



**International Listening Association**

# THE LISTENING POST

Vol. 118, February 2016

## Presidential Ponderings

As I write this I am in the Sunshine State having completed the Miami Half-Marathon on Sunday, January 24th, having escaped the throes of the major winter storm that The Washington Post named Snowzilla. It was a good race though the weather was cold, (in the mid-40s, just a tad nippy I suppose) and very windy. I thought running in Miami in late January would be nice and warm, the joke was on me! At least we will soon be gathering in Tucson for our 37th Annual Convention where the weather should be much nicer and warmer!

For most of us a new year begins with reflection and making resolutions; I am no exception when it comes to reflecting though to me it is more productive to set goals rather than make resolutions. While it may seem that making resolutions and setting goals are there really are major differences; in a way it is like the difference between hearing and listening. Resolutions can be easy to make but difficult to keep; perhaps it's because we make them without really considering whether they are realistic and achievable.

In the last issue of The Listening Post I mentioned some of the challenges that we face as an organization; these challenges are not that much different than are faced by other organizations and associations. The challenges will always be there, it is how we look at them and the actions that we take that determine the health and growth of the ILA. Our colleagues are doing great work to advance the listening discipline. The ability to transform lives that go far beyond a confined organizational structure, they are to be commended. I am amazed at the passion of our fellow members to meet the challenges and move forward; thank you!

In closing, I look forward to seeing many of you in Tucson, sharing your passion and learning. My goal is to sit down with as many as possible to listen and act so be sure to stop and have a cup of coffee, tea, a soft-drink and dialogue with me. Let's continue to make the time we have together a Labor of Love!

Looking forward to seeing you,

*Philip*  
Philk Tirpak, ILA President

*Want to Get Away for Spring Break?*

*Searching for a Warm Place to Venture To?*

*Looking for Something Unique?*

*Want to Probe into the Unknown or Unusual?*

*Then Search No Further.....*

*Come to the*

*International Listening Association Convention*

*“Listening: A Labor of Love”*

*in Tuscon, Arizona*

*March 10-12*



SCE 877 Saguaro with Sunset  
Photo by: Fred Hood © Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau



## Exciting ILA Keynote Speaker at Convention

**Kent Zimmerman**

In keeping with the tradition of previous conventions, a noted individual from the area was invited to speak so the convention participants might be introduced to the culture of the region. The Keynote Speaker at the Presidents' Luncheon on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup> will be Dr. Franci Washburn from the University of Arizona.

Dr. Washburn holds a BA with a double major in English/Spanish; an MA in English (Creative Writing, Fiction) and a Ph.D. in American Studies with an emphasis in Cultural Studies, all from the University of New Mexico. Her dissertation, "Beauty of Sound and Meaning: An Analysis of Lakota Oral Tradition," was directed by M. J. Young. She has been employed at the University of Arizona since 2004 with a joint appointment in the American Indian Studies Program and the Department of English. Research and teaching interests include American Indian literature, Indigenous World literature, Globalization and Indigenous Peoples, Critical Theory, and Creative Writing (both fiction and poetry). She will introduce her new book, *The Red Bird All-Indian Traveling Band*.

Dr. Washburn has agreed to lead a program session immediately after her presentation on the topic, "Listening to the Stories that We Love." She noted, "The best way to learn about another culture is to learn their language, but if that isn't possible, then the next best way is to learn their stories. The tales we tell, whether we speak them aloud or read them as written documents transmit the ideas that any culture deems important: what they love, what they question, how the world came to be, and how it should or should not be changed. A story can be as short as one sentence or as long as the history of the human race." Her session will emphasize one sentence stories: how one hears them, understands them, and interprets them. Attendees will review one sentence stories that they love or hate, and they will create one sentence stories of their own."



**ILA Founding Member**

## Remembering Jerry Carstens

**Jim Pratt**

I first met Jerry when he judged my partner and me in a college debate round. I was a senior at Macalester and he was a graduate student at South Dakota State. After I started coaching debate on my own, I would run into Jerry at tournaments where both of our teams were competing and at tournaments he ran at UW-River Falls. I liked visiting with Jerry between rounds: he had an opinion on everything, he loved to argue, his politics were the same as mine, and we were both South Dakotans who had left the state for greener pastures.

In 1977, when he was chair of the Speech and Theatre Department at UW-River Falls, he hired me to replace himself as debate coach. A year or two later, he introduced me to Ila June, whom I would marry, with Jerry as an usher at our wedding...and a few years later he became our sons' godfather.

But I'm getting ahead of myself, and I want to tell a story that most of you don't know. When Ila June and I decided to start the adoption process, Jerry was the first person we told. He was as excited as we were; and a week later, he told us that we had inspired him to act on a plan he'd been considering for some time: becoming a foster parent. He laid out his plan to us, saying that he didn't think he'd be good with little kids, and, as a career bachelor, he didn't want a girl! So the obvious answer was a teen-age boy, and he went to the court house the next day to apply as a foster parent. Would they accept him? "Yes," the social worker said, "how about today? Teenage boys are the most difficult children to place and we have a ready supply available right now."

Over the years, Jerry provided a loving home for several foster sons, two of whom were at his memorial service in River Falls. They testified that Jerry had changed their lives, providing a stable and safe home in a family environment that they had never had.

Jerry's contributions to the field of Listening were significant, as well. He was a founding member of the ILA, and he was the first to propose and teach a listening course at UW-River Falls. I took over the teaching of that class when Jerry retired, and I now teach one or two always-full sections every semester. For his first sabbatical project, Jerry studied listening behavior among retirees in Florida and produced an in-house video to use in our classes.

We miss our good friend and gave him a celebration of life send-off that he would have enjoyed. A jazz group, the Mouldy Figs, played: they were his favorite, and we used to hear them play on Sunday afternoons in Saint Croix Beach. His sons, his former debaters, his colleagues, and his friends shared stories and tributes. And we all toasted him with Miller Lite, his favorite.

## Education Committee Invitation

Melissa Beall

The Education Committee and Executive Board members will try something new at the ILA 2016 Convention! Many of us are asked for listening activities to help teachers at all levels, so we decided to run a workshop and invite everyone to participate in a resource building time. What we develop here will go up on the website as resources. In addition, we'll submit to *Listening Education*—we should have enough for a whole “issue” when we finish. We invite you to join us OR provide ideas and activities for this project. Please read on.

Our Friday 2:30-3:45 p.m. workshop “DEVELOPING CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND UNITS TO TEACH LISTENING PRE-K THROUGH 18” will be held in Fountain.

This is a work session featuring panelists and audience members. The goal is to share our own love of listening as we create and adapt classroom listening materials to Pre-K through college/university levels.

**Convention program description:** This is a work session! The listed presenters will work with attendees to create listening curriculum units and classroom activities people can put to use immediately in their own classrooms or workshops. In addition, we'll put the materials on the ILA website for others to use, and submit to *Listening Education* to facilitate the teaching and learning of listening in all our schools. We'll start with three learning objectives and find, create, or adapt materials to set up learning activities and units for Pre-K through grade 3, grades 4-6, grades 7-12, community college, college and university classrooms. Members who attend this session will be invited to work with the panelists to create lessons, activities, and units based on the learning objectives. **Please bring five to ten copies of favorite activities you use in your own classrooms to the session to share with the group so we can see if these ideas can be included in the units. If not, we'll still find ways to share them!** This may well be a project we continue in 2017. Please join us in Tucson!

**The learning objectives are:**

- (1) Identify main ideas in messages.**
- (2) Synthesize information from others.**
- (3) Distinguish between facts and opinions in messages.**

### Panelists:

Melissa L. Beall, University of Northern Iowa, 319-266-9827; [Melissa.beall@uni.edu](mailto:Melissa.beall@uni.edu)

Nanette Johnson-Curiskis, ILA, 952-221-5624; [info@listen.org](mailto:info@listen.org)

Michael Z Murphy, Union Community College; 908-497-4229; [mmurphy@ucc.edu](mailto:mmurphy@ucc.edu)

Gayle Pohl, University of Northern Iowa, 319-504-5149; [gayle.pohl@uni.edu](mailto:gayle.pohl@uni.edu)

Phyllis Tirpak, Northern Virginia Community College; 703-244-7086; [listenusa@gmail.com](mailto:listenusa@gmail.com)

Kae Van Engen, Dordt College; [vanengen@dordt.edu](mailto:vanengen@dordt.edu)

## ILA Establishes a Mentoring Program

Kent Zimmerman

If you have been a member of ILA for any period of time, you know that our Conventions include thought-provoking sessions, engaging lunch conversations and wonderful opportunities to learn the culture of the Convention city. Over the years, we may forget what that first ILA Convention was like. What session should I go to next? Where should I sit at lunch? How does this committee work?

In an effort to facilitate a smoother transition for first-time Convention attendees, the Executive Board initiated a new mentoring program. These first-time attendees will be paired with an experienced member of the Association before the Convention begins. The veteran ILA member will commit to meet the first-time attendee on Thursday of Convention week and introduce the first-time attendee to a variety of activities. Those options for interaction include:

- a. attend one session with the new Mentee on Thursday & introduce that person to others at the session.
- b. invite that person to attend one of the Friday morning committee meetings.
- c. invite that person to sit with the Mentor at either the Friday or Saturday luncheon.
- d. invite that person to join the Mentor (and others) for dinner on either Thursday or Friday evening.
- e. get the Mentee's phone and email address before the Convention adjourns.
- f. contact the Mentee within two weeks of the Convention and offer to answer any questions.
- g. contact that person one time during the summer months.
- h. contact the person next January & invite that person to the 2017 Convention. Engage in a discussion on, “What has the Association done for you this year?”

We want the first-time attendees to notice that ILA offers something that the other professional organizations cannot – a personalized touch. We are committed to listening to all, including our first-time attendees, and being there after the Convention ends.

If you are planning to attend the Tucson Convention, and have never previously attended one of our Conventions, please note this on your Registration or contact the Convention Planner. You will be paired with a seasoned ILA member.

If you have attended many ILA Conventions, and would be interested in becoming a Mentor, contact the Convention Planner. You will be glad that you did.

## What do YOU want from the ILA?

Carole Grau

36 years ago...in Atlanta, I stumbled upon the birth of a new organization, the International Listening Association. The title intrigued me. Even though my professional training was as a Communication Specialist, with one bachelor's degree and two master's degrees, my studies had omitted any reference to or investigation of "listening".

Across the years, my membership exposed me to cutting edge research in the field of listening, allowed me to network with other professionals focused on listening and provided me several mentors willing to share their expertise with me. Although I did not know it at the time, this has been a life changing experience. Being an octogenarian, I have had the opportunity of watching the ILA in its formative stages. Now I am privileged to be at the gateway of its next stage of growth. It's exciting to be standing at this spot, an important moment of our organization's history. For an organization to make a significant contribution it must survive and thrive. It must change over time to respond to members' evolving needs and changes in the environment. In this way the ILA is much like any organization that survives beyond its formative stage. We recognize our future depends on understanding what YOU and potential new members want from the ILA. We know that this would best be done with the input and energy of our members. We want it to be the organization that you will continue to love.

The Business Committee is planning a session at this year's conference entitled: What Do You Want From The ILA? The Committee has been involved with analyzing several years of membership data. There have been conversations with current and past members. This conference session will share the data discovered in these informal conversations and explore next steps. If you cannot join us in Tucson, we especially need your input. Send your ideas to Helen Ralston and/or Sheila Bentley on [hfrench25@gmail.co](mailto:hfrench25@gmail.co). If you prefer to talk to us we can arrange a Skype call. We need your ideas. We need your creativity. We need your guidance. We need you. What do YOU want from ILA?

## We Want Your Submissions

Erica Lamm

Do you have a great teaching or training idea? Have you read any great books about listening lately? If so, you are invited to submit an article to the online journal, *Listening Education*! Details about format can be found on the ILA website under "publications." You can also email Dr. Erica Lamm for information, at [LEditor@listen.org](mailto:LEditor@listen.org). Please consider a submission so we can share our good work!

## Why Is There A Beall Scholarship Fund?

Melissa L. Beall

Some people have asked about the Hugh Beall Student Scholarship fund and why we still include it on the registration form. Indulge me for a few minutes while I share the story of how that scholarship fund began.

Hugh and I attended the 2007 ILA convention so superbly planned by Margarete Imhof in Germany. When we went in to one of the luncheons, Hugh saw a young woman eating a sandwich out in the entry to our luncheon. He asked her why she wasn't joining the rest of us. She told him she was a student and she "could not afford the luncheon fee." He immediately asked her to go into the luncheon in his place, saying that she would appreciate the meal much more than he. She refused. As we continued in to the luncheon I could "see" Hugh thinking about that situation. After lunch he asked me how many people did not get the luncheon and how many were students. He also asked about the cost of the luncheons. When I gave him the numbers, he said, "We need to make sure this does not happen to anyone. Let's find a way to at least provide meals for those who cannot afford the luncheon fee or, for that matter, the convention fee."

One year later, after Hugh's reminders to do something about students' inability to afford luncheons, I had the opportunity to "do something." On Hugh's passing, many people gave memorial gifts. The monies from ILA members and from family members, who did not specify a charity or organization, were donated to ILA to create a Hugh Beall Student Scholarship fund. Because it was not what I considered a "substantial" amount, I requested the fund be allowed to build up to a "viable amount" in order to make a difference. Each year I donate to the fund and many of you have also done so, and I am appreciative. When I re-wrote my last will and testament, I designated an amount to be given to the Hugh's Student Scholarship Fund upon my passing. (While I do not plan for that to be soon, one never knows.) In the meantime, I continue to donate to the fund and provide random acts of kindness for those who might not otherwise attend the luncheon or even the convention, and will continue to do so in Hugh's memory. When I win the next big Powerball Lottery, I'll share some of that with ILA to raise Hugh's student scholarship fund so we can help others as he had hoped.

Let me know if you have any questions or ideas about how to grow this account.



Hugh and Melissa Beall in Germany. Hugh loved being around students as well as ILA members.

## International Day of Listening

Sheila Bentley

Imagine what it would be like if the entire world would embrace the goal of spending one day focused on the role of the listener - setting aside one day to concentrate on listening. Just read the national or international headlines, and anyone can see that getting people to be more conscious of and willing to listen to each other would be a worthwhile endeavor.

Some of you will recall our Listening Awareness Month. For many years this was pursued in an effort to raise awareness of the importance of listening. That effort was joined by Marva Shand's actions in and around her community to promote "I Love To Listen Day."

This year, the Business Committee is sponsoring a session at the ILA Convention in Tucson in the hope of establishing an International Day of Listening. Sheila Bentley and other members of the ILA will facilitate the session in Tucson. The goal is to begin the groundwork to create such a universal tribute to the value of listening to each other. There are no preconceived notions regarding how our goal might be accomplished. All ideas will be welcomed. If you cannot attend in Tucson, please send your ideas to Sheila (at [bentleysc@aol.com](mailto:bentleysc@aol.com)) because we would love this effort to represent all of our membership. We can start small, tapping into our membership with realistic, short-term goals. Ultimately, a vision like this can evolve to encompass the entire globe in an annual event. Join us in making that difference either at the 2016 Convention or via email.



### INVITATION

### TO ENTER A LISTENING-THEMED POETRY CONTEST

Dear ILA Friends,

I'm excited to invite ILA friends to send listening-themed poems for a competition I'm sponsoring through the Florida State Poets Association (FSPA)—especially as so many have shared wonderful poems with me at ILA conventions and through Listeners Unite! Submissions are open to everyone; you need not be a Florida resident or an FSPA member.

The submission period begins May 1 and the postmark deadline is July 15, 2016. Find complete guidelines for all FSPA poetry contests at <http://FloridaStatePoetsAssociation.org>; I will also post guidelines specific to this contest at <http://ThePigsWings.com> in February or early March, so please check back. Winners of 1<sup>st</sup> Place (\$50 award), 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (\$25 award) and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place (\$15 award), as well as three Honorable Mentions, will be published in the 2016 *Florida State Poets Association Anthology* and recognized on the FSPA Website. I will also post a special recognition of LISTENING poem award winners at <http://ThePigsWings.com>.

As a sponsor, I chose the theme but won't be judging or even seeing entries. If any ILA members decide to enter, please let me know. I'd love to hear about it. In the meantime, I look forward to seeing and celebrating the final selections.

Best of luck!

Linda Eve Diamond  
Author of *The Beauty of Listening*



