

Tennessee Council of Teachers of English

Visions & Revisions

June 2012

Annual TCTE State Conference in Nashville Sept. 28-29

The annual TCTE Statewide conference will be held this year on Friday and Saturday, September 28 and 29, at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville. The theme is “The Writing Life: Integrating Common Core and Technology into the Curriculum.”

This year’s keynote speaker is Beverly Chin, Director of the English Teaching Program at the University of Montana. Beverly is a former president of the National Council of Teachers of English and the author of *On Your Own: Writing* (Prentice Hall, 1990) and *On Your Own: Grammar* (Prentice Hall, 1991). She appears on *The Expanding Canon*, a video program sponsored by the Annenberg Foundation and NCTE (WNET-13, 2003).

On Saturday morning, the conference will close with an entertaining session with Nashville song writer, Thom Schuyler.

The cost of the conference is \$110 in advance (\$25 for student members) and \$125 during the conference. This year, three or more teachers from a single school get an additional registration for free. See pages three and following for additional information about the conference, including lodging information and forms.

Visions & Revisions is published three times per year (June, October, and February) by the Tennessee Council of Teachers of English. For information, or to submit articles, please contact the editor, Susan Giesemann North, Department of English, #2703, 615 McCallie Ave., Chattanooga, Tennessee, 37403or by telephone at (423-425-5807), or by e-mail: Susan-North@utc.edu or TEJ-English@tc.edu. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution.

A Message from the TCTE President

Hello, fellow teachers of English.

I confess: I am a newcomer, for the most part, to TCTE and the art and craft of teaching English. A wise colleague told me in my first or second year in the classroom, “The first five years are about you, and then it can be about them.” Frustrated and indignant, I nevertheless understood and accepted the truth he spoke.

Turning the final corner in year five, I eagerly await the magic moment August first when, at last, I’ll become the teacher I have yearned to be since I decided to get out of the field of public relations nine years ago to work with hormonal, hilarious, and heartbreakingly inspiring middle schoolers. Still, I know that I will never be the teacher I want to be: caring, challenging, and collaborative to the nth degree.

Part of the reason we teach is to fulfill those unattainable goals. Earning a respite over summer break doesn’t hurt, either.

Getting together with like-minded professionals also refreshes our teacher’s spirit. Therefore, I urge you to make every attempt to come to our annual conference in Nashville this September 28 and 29. Please bring a friend and come for the fellowship and knowledge you’ll invariably gain. And please, let me know how I can help to convince anyone who hesitates to let you go. After all, I used to be in PR!

Have a great downhill slope to summer.

Christi Williams,
TCTE President
Christina.williams@Mnps.org

TCTE Names Dwight Robert Wade III as New Director

After five years of exceptional leadership, Brenda Robinette has stepped down from her position as Director of TCTE to focus more time on her duties in the International Baccalaureate program at the Lausanne School in Memphis. TCTE wishes her the best and looks forward to her continued involvement as an active member of the organization.

TCTE's new director is Dwight Robert (Rob) Wade III. Wade has spent most of his life in Tennessee. He graduated from Baylor School in Chattanooga, earned his BA at Vanderbilt University, and has advanced degrees from The

University of Tennessee-Knoxville and The University of Memphis.

Wade says he has enjoyed writing and reading his whole life. He was first hooked on reading in grade school when he encountered the Hardy Boys mysteries. By fourth grade he was dabbling in the genre himself, his first short story being a mystery with a "super-abundance of hidden passageways." Wade says his love of literature has grown over the years to encompass both European and American literature. He currently teaches at White Station Middle School in Memphis.

A Letter from Incoming Director of TCTE

TCTE and Friends:

Outgoing Executive Director Brenda Robinette has honorably steered the TCTE for five years, and the TCTE wishes to thank Brenda for her dedicated service. The Executive Director maintains our charter with the NCTE, manages the records and finances for the organization, helps set the TCTE agenda, and provides a substantial amount of administrative support to the annual TCTE conference. The responsibilities of managing an organization of this size are especially challenging to a teacher who is also highly dedicated to her work and family, and Director Robinette is certainly deserving of our gratitude for her duty, for the good care she took, and for the foresight and talent with which she has stewarded the TCTE.

As Executive Director Elect, I am honored to be trusted with the responsibility of this position and to follow such a distinguished colleague as Ms. Robinette. However, I am also disquieted by the trying times that confront professional organizations in education. Teachers today find themselves at the center of a great upheaval in education and at a time when economic conditions are demanding that we all do more with less. As school districts gut their budgets, the evaporation of funding for professional organizations requires us to scrap for membership among teachers for whom conference fees or membership dues seem prohibitively expensive as they must likewise make ends meet at home. Moreover, in the turmoil of reform, teacher's tasks have so multiplied that they are physically and emotionally fatigued, finding little dedication in reserve for that extra effort that self-improvement demands. The consequences for professional development organizations have come alarmingly quickly. Membership revenues are in sharp decline, attendance at conferences is a fraction of what it was as little as two or three years ago, and the reserve funds that our organizations have squirreled away in more prosperous times is now being quickly depleted.

None of you need be convinced that the role of professional organizations is vital to the stated aims of educational reform. We may not agree on the measures of performance, but we do all agree that the children of Tennessee deserve higher standards in education, and peer organizations such as the TCTE stand better positioned to be the custodians of these standards than do the bureaucrats who poorly grasp the subtle nuances of teaching particular subjects. At this time, however, we are unlikely to win appeal to school districts to reconsider the wisdom of scuttling professional development monies. And yet, with the pressures of performance evaluation and new Common Core standards, teachers today need us all the more. We must therefore find ways to adapt, to renew and grow our membership, and to serve the needs of today's English teachers. We must renew our sense of purpose, we must remember who and what we are fighting for, and we must find the strength to rise above the challenges that stand before us.

I thank the members of the TCTE for their vigilance and encourage all to take pride in the TCTE's generations of noble service in inspiring both teachers and students to excellence in English.

Dwight Robert Wade III, TCTE Executive Director Elect

More About This Year's Conference

The Writing Life: Integrating Common Core and Technology into the Writing Curriculum

We're trying something different this year. The Scarritt-Bennett Center is a beautiful retreat center featuring gothic architecture and beautiful grounds. It is a nonprofit education, conference and retreat center committed to addressing social justice issues through programming that promotes cross-cultural understanding, education on women's issues and spiritual renewal. Income from the rental of the center's historic facilities for meetings, conferences, events and overnight accommodations supports the center's efforts. Scarritt-Bennett is situated just off Vanderbilt University's campus.

Kick off a great conference with Beverly Chin. This former NCTE president and director of the English Teaching Program at the University of Montana will offer our keynote address on Friday morning. This former member of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards wrote *On Your Own: Writing* and *On Your Own: Grammar* and served as senior advisor on *The Readers' Choice and Grammar* for Writing and consults across the country.

Throughout the day Friday will be presentations by your colleagues from across the state. Classroom teachers, university professors, educators from the arts community, state Department of Education representatives, publishers' representatives, and others will offer you great ideas and renew

your sense of purpose. Lunch and awards will be on the program Friday. The day will conclude with an invigorating roundtable by some leaders in our field.

Saturday morning will feature a few more presentations and will close with entertainment and words of writing wisdom from Thom Schuyler. A member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, Thom Schuyler has penned numerous hits, including "Love Will Turn You Around" (Kenny Rogers), "I Don't Know Where to Start" (Eddie Rabbitt), "A Long Line of Love" (Michael Martin Murphey), "My Old Yellow Car" (Dan Seals), "I Fell in Love Again Last Night" (The Forester Sisters), "Years After You" (John Conlee) and "Love Out Loud" (Earl Thomas Conley). Often credited with inventing Nashville's signature in-the-round style of songwriter showcase with Don Schlitz and Fred Knobloch, Schuyler also has taught songwriting at Belmont University and serves as youth director at Woodmont Christian Church in Nashville.

Following this page, forms are available for conference registration, to propose a presentation at the conference, and a membership form. Please share them widely with your colleagues. The conference registration includes the modest dues of \$20 to keep you and your colleagues a member of TCTE for the entire year. As we Tennesseans like to say . . . "Ya'll come!"

Lodging Options

Hosting this year's conference at Scarritt-Bennett has allowed us to keep the registration fees at the same level as last year. However, it means we do not have a conference hotel. Here are the names and addresses for a few of the hotels nearest the conference center.

Courtyard by Marriott
1901 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tn. 37203
615-327-9900

Hampton Inn
Nashville/Vanderbilt
1919 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tn. 37203
615-329-1144

Embassy Suites
1811 Broadway
Nashville, TN. 37203
615-320-8899

Hutton Hotel
1808 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN. 37203
615-340-9333

There are many other hotels in the area around Vanderbilt and Scarritt-Bennett. If you want to search for other hotels near the conference center, the address for Scarritt-Bennett is 1008 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212.

The Writing Life

INTEGRATING
COMMON CORE
AND
TECHNOLOGY
INTO THE
WRITING
CURRICULUM

September 28-29, 2012 Conference Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

(necessary for registration confirmation)

School/Organization _____

Conference Fee \$110.00 _____

(tax deductible; includes Fri. lunch, Sat. breakfast, and \$20 TCTE dues for 2012-13;
three or more teachers per school receive one free conference registration)

Student Fee \$25.00 _____

(includes free TCTE membership for 2012-13 and conference fee)

On-Site Registration \$120.00 _____

(includes \$20 TCTE dues for 2012-13 and conference fee)

Please check whether you will attend Friday's lunch and/or Saturday's breakfast.

Friday lunch Saturday breakfast

I will attend.

I will attend.

I will not attend.

I will not attend.

Return registration form to:

Rob Wade

4840 Fleetgrove Avenue

Memphis, TN 38117

(Make checks payable to TCTE.)

Please note: Registration includes Friday keynote, lunch, and workshops as well as Saturday continental breakfast and breakout sessions. No refund or fee reduction is possible for those unable to attend the meals. Registration confirmation will be emailed.

Questions: Contact Rob Wade at Dwight.robert.wade3@gmail.com

TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
FOR MORE INFORMATION: christina.williams@mnp.org

Program Proposal

The Writing Life

Integrating Common Core and Technology into the Writing Curriculum

Scarritt-Bennett Center Nashville, TN
September 28 – September 29, 2012

1. Prospective participants may suggest themselves and/or colleagues as chairs, recorders, or presenters. (Photocopy this form if necessary.)
2. All sessions will last 45 minutes.
3. Audiovisual equipment is not available. Presenters must bring their own.
4. TCTE is a nonprofit organization and cannot reimburse participants for travel, expenses, or registration fees.
5. Program participants should check with their school district personnel for professional in-service credit and financial assistance.
6. Pre-registration is required for all presenters. Participants' names will appear in the program only after they have pre-registered.

PERSON SUBMITTING PROPOSAL _____

Institution/Affiliation _____

Position/Title _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Work _____ Home _____ Email _____

If this is a group presentation, please list all members of the group (include email address for each): _____

Title of Presentation (Please be as descriptive as possible.): _____

Presentation Summary (3-5 sentences for inclusion in the conference program):

Though all proposals are welcome, these are suggested strands: (Please check the one that you feel best fits your proposal)

New Teachers Middle School Practices High School Practices AP/IB Practices

Grade levels primarily applicable: (Please check the one(s) you wish to appear in the program.)

Grades 1-6 Middle/Junior High Senior High College General (All Levels)

Would you be willing to act as a session facilitator? Yes No

Email or mail completed form by May 30th to:

Kathleen Turnmire
613 17th Ave North
Nashville, TN 37203
Kathleen.turnmire@mnps.org
(615)329-8400, ext. 1002

Presenters will be notified by email or a letter by the end of June 2012.

Join today!

Tennessee Council of Teachers of English

The Tennessee Council of Teachers of English is an affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English. Our state organization includes several hundred English teachers.

TCTE exists to support the teaching of writing, reading, and literacy across the state and to provide a professional network for the support of educators.

Why join TCTE?

~An exciting state annual conference

~Awards and scholarship opportunities for early career and veteran teachers

~Publications including newsletters, journals, and books

Membership Dues: \$20

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

School/Organization _____

Return Form to:

Rob Wade
4840 Fleetgrove Avenue
Memphis, TN 38117

(Make checks payable to TCTE.)

Questions: Contact Rob Wade at Dwight.robert.wade3@gmail.com