green Street School in Brattleboro, Vermont, has been trying to figure out ways to incorporate the use of primary resources while tending to all the other responsibilities of a classroom teacher. I was lucky enough to help her get started last winter.

Planning Far Ahead

Dot and I began by planning some small steps that would eventually lead to independent student research in the late spring when her students would be studying the Civil War. Dot was concerned that her students did not have enough background in the events leading to the American Revolution and wanted to make sure that her students knew something about that before their Civil War study began. We used a winter reading unit on nonfiction to get started.

Establishing Context

In 1789 Olaudah Equiano published a personal narrative entitled *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*. In it he tells about his kidnapping from Africa, subsequent enslavement, and eventual freedom in Great Britain. Equiano's life experience spans the Seven Years War (a.k.a. The French and Indian Wars) and the American Revolution. Ann Cameron adapted the narrative for young readers in a book entitled *The Kidnapped Prince*. We used the original narrative and the adaptation to guide a reading study. The literature brought out issues of freedom, slavery, war, individual rights, and events in history—all of which provide a solid foundation for entering a study of the Civil War.

Practicing with Small, Guided Steps

As part of the reading group, students did Internet research to find out more about Equiano. Questions that couldn't be answered locally were posed to an online history mentor, a friend of Dot's from Boston who is a scholar in African American history. Via the Internet, students located many primary source documents, including the Treaty of Paris in 1763 that ended the Seven Years War.

Beginning with the small step of locating Internet-available primary resources and receiving guidance from a person with expertise, we moved into the next phase—exploration of a regional person, Lucy Terry Prince, who had also been captured and enslaved. We selected short readings about Lucy



Terry, including a well-researched pamphlet titled “Lucy Terry Prince: Singer of History” and a four page children's story adapted by Elise Guyette entitled “Lucy Terry Prince: Vermont Fighter For Justice.”

Using Libraries and Field Trips

The research pamphlet alerted us to documents held in the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association Library. So, we decided to take a field trip with students during winter break to see some primary resources and to visit the house where Lucy Terry Prince lived in Historic Deerfield. The trip to the PVMA library was a “controlled step” in that we knew what we would find. Still, most of the students had never looked at a primary document and were thrilled to see what was probably Lucy's signature in an October 17, 1754 ledger account. Although we had arranged to examine documents related to Lucy Terry and 1750-1790 Deerfield, the students were drawn into the excitement of online database searches for their ancestors and familiar names from history. By watching the students explore the databases, we could see that they were already preparing themselves for the next phase.

Learning from Cemeteries

Later during winter break, Dot and I went to Brooks Memorial Library in Brattleboro to look through their local his-

tory collection to see what was available about the Civil War era. There, we met two women who have spent most of their adult lives researching local history. They pointed us to all kinds of resources—publications, people, interesting sites, and some diaries. Dot decided to use two cemetery guides as a starting point. Because she didn't have time to locate the Civil War era people buried in the cemeteries, she turned the task over to some interested students. They are building a list of names from which classmates will make selections for independent, small group study.

Creating More the Next Time Around

When trying to use primary resources for the first time, teachers should not expect huge results immediately. Seemingly small steps, like looking at a primary document for the first time, leave lasting impressions. Thanks to the Internet, many significant documents are within easy reach.

Teachers along the Connecticut River watershed are beginning to use local primary resources to connect local history with American history. To make this easier, the Flow of History is working with historians to identify relevant documents, photographs, and artifacts in local collections. These primary resources are being used to prepare learning guides, and an online database of resources that we call History Harvest will be released in the spring of 2005. □

You will find more information on the work of Flow of History at www.flowofhistory.org/. Fern Tavalin can be contacted at tavalin@sover.net.



Tavalin, *cont'd.* from p. 21

focused the initiative on the theme “Taking a Stand” and read a set of books and discussed them. There was more to share because the texts rooted the discussion across what would have been diverse schools.

So, rooting discussion in something common and tangible—a book, an experience, making a product—fosters collaboration. Learning is improved by reflection and critique while work is still in progress. If the critique is respectful and timed so that the person receiving the feedback still wants to improve what she or he is making or doing, it works well. Otherwise, critique carries that feeling we all get when the teacher hands back a paper filled with red ink. Processes for structured discourse have been made up by all sorts of groups—the arts, education reform, even the Canadian Ministry of Culture.

I've been describing formal situations. But it is important to create informal opportunities, too, because that's how many creative ideas develop. With the Flow of History, a wonderful area cabinetmaker is building a work station for

the Southeast Vermont Community Learning Collaborative. My hope in placing this work station at the teachers' center is that while we build things together—classroom displays about American history, and so on—we can talk informally about our work.

So here's a list of techniques that I use: inquiry-based book discussion, work-in-progress sessions, building new things where no one is expected to carry all of the answers, opportunities to bring out multiple points of view, action research, and reflective retreats with good food and beautiful surroundings.

For me, the ideas of collaborative learning, multiple points of view, not expecting everybody to have the same view or the same goal even but having a mutual exchange are really important. Contributing and receiving keeps collaboration alive. □

Fern Tavalin can be reached at 802-387-4277 or by email at tavalin@sover.net. More information of the Flow of History can be found at www.flowofhistory.org/.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

A SCHOOL FIRE PROVIDES A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

by Susan Bonthron

In September 2003, a fire and its aftermath forced the temporary closing of Guilford Central School in southern Vermont. The K-8 classes were dispersed to various locations throughout the towns of Guilford and Brattleboro until after Thanksgiving. Though the situation was extremely challenging to staff, students, and parents, some wonderful outcomes—and powerful lessons—evolved. The story below, based on an interview with local childcare provider Laura Lawson Tucker and sixth grade teacher Pat Ireton, touches on some of them.

Guilford Center village presents a classic New England face: An 18th century meeting house, a 19th century Grange, a residence or two, and a tiny two-room “Free Library” flank the downhill side of the Guilford Center road. On its uphill side sit the Historical Society, more residences, and the home daycare business of Laura Lawson Tucker. “When the school building was close (because of a fire) in the fall,” began Laura, “the sixth grade was at the Grange, down the hill but right there in the village of Guilford Center. I knew they were there, and that’s walking distance for me. I knew I could get my kids there, and I wanted to connect with them. Also, this was a really unusual opportunity—they were having “school” at the Grange. It showed the children that “school” doesn’t necessarily mean a certain building. And this was a great example of creative problem solving for them. But most important, here was an opportunity to hook up with older kids. So my children and I went twice to the Grange.” During their first visit, the younger students came prepared to lead some songs, finger plays and stories with the older kids, who reciprocated by reading stories themselves. “We sat on the floor in a circle, 17 sixth graders, and 6 pre-schoolers (3- and 4-year-olds).

“At the second gathering,” continued Laura, “we planted flower bulbs. Pat and I both wanted to continue this connection, and do something for the Grange. We met in October on the front porch of the building. I read *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney—the message of the story is finding a way to make the world a more beautiful place.” Laura brought hundreds of bulbs, and she and Pat encouraged the older and younger kids to connect as they planted them together. “During a third visit, Pat came to my house with her kids. The whole group made one oblong circle on the floor, and we did more songs and stories.”



Pat added, “Each time we met, there were probably 4 sixth grade readers. Each would have their own book to read. I prepared them by first asking for volunteers, giving them time to choose books and practice reading them. The kids weren’t sure what would be appropriate for preschool, so I helped them choose, and some thought about younger siblings at home and the books they enjoyed.”

After the fire, another sixth grade shared the Grange with Pat’s class, but they were forced to find a new location when the unheated room they were using became too cold. With Pat’s class on its own in the Grange, they felt isolated at first. “Our school life at the Grange became an opportunity to look for a variety of activities outside the building.”

Laura’s desire to have her young children connect with the older ones fit right into this need. “As soon as I knew you were there, I wanted to tap in, I knew we were neighbors,” said Laura. Pat added, “Here was a situation that could have been bad, and Laura helped turn it into something more positive. For my students, being at the Grange really helped them. When the other sixth grade left, that became the time when we really built our own sense of community.” Visits to

the younger kids contributed to this effort. The visits also helped both the older students and Pat (who lives in Brattleboro) get to know Guilford in a more intimate way. “The younger kids were right down the street. Kathy Wilkins (the librarian at the Guilford Free Library next door) would come down with a pot of soup. “Some of the kids chose books to read to the younger kids from the tiny library. Our experience was so powerful because it came out of our day-to-day living.” Pat was later to write, “Close to school and still nestled in the center of town, I experienced a deeper sense of home and belonging.”

“A side story for me,” explained Laura, “is that we have a Halloween Parade and Party at the Grange for the Guilford Community, and almost all my kids go. So my kids have a relationship with the Grange, and they know it from the Thanksgiving lunch that we do every year. Now we were learning about it in another way.” For each of these events, Pat’s class had to “pack up and put itself away in the corners.” This helped the older children know Guilford in a different way too. They saw the Grange as a meeting place that was important to the community.

Because one of the sixth grade students walked with leg braces and had difficulty negotiating stairs, he had to use the kitchen door to come into Laura’s home. “That has come up in their conversation several times since,” said Laura. It was an opportunity for the younger children to experience and accept difference. “The other special thing was the school bus ride,” she added. “The fourth visit happened after the students had returned to the school. The bus driver allowed the younger kids to go home by bus.” This was the first school

bus ride for all of them—an event that loomed large in their imaginations.

Pat continued, “By then the kids expected certain activities with the younger children. The older kids allowed themselves to soften and open up, and they did it early on.” Pat feels that students at this age need this kind of experience “because peer pressure is so strong—they’re concerned about how they look and what’s cool, and this was an opportunity for them to lose their self-consciousness and relax, to be themselves in a nurturing role.”

“What’s important to me is to give older kids an opportunity to care about younger ones, said Laura, “and for the younger ones, it’s important to feel cared for by older children. So often they are seen as an annoyance by their older siblings, or they are seen as just “cute.” This was different because the older kids were learning to relate to them as individuals. That only happens with time.” The other aspect of this interage learning for Laura is the “school-to-community and community-to-school relationship. If I am isolated, I feel it’s a big deficit.” An added benefit was that three of Laura’s charges would be attending Guilford the following year. Two of Pat’s sixth graders gave a tour for the younger group, showing them the school’s kindergarten, the nurse’s room, the bathrooms and office. “It was important for my kids to understand that we were helping to welcome them into our school community and to prepare them,” explained Pat.

“Having this time at the grange allowed us to relate to each other and have conversations about the importance of building community,” she added. “There was more at stake.

We needed not to feel isolated, so we had to be more active in building and keeping connections. And we had to realize there was work involved in that, and it was a kind of work we came to value. The students came to that through their own experience. The challenge now is to how to hold on to those lessons in the school the way it normally operates. For me it’s opened up this connection, so now I know this community better. I became more rooted in this community through the experience, and the investment in my classroom spilled into other spaces. I had conversations with other people in the community about our needs at the Grange. We had the sense of a “one-room schoolhouse,” being alone together all day. Another thing that comes out of this is that it helps us all develop our own voice and listen to each other, communicate with each other—this is crucial to the future of this country.” □



Discovering, cont'd. from p. 5

My intention is to evoke a thumbnail, on the spot ethnography, using the computer as a starting point for students to talk about the fabric of their everyday lives. I then suggest that within their lifetimes something new will replace the mouse. When this occurs people will at first discard them as useless and obsolete, but later they will be saved and prized as emblems of a bygone era. A time will come when today's young people will see a mouse in a museum display. It will be totally familiar and they will have intimate personal knowledge of the world in which it was used. But it will be unknown to their grandchildren, just as the bed tightener is foreign to them.

I then use interview excerpts from audio field recordings to recreate the everyday world in which the bed tightener was a common object. I start with a description of how it was used, move on to a remembrance of sleeping on a rope bed with an oat-straw mattress, and then move further out into a world where frozen meats were buried in an oat bin and the principal source of farm power was a team of horses fed on oats. Just as a computer mouse can serve as a gateway to talk about the fabric of everyday life in our world today, so too the bed tightener—or any other common household object from an early 20th century Vermont farm household—can serve as a gateway to that bygone everyday world.

I liken this to Alice's entry into Wonderland. Every object has a cultural context and that context can be recovered. The object is the starting place—the rabbit hole, if you will—that serves as the entry point to past worlds that are in some ways familiar and in other ways radically different. This may sound overly complex, but it works. Kids get it, and at its root it's all about ethnography.

Sustainability, cont'd. from p. 4

reflected sustainable thinking. Although the goal was to make “sustainable pizzas,” students were assessed at a higher percentage on their team work. Their teachers realized that a key skill in creating an equitable, environmentally healthy and economically viable future is the ability to make decisions together and to respect the multiple perspectives of all stakeholders.

Projects around the globe working towards sustainability have experienced the benefits of collaboration and seeking out multiple perspectives for the long-term benefits of all. These two concepts are also at the heart of service-learning and key to our success in furthering Education for Sustainability. What does effective collaboration look like? In the microcosm it may be teachers, administrators, parents, students and experts in the field developing new school policies on cafeteria composting; globally, it might be governments addressing cross-border water issues with the help of ecologists, teachers, indigenous peoples, children, farmers, and business owners.

The best or most sustainable decisions take into account the perspectives of all stakeholders (including those without a voice) with a process that is collaborative. Can we or should we achieve full collaboration on each decision? My best answer is that certain choices—generally short-term—don't need to be made by everyone. However, ones that are to be made for the long-term and have

In a word, ethnography is the study of culture as both interviewer and distanced, self-reflective participant. The popular image of this approach, common to both anthropology and folklore, envisions the ethnographer studying a foreign, exotic culture. But the same lens can be turned on cultural experience near at hand, as well as the fabric of everyday life in the past.

When teachers approach me for advice on oral history, I try to steer them in the direction of historical ethnography. Both employ the same fundamental method—talking to older people about the past—but historical ethnography provides a broader frame of reference for thinking about what an oral history project might encompass. Instead of focusing solely on pursuing “facts,” historical ethnography suggests eliciting detailed narrative accounts of actual lived experience, prompting such questions as “What did it feel like?” “How did it look?” Obviously the student researcher can't enter into past worlds as a participant-observer, but he or she can wear that hat, adopt that point of view, which can profoundly reshape the research experience.

Just as I vividly entered into the world of my mother's childhood through the interplay of her stories, primary resource materials, and the landscape itself, in like manner researchers of any age can voyage into the past worlds of their families, neighborhoods, and communities. The resources are abundantly available, it's simply a matter of framing a project that takes full advantage of their storytelling potential. By embracing the model of ethnographic inquiry, artifacts become gateways and people guides to the wonderland of past worlds that exist in our very midst. It's history with flesh and blood. □

far-reaching impacts should be collaborative.

What I and others have experienced is the power of food as a way of teaching sustainability, as well as the importance of teaching collaboration skills. We all eat; therefore, we are all affected by the many decisions made about food. And though choices about food are very personal and cultural, we need to come together to evaluate locally and globally how we want to meet the challenge of feeding ourselves. We may, like my Italian friends, focus on cultural issues—preserving rare breeds, traditional farming techniques, and the customs of food, family and community. Or we may decide to put our efforts into supporting a healthy and local school food system—supporting local producers and processors, building a strong infrastructure to provide fresh food in cafeterias, and educating youth and their families about food, farming and nutrition

Whether we choose to focus on food or another topic, we must enable our students to realize the interconnectedness of our world and to seek out others' perspectives. We must learn to collaborate on decisions that will help us build a sustainable future that meets the needs of all beings. □ (For additional information go to: www.spannocchia.org) and also; www.shelburnefarms.org/PDF%20Files/GrowingFarms&Minds.pdf)

Place, cont'd. from p. 7

posium, have discovered what it takes to convince others that their findings are meaningful and valid. With the help of the Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation, the students conducted monthly tests on Pretty Creek's water, studied its ecosystem, learned to read topographical maps, and identified human and natural factors affecting water quality of both the creek and the larger Lake Ponchartrain Basin watershed.

Since implementing Project Connect, East Feliciana's test scores have shown dramatic improvement. In science, the district's fourth grade passage rate increased by 13% in one year. By 2001, the passing average of the three elementary schools' fourth graders was the same as the state's: 85% (an increase of 25% in two years). Increases were equally dramatic in English Language Arts. When the district introduced place-based learning in 1999, 32.6% of students were scoring at the unsatisfactory level. By 2002-2003, student scores surpassed the state benchmarks for proficiency.

While standardized test scores have increased dramatically, place-based learning has had an equally important impact on getting students excited about learning and the environment outside the school walls. Nan Goodreau, who has taught math in the East Feliciana schools for 21 years, welcomes the move to more hands-on, outdoor learning. She says it motivates some of the lowest scoring students and shows them how to learn with all their senses. "They use a lot of math skills in their projects too," she adds, "...measuring, making plots, and mapping." Project Connect is also developing lasting school-community partnerships in a region that historically has been divided over racial issues.

The Beebe Environmental and Health Science Magnet School in Malden, Massachusetts

The CO-SEED project has been working with the 900 student K-8 Beebe School in Malden, Massachusetts for the past 5 years. Beebe is one of five K-8 magnet schools in the city of Malden. Malden is a city of about 65,000 just north of Boston with a culturally diverse population. There are approximately 30 different language groups represented in the school. The community learning center partner is the Stone Zoo. Other partners have included the Malden Historical Society, the Mayor's Office, a brownfields redevelopment project, Tufts Engineering Department, Stop and Shop and the local waste hauling company.

Over the past 5 years teachers have implemented a variety of school-community projects including the installation of a butterfly garden on the school grounds, the creation of a school newspaper, translation of parent newsletters and school letters into multiple languages, creation of a field guide to a neighborhood park managed by the Metropolitan District Commission, a schoolwide recycling program, the creation of a schoolyard ice skating rink to support neighborhood recreation, and program development for children and parents at the Stone Zoo. Evaluation of student performance on the state administered MCAS has indicated that Beebe students either outperform or perform at a comparable level with students at all other Malden schools. Test scores have improved over each of the last 3 years. Requests for kindergarten placements at Beebe have become the highest amongst the five schools in the city. We

are pleased that Beebe students are both performing academically and are contributing to the betterment of community.

In 2003, the EPA determined that Malden's storm water runoff did not meet federal water quality standards. The EPA ordered the city to develop a plan for remediating this situation and a Storm Water Management Committee was created by the mayor's office. One of the EPA-required components of the plan was a public information initiative to educate citizens about storm water runoff and how they could contribute to decreasing contaminants in runoff.

Due to previous collaborations between the city and the school, committee members recruited seventh grade teachers to help them with the educational component of the plan. The teachers implemented a curriculum project that required students to develop public education brochures. In science, teachers and students learned about storm water collection and outflow in the city, the range and sources of contaminants, the impact on water quality in the Malden and Mystic Rivers, and possible solutions. Students mapped storm water pipes in social studies; met English standards by writing persuasive essays; calculated surface runoff in math; took photographs; interviewed city officials; and used graphic design software in computer class to complete the assignment. The project requirements dovetailed with curriculum frameworks in science, language arts and technology. All kids created brochures and five were selected to be distributed in the city water bill, when citizens register their pets, and at City Hall.

The city now has the Beebe school officially written into its storm water management plan and the school is planning strategies to involve the other four K-8 schools in the city next year. If and when storm water quality has improved within 5 years, Malden teachers and students will be able to claim some of the responsibility for improving environmental quality. Wouldn't it be good to include charts of storm water quality improvement in the local newspaper along with the measurements of Annual Yearly Progress in the school? Projects such as this exemplify the community learning and empowerment aspects of Rural School and Community Trust.

Both Project Connect and the CO-SEED project example describe rich learning experiences that not only represent student comprehension of basic reading, writing and math concepts but more importantly, demonstrate student ability to apply academic concepts to complex community issues that are relevant to their lives. The expanded assessment strategies of the Rural Trust measure students' ability to obtain information, weigh evidence, think critically about issues, welcome diverse opinions, and act purposefully as responsible citizens—the real indicators of a well-educated student.

Shared, public accountability is inherent in place-based education. This kind of accountability makes the celebration of accomplishments, the cataloguing of lessons learned, and the analysis of both what students are learning and what the community is gaining a school-community exchange. It reflects a commitment to standards and measures that are expansive and supportive, not limiting and punitive. □

Youth Planning Charrettes

by Bruce Race and Carolyn Torma

Youth Planning Charrettes, published recently by the American Planning Association, is a new resource for planners, educators, and community and youth advocates



to introduce and incorporate youth insights into the community planning process within an educational setting.

Youth Planning Charrettes is designed to help teachers and advocates offer creative and inspiring activities for children while imparting the value of planning in our everyday lives. Ultimately, teachers, community members, planners and schoolchildren will benefit from new solutions to community problems resulting from these activities.

“Oftentimes, young people are excluded from the community planning process, although, frequently, their insight is very valuable,” said APA Executive Director Frank So. “Planning charrettes offer opportunities for kids to become active citizens, gain a voice in community affairs and contribute to their world.” said Torma. “Young people are capable of taking an active role in discerning and solving community problems, and contributing intelligent and thoughtful solutions. We should be giving them the occasion to do that”

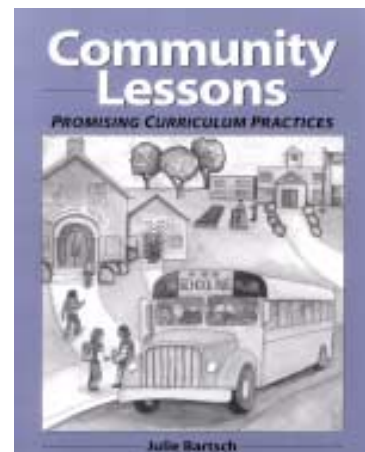
Youth Planning Charrettes contains case studies from events and programs held in conjunction with the San Diego Children's Museum, Smithsonian Institution's National Building Museum, George Washington Carver Elementary School, Albuquerque Cultural and Recreational Services Department and the Children's Museum of Boston.

Each charrette is centered within learning goals, for both children and adult participants, and includes applications of history, math, science and nature, good health and problem-solving skills. The guidebook includes preparatory event checklists, tip-sheets, specific charrette exercises, a sample agenda, a planning "Brain Teaser" for kids, and explanations of charrette development and implementation, among other helpful suggestions and examples. Information on *Youth Planning Charrettes* can be found at www.planning.org □

Community Lessons: Promising Curriculum Practices

by Julie Bartsch

Community Lessons is a collection of promising service-learning instructional practices from teachers across Massachusetts that can be easily replicated and adapted to varying grade levels and specific curricular goals. This guide grew out of a mutual desire among teachers and administrators to share their work



and enhance the public's understanding of service-learning as a powerful instructional tool for motivating students to learn and become socially responsible citizens. Each curricular unit contains:

- Rationale for connecting academic content to CSL activities
- Ways to assess academic and community outcomes
- Multiple connections to Learning Standards
- Lesson plans
- Solutions to organizational barriers
- Timelines
- Resources and materials
- Next steps in project development

The K-12 curricular lessons presented in *Community Lessons* represent multiple entry points from which to launch CSL initiatives as well as various degrees of development. Some teachers have approached service-learning by connecting their academic courses and/or themes to community needs; others have designed service-learning initiatives to address school system issues and others have built activities around students' interests. All are meeting intentional learning goals and addressing significant community needs.

As educators, parents and community members focus on the challenges of improving academic performance and opportunities for all learners, service-learning deserves serious attention as a powerful educational strategy for building strong learning environments.

For information on how to obtain a copy of *Community Lessons* contact the Massachusetts Department of Education at 781-338-3000. □

A Piece of it All: Joseph Sews the Threads of Sustainability

by Mary-Ellen Lovinsky

Mary-Ellen is a Title One Reading and Consulting Teacher in Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union. She works with students at Hardwick Elementary, Lakeview Union and consults at Woodbury Elementary School. Mary-Ellen lives with her family in East Hardwick on a small homestead farm.

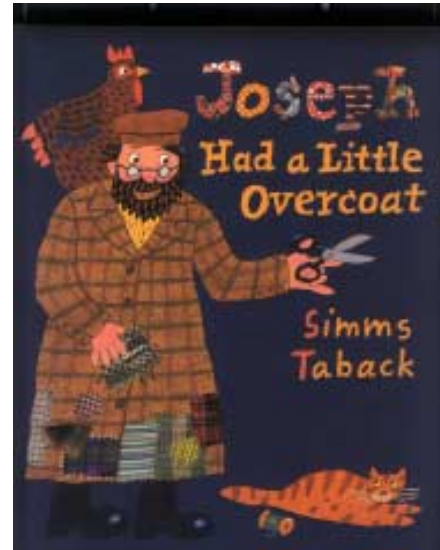
The tale of Joseph and his coat is a useful one to early childhood educators interested in education for sustainability. When his coat becomes too old and too worn, Joseph reuses the fabric to make a new article of clothing rather than throwing it away. Joseph's craft as a tailor distinguishes him both as a creative man (he always thinks of a smaller but still useful item) and a thrifty one (he doesn't spend more money on a new article of clothing but instead reuses what he has). In the end, when Joseph has only a covered button left and then loses it, he makes a story about it, proving that "you can always make something out of nothing." Joseph loves his coat; it's clear by the look on his face in the illustrations.

Joseph Had A Little Overcoat by Simms Tabach is one of several books that can be used to introduce discussions about recycling and reusing things. The first graders that I read it to were fascinated with the way the book was made, discovering the next thing Joseph made could be guessed by the size and shape of the hole cut out of the page. We guessed items and predicted what Joseph was going to make next. The book works best in a small group or even one-on-one so that the cutouts can be examined.

Two other books with similar story lines and sustainability threads include *Geraldine's Blanket* by Holly Keller and *Owen* by Kevin Henkes. Both of these books give early elementary age children and their teachers an opportunity to explore the subject of sustainability in an age-appropriate way. They can be used as companion books with *Joseph Had*

a Little Overcoat to facilitate discussions around recycling a worn but loved item. Each book also adds something more.

In *Geraldine's Blanket*, young Geraldine pig has a pink blanket, given to her by her Aunt Bessie. She carries it with her everywhere and "she always found a use for it." When it is too worn and has become much smaller and "looks silly," she is given a doll by her aunt to replace it. But she refuses to leave her blanket behind. Geraldine comes up with an idea that solves her problem: she uses it to make a dress for her new doll Rosa. Geraldine has Rosa and Rosa has Geraldine's blanket.



Thus the tale adds a touch of understanding about a child's determination to hold on to something safe and valuable and is a reminder for parents and teachers: Most children have a treasured blanket or soft toy they have had to leave behind. First graders can relate to this story easily; Geraldine's blanket becomes silly when it is time for her to go to school.

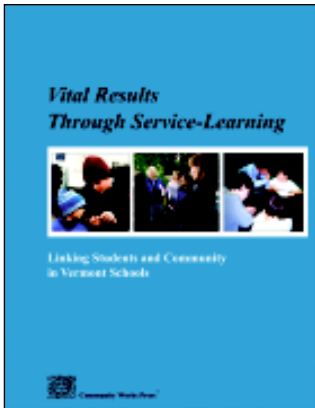
Owen is a story about a little boy mouse who has a fuzzy yellow blanket. Like Geraldine, he has had it since he was a baby and "loved it with all his heart." "Fuzzy" goes with Owen everywhere. School is starting soon and something must be done. In this story Owen's mother comes to his rescue with a plan for reusing Owen's treasured yellow not-so-fuzzy blanket in an acceptable and useful way. She snips and sews and now Owen has "not-so-fuzzy handkerchiefs to carry with him wherever he goes."

Primary teachers can read all of these stories to the children in their class and make connections between the tales. These early links, part of a continuum in learning, offer associations that can promote thoughtful discussions around issues of sustainability and love as well. □

Tabach, Simms, *Joseph Had A Little Overcoat*, Viking, 1999, Keller, Holly, *Geraldine's Blanket*, Greenwillow Books, 1984, Henkes, Kevin, *Owen*, Greenwillow Books, 1993.

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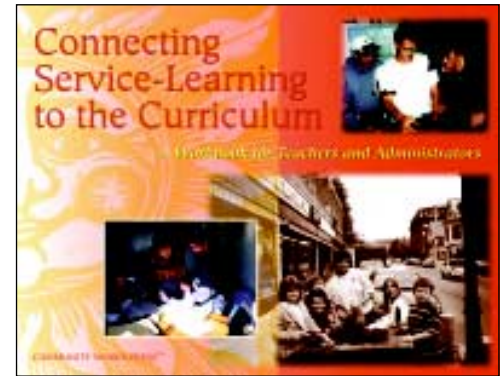
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INSTITUTE FACULTY A large multistate group of experienced practitioners with diverse backgrounds comprise our faculty. Faculty members share tools and exemplars and are available for direct support to participants throughout the week.

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The Institute was an experience that simply, words cannot describe.

In those few days in Vermont other people’s kindness and strength, their commitment to service-learning and the Institute that brought them all together renewed my faith in human power.

We were all working on things that mattered.

*Sherine Hafez, Teacher
Cairo American College (K-12), Egypt*

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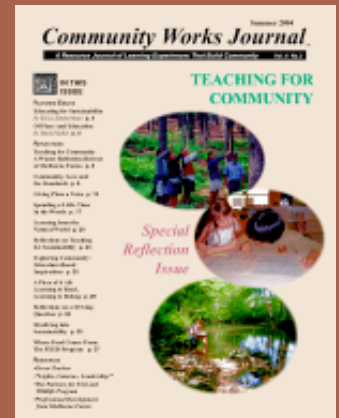
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