



## President's Perspective

Kent L. Zimmerman

This year, people around the world will have the opportunity to share in the excitement of the Olympic Games. Athletes will demonstrate their prowess in the specialty event for which they have trained for years. One of the favorite events is the 4x400 meter relay race. In this race, one runner on each team runs one lap around the oval track and then hands the baton to the next teammate. If the baton is dropped in the exchange, the team is disqualified. Fatigue sets in for each runner at the end of each 400 meters, but the next teammate is ready to take the baton and begin the lap with vitality.

As I reflected on the upcoming Olympic event of the 4x400 meter relay race, I began to see a parallel between that race and what we do in the International Listening Association. Let's explore the comparisons. The 4x400 meter relay team needs each runner to be trained, focused and ready to excel because the team will not succeed if the baton is mishandled. This relay team symbolizes the ILA Presidents. We allow our Presidents to train for two years for the big race of assuming the presidency; the year of the Presidency is a short sprint to identify and complete goals before the next Convention, but there is another President ready to take the baton at the end of that lap and continue with the race.

The team includes more than the four runners. We have the former relay participants, trainers and coaches who work before, during and after the race to prepare these runners. They advise and monitor the workout sessions. Past Presidents, current Board members, Committee Chairs and committee members whose regular guidance is invaluable would represent those individuals. They feel a tremendous sense of satisfaction when the baton is passed successfully.

As each runner completes one leg of the relay, they look up into the stands and wave to the spectators whose participation is essential for the event to be worthwhile. Without the cheering crowd, there would be no need to run the race. These fans embody the members of the ILA. Even as they paid their own way to be there, they are willing to travel near and far to be with their team at the next competition. They will celebrate with the entire team when victory is attained.

There are people outside the stadium who do not even realize that a race is transpiring. They are oblivious to their need to be a part of something bigger than themselves. As runners, trainers and coaches, and also fans, we need to tell them about the joy of being a part of the winning ILA team. As an organization, we must try. Four-time Olympian, Jesse Owens, said, "If you don't try to win, you might as well hold the Olympics in somebody's back yard." This year, make a pledge to yourself: tell one person about the benefits of ILA; invite that person to join; or even buy that individual a gift membership. Imagine the roar of the crowd inside the stadium if even more of those seats were occupied with people supporting the same team: the ILA.

**Let the games begin!**

## ILA 2017 Convention: "Listening for Healing"

Omaha, Nebraska, June 8-10, 2017

Charles Veenstra

The 2016 convention is over. By all accounts, the convention went very well. We had many new members present along with eleven past presidents. Thanks to Kent Zimmerman for very careful planning.

Now we need to look ahead to the next convention. It will be in early June. Omaha offers much for families: the famous Henry Doorly Zoo has been ranked in the top of the world and is even now planning a very extensive expansion. The convention, which will be in the Hilton hotel in downtown Omaha, will be in the center of several attractions. Old Market is within walking distance. It has several restaurants, pubs, pizza places, art shops, etc. Also within walking distance is the Pioneer Courage Park, a series of sculptures that depict the early pioneers on their dangerous trek westward from Omaha. Not far from the hotel is a walking bridge over the Missouri River.

Within an hour's drive is the SAC museum, a Smithsonian associate that is the home to the largest collection of Cold War aircraft and artifacts in the U.S. The historic landmark, Arbor Day Farm, is located in Nebraska City and is packed with fun and adventure for the whole family.

The hotel provides free shuttle not only from the airport, but also to any attractions within three miles of the hotel. I have to add that the Omaha airport handles several airlines, so the problem of getting airline connections to Omaha should be minimal. Honestly, we think Omaha has a lot to offer families. Consider taking an extra day or two on either side of the convention to engage in some family outings (the ILA price is good for three days before or after the convention).

The theme of the convention is "Listening for Healing." We envision several possible tracks: listening to heal marriages and families, listening help processes of reconciliation, listening in international relations, listening to make organizations instruments of healing, listening in medicine, and listening to those who desperately need someone to care. All of us want to tell our stories, but somehow we do not know how to ask others to listen to us. Can we tap these topics at the convention? I think we can. While research in listening education is very important, I hope we can expand our work to tell the stories of when listening works in a variety of these areas. I would love to see us try to develop a series of presentations aimed at youth. So often, it seems to me, the children are not given the privilege of a listening adult that they deeply need. In our respect for children, we need to treat them as full human beings who also have stories to tell.

I encourage you to think outside the normal convention paper type of presentation. Of course, we love the papers, but we need to think about appealing to many others besides those who focus on fairly narrow research topics. We need to promote the value of listening in all kinds of contexts. I would love to hear your creative ideas on how to make the next convention appealing to many different groups of people, particularly the young.

While we have an extra two months before the next convention, do pay close attention to these deadlines: short courses/workshop—January 10, 2017 and papers/panels/posters—February 1, 2017. My goal is to give tentative notification of acceptance by March 15, 2017.

## Past President's Perspective

By Philip Tirpak

Wow! It just doesn't seem possible that a year has gone by and I've passed the gavel on but it certainly has. Where has the time gone? That's one of those questions that doesn't have a hard and fast answer, time just goes by, it is and it will be and we don't really have control over it, time just is. Wow! I often am not at a loss for words, as many of you know and as I shared in Tucson; looking out at the gathering, and thinking of those who were unable to be there did have me at a loss for words however. I want to take a little bit of time to share with you once more, (not that I'm going anywhere,) thank you in advance for listening.

I am honored, privileged, and humbled to have served as President of the International Listening Association; thank you for your encouragement, faith, and for being part of something even larger than the organization itself. While planning the 2015 Convention in Virginia Beach the words of Dr. Ralph Nichols resonated and were rooted deep in my soul, you know them but they need to be repeated. "The most basic of all human needs is to understand and to be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them." There is no argument there, it is an essential truth. As I thought about what Dr. Nichols said it became crystal clear; to understand and be understood is not a basic need it is the MOST basic. It is the essence of a listening-centric life. It is something to strive for every single day. To live a listening-centric life, to learn from others who have blazed the trail before us; as Manny Steil, says, "We stand on the shoulders of giants." Manny, you are a hero, we wouldn't be there if you did not have the vision to begin this organization, thank you.

It was a challenging year, in some ways even more so than the previous year and a half spent planning the convention. Serving as President was like riding a roller coaster; up, down, around, steep hills to climb and awesome plunges that left me with a feeling that is hard to put into words, (Kent, Charles, and Helen, don't cringe, march forward, the ILA is in good hands.) I'm not going to rehash what I shared in my Presidential Address in Tucson, (that's for another time and something that I will indeed do.) Instead I want to leave with a few thoughts.

First, each member of the ILA has made an impact on and contribution to my life; yes even those who I have not personally met, talked to or corresponded with. As a member you each are part of something that is important in every aspect of life.

Second, we have an obligation to each other, and yes, to the world, to share the word and the reality that listening changes lives! It is not a platitude, it is reality and it is so needed today. In the midst of all that is happening in our world, (and I'm not even going to get into the American political spectacle,) listening shines a light and you are the bearers of that light.

Finally, listening is a passion, it is a burning flame, it is energy, and it is transformative. The passion needs to ooze down so that it drenches each fiber of our existence. The flame of passion can go out as quickly as it is ignited, however, so I charge you to keep that passion alive, don't fear it, and rather embrace it! There are so many that don't know about the real power of listening, understand what it is about, or have not been listened to. Listening is too important to not share and live the passion, do it!

## Congratulations To The 2016 ILA Award Winners

By Melissa Beall

### Research Award (2 awardees):

Sanna Ala-Kortesmaa and Pekka Isotalus

"Professional Listening Competence Promoting Well-Being at Work in the Legal Context", International Journal of Listening, 29

Graham D. Bodie, Michelle E. Pence, Michael Rold, M. Daniel Chapman, Jamie Lejune and Lisa Anzalone, "Listening Competence in Initial Interactions II: Applying Trait Centrality to Discover the Relative Placement of Listening Competence Among Implicit Competency Theories," Communication Studies

### Special Recognition:

Julian Treasure

### Listening in the Business Sector:

Kathie O'Brien

### Outstanding Listening Educator:

Kae Van Engen

### Hall of Fame (2 awardees):

Laura Janusik

Jennifer Grau

AWARDS COMMITTEE: Carole Grau, Andrew Wolvin, and Melissa Beall (chair)

## Call for Listening Education

Erica Lamm

Do you have listening teaching or training activities that have worked well? Have you done assessment of a listening assignment or activity in a classroom or training session? Do you have "think pieces" about listening in the classroom or training arena? Listening Education is the place for these types of articles! We are expanding our focus beyond teaching/training lessons and book reviews to include more informal research and philosophies of teaching and training in the listening realm. Please submit articles to Dr. Erica Lamm at [LEditor@listen.org](mailto:LEditor@listen.org) and see the website for details about submission guidelines and previous issues.



## Activities within the Executive Board

Kent L. Zimmerman

As we wrapped up the International Listening Association Convention in Tucson, I remarked that we had the opportunity and privilege to accomplish much for the organization this year. Since you are an integral part of the Association, I wanted to brief you on what is transpiring behind the scenes.

We tend to work more effectively when we operate as a team as opposed to working as an individual. With this in mind, I asked the Board to agree to the "Accountability Project." We would each announce what we planned to do for the Association this year, and charge the other Board members with the task of keeping us accountable to those stated intentions.

To that end, I asked each member of the Executive Board and each of the three Editors to note 1-2 goals they intended to address as a part of their Board responsibility in the coming year. I asked them to tie the goal(s) to the Mission statement of the organization and also provide specifics on how the effectiveness of the project or activity would be evaluated. The response from the Board was impressive! Each of your Board members took time to assess the strengths and concerns in the specific area of responsibility. Rather than viewing their area independently, there was a concerted effort to enhance the structure and offerings of the entire organization within the goal statements. We plan to meet electronically every two months at a minimum. I set the expectation of 100% attendance at each meeting. Each Board member will be asked to provide an update on the stated goals at each meeting. Since we all know each other's goals, we will be accountable to each other.

The Committees have now been formed. The Committee Chairs have been named. I am especially impressed with the talent and commitment of the Chairs and their respective members. Each committee has a different focus, but the theme is common: how can we enhance and promote the image of the Association through a variety of approaches? By the way, there is still time to volunteer on a committee if you missed out. Please go the ILA website and click on About Us: Government and scroll down to see the name of the committee and the Chair. Please contact the Chair directly.

The ILA committees were also asked to identify 1-2 goals they intended to address this year as well. When we have the committee reports in Omaha, their accountability will be on display there, too.

We have several key issues on our plate currently. They include:

- Receiving and reviewing the Pfeil proposal;
- Revising the ILA website;
- Enhancing and coordinating our presence on Social Media;
- Promoting a dynamic 2017 Convention in Omaha;
- Choosing a viable Convention location for 2018;
- Planning the International Day of Listening;
- Continuing to produce quality publications;
- Devising an effective way to connect with people with lapsed memberships;
- Increasing the number of non-US ILA members;
- Revamping the Certified Listening Program; and

- Maintaining an efficient day-to-day operation.

It is our honor to serve the Association as your elected officers. Remember, though, we cannot do it alone. Your expertise, talent and energy are needed to make the Association into the world-wide leading resource for listening. We need you, and we need your friends and colleagues. I plan to bring at least one new member into the Association in 2016-17. Will you join me in that endeavor? I hope so!

## International Day of Listening

Shelia Bentley

Plans for the International Day of Listening are moving forward, and we are looking for some enthusiastic committee members. There are three committees that will divide up the tasks. They are listed and described below. If you did not sign up at the Convention and would like to be part of this exciting, soon-to-be annual international event, please take a look at the committee descriptions and choose which one (or more than one) you would like to be part of. Please notify Sheila Bentley at [bentleysc@aol.com](mailto:bentleysc@aol.com) of your interest and your committee choice. We look forward to having you on board!

**Executive Committee:** Responsible for making big-picture decisions and coordinating with the ILA Board and other ILA Committees.

**Marketing and Public Relations Committee:** Responsible for developing IDL website and marketing plans and obtaining sponsorships.

**Events and Resources Planning Committee:** Responsible for creating event ideas and developing resource materials that would help organizations, schools, businesses, individuals, international groups, countries, etc., carry out the events. This could include curriculum, activities, teaching materials, lists of resources, and any other information that would help individuals and groups carry out the events/activities.



## A Listeners' Convention?!

I was recently a speaker at the ILA International Listening Association Convention in Tucson AZ, presenting on "Can Appreciative Listening be a way to (re)discover the motivation to listen to people?"

After attending a first session as a participant, I quickly realized it was about sharing passion and knowledge far more than information and lectures. At this Convention I felt immediately welcome, warmly invited to contribute, that my voice made a difference and that I was listened to.

ILA members are a very special audience. I've rarely been listened to with such attention. Everyone looks at you with the greatest interest and nobody fiddles with a pen or electronic device.

It was an immense honor to have such experienced listeners amongst the audience, including some living legends of Listening, the authors whose books and papers I have read with great interest. They don't have anything to prove. Despite their immense experience, they still are eager to learn. It was a lesson in real leadership and humility.



At this Convention I received many insights on Listening from so many angles, and I want to share some with you.

- One stunning observation that is recurrent these days is that many people, being used to communicating through electronic media, are afraid to meet and speak to a real person. It's a problem for communication at large, between family members or peers at work, students among themselves... accentuated by the position, hierarchy or age. How can you meet the love of your life under these circumstances?
  
- One ILA member assists policemen in his district to help them to be more effective listeners. This helps greatly to replace violence by communication and understanding.

- We also observed that when you learn to be a more effective Listener, you become almost automatically a more effective speaker. You know how to present your material better for the Listener to have the maximum of comprehension and retention. You become "listenable". And that's what speakers want, don't they?

A listeners' convention?

Before leaving for Tucson, when I said I was going to a "Listeners' Convention, the joke I heard the most was "A listeners' convention? But who's talking? Hahaha!"



Believe me, these passionate listeners, researchers, authors and teachers have A LOT to transmit. And they won't have to speak or write very long to make you realize that you may have missed one of the main components in communication!

Good news! listening can be learned!

If you missed the teachings of Ptahhotep 4000 years ago, or the writings of Plutarch 2000 years ago, and many others along the way, there's a lot of comprehensible material nowadays to learn and practice Listening to assist you in bettering yourself, your family, your community... and the world at large.

If you're not satisfied with the way you listen or the way you're listened to, it may be time to become aware of your listening behaviors.

Before filling a complete listening assessment, start simply by drawing two columns (on paper or electronic...). Label the first one "When do I listen?" the other one "When am I listened to?". At every moment of your day put a tick in the corresponding column.

Too simple?

You'll let me know after just one day how your awareness on Listening has increased.

Repeat the process for one week. Count the ticks. Compare one day with another.

Another way to realize the importance of listening as a tool to attain very concrete goals is to ask yourself "When did I encounter these kind of situations (or similar)?"

You've lost important information (or data, money, clients, providers, partners...)/someone lost yours.

You've hurt feelings / you've been hurt.

You've missed opportunities / you've made others miss opportunities.

Learning to listen is not linear. Neither is the way we teach it.

One way I sometimes approach teaching how to listen to people is the same way I teach listening to music. It all begins with sound. We call this “Appreciative Listening”. If you like the sound of what you hear you’re more inclined to make the extra effort to pay attention in order to understand.

Whatever the approach, as soon as you become aware of the benefits of learning even just one listening skill, your overall listening effectiveness will take a leap forward!

More about our Listen and Lead programs on [www.leaderstoday.co/listen-lead](http://www.leaderstoday.co/listen-lead)



Jean-François MATHIEU (jfm) April 2016

Music composer, improviser, producer, teacher, Listening Culture

Designer

Contact, details and more about our Listen and Lead programs on

[www.leaderstoday.co/listen-lead](http://www.leaderstoday.co/listen-lead)

## Special issue on Listening in Language Learning (L2)

By Margarete Imhof

Guest editors Christine C. M. Goh and Vahid Aryadoust from Singapore have monitored the publication of a special issue of the International Journal of Listening with a focus on listening in the area of second language learning. The call for papers went out in 2014 and after a rigorous review process the guest editors were able to compile a special issue which fills a double number of the International Journal of Listening in the 2016 volume.

The issue 1/2, 2016 is now published online for you to read and share. Contributors represent an international, evidence-based perspective on teaching and assessing listening in L2 programs. The papers address issues of exploring the composition and development of listening competences as well as the testing of listening skills at the college level as well as the high school level. All contributions are original empirical studies and most focus on English as a second language. Login at [www.listen.org](http://www.listen.org) and check out the special issue in your members only section of ILA’s website.

## NEWBIE NOTES: LESSONS LEARNED FROM MY FIRST ILA CONVENTION

Sherry Wien

I came to the ILA Convention in Tucson with three specific purposes: 1) learn more about the association, 2) learn what areas of research I could investigate, and 3) come back a better listener. The third goal was set by my husband. I admit that I’m not a good listener but my hope is to learn and improve those skills. When I joined as a member of ILA this past January, something happened quickly that was unexpected.

Even before the convention, members of ILA reached out to me through email. Welcome to our association! We look forward to seeing you at the convention. Do you have any suggestions on how we can serve you? Here’s your new mentor, Rick Bommelje! He can answer your questions throughout your first year. Would you like a roommate at the convention? Here’s your new roommate, Michelle Pence! Wow! One month before the convention, I already had talked with four members and felt like I would not be around strangers in Tucson. What a friendly and welcoming group!

The first impression of “friendly” was reinforced at the convention. I met Michelle on Wednesday and we immediately connected. We participated in the Thursday bus trip excursion to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. People thought we already knew each other. Meeting ILA members in a fun, relaxed setting before the convention started was a great idea. Instead of members seeing me in business clothes, they first saw me in athletic wear for the desert. It was enjoyable to hang out with people and socialize before we got down to business. What a fun group! From the formal Opening Session on Thursday to the final informal discussion on Saturday, I learned that ILA has a rich history and diverse interests. There are “founders” and “lifetimers.” There are “newbies” and “new bloods.” Members come from different cultures and areas of interest. But we all come together with enthusiasm for listening and motivation to share what we know with others. There are traditions passed along and new directions to explore.

The biggest lesson I learned about the association is that ILA needs to use social media. We need to share our work with the world. People are surprised to learn there is an International Listening Association. Members need to talk about ILA through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and other social media platforms. On the homepage of the ILA website (as of April 2016), the word “PROMOTE” occurs five times. We need to promote listening and the International Listening Association. If the association is to continue and grow, more people need to know.

The second lesson I learned at the convention was that numerous opportunities exist for research, teaching and service. As a professor on a scholarship track, that’s attractive for my membership. I asked the same questions to many convention presenters, “What do you need?” and “How can I help?” Here are just some of the answers. Debra Worthington is looking for larger samples, mixed methods, people who can create literature reviews, and networking for broad ideas. Andy Wolvin is looking for larger samples to do pre/post assessment and teachers to flip how public speaking is taught. Erica Lamm is looking for resources to use for web seminars and listening education. Marva Shand-McIntosh is looking for people to promote “I Love to Listen Day.” Sheila Bentley is looking for ideas to create an International Day of Listening. I left the convention with many more names and notes about how I could contribute. The field of listening research is bountiful for exploration. The hard part is deciding what to do first. What an active group!

The third purpose for attending the convention was to become a better listener. That goal was not directly met. I wish there were more sessions that provided skill training in listening. I enjoyed the participative program sessions: “What Do You Want From ILA?”, “Are We In A Listening Crisis?”, “Servant-Leader Listening”, and “Fostering Listening and Learning in the Classroom.” I had to choose among competing sessions and missed out on some great panels and workshops. People kept mentioning the term “CLP” (Certified Listening Professional) and I still don’t fully understand that designation. But perhaps this program (currently undergoing revision) is where I can learn to be a better listener. Hopefully through my participation in the association and my relationships with members, I can improve my skills. My husband would be very grateful.

Carole Grau said that she joined ILA and it changed her life. I believe that also happened to me. I instantly feel that I belong to a group of friendly, welcoming, fun, and active members. I’m happy to serve the association. I’m motivated to start research projects. I’m enthusiastic about learning ways to teach listening. My first ILA convention was a wonderful experience. I look forward to seeing my new friends at next year’s convention in Omaha, Nebraska. My final suggestion as a newbie: I hope next year’s hotel will have a “milk and cookie” buffet like the one offered in Tucson during our beverage breaks!

## Confessions of a Talkaholic

Sheila C. Bentley

Hi. My name is Sheila, and I’m a talkaholic—and a lousy listener. I want to stop being a talkaholic, but so far, I haven’t been able to. Other people drive me to it. Sometimes they are so boring that I have to stop them before I am completely catatonic. Sometimes they are saying something so stupid, I have to stop them to keep them from embarrassing themselves. Sometimes I know something really important that the other person should know, and frankly, sometimes I just know more than they do, so I have to educate them. And I feel really compelled to help them be informed when I have some research to cite! Also, I’m older than a lot of people I talk with, so I feel that my experience will be interesting and valuable to them. And unfortunately, sometimes, I just can’t stop myself.

I realize it isn’t always someone else’s fault and that if I really want to change, I’ll have to take responsibility for my behavior, but really, most of the time, someone else drives me to being a talkaholic.

I know I talk too much, but I’m a pretty good speaker and have a good sense of humor, so I’m sure they are entertained. And in groups, well. . . I just know lots of relevant information that they need to know.

When I’m at my worst, I interrupt, or enthusiastically let them know that I have something to say so they’ll stop talking. Sometimes I listen critically or judgmentally for what they are saying that is wrong or needs correcting. And often, I make sure that my body language lets them know that I’m not interested or paying attention.

I think I need help to really change my behavior. Maybe I should wear a big button that says “I’m a talkaholic” so that people won’t get in the car with me alone, or get cornered by me at a party, or accidentally sit next to me during a meal or meeting. But I’m not sure that even that would help. I’d probably just hide the button and find someone else.

I know that there is a ten-step program to help talkaholics. Maybe I could just work on following the first three rules for a while:

1. Stop talking.
2. Don’t interrupt.

3. Hear the person out,
4. And perhaps if people would give me feedback or cues when I’m doing these things, that would help.
5. I really think a support group would be helpful so that I would know I’m not alone and that other people have made it and are successful recovering talkaholics.

My name is Sheila. What’s yours?

## EXPLORING MEMBERSHIP IN THE INTERNATIONAL LISTENING ASSOCIATION

Terrence Stange

It was almost two years ago to the day that I found myself exploring professional development options related to my field in reading education; options, beyond those organizations and associations that I had long been involved with during my career in higher education. At the time, I was especially interested in conducting research about listening comprehension and capacity, text level complexity and language processes of listening, speaking, reading and writing. I was already involved with many professional organizations that allowed me to be an active participant, from attending sessions that enhanced my background and knowledge, sharing information with individuals from other universities and fields, accessing opportunities to present at a professional forum, filling an office, serving on a Board, producing a Newsletter, and ultimately, to becoming Editor of a Journal. However, something seemed to be missing.

I began conducting [googling – what else!] an online search of professional organizations related to my research interests in listening. And, what do you think appeared at the top of the search list? The International Listening Association, an organization dedicated to “. . . learning more about the impact that listening has on all humanity.”

I remember thinking, ILA is a PERFECT PATH [a path that “promotes the study, development and teaching of listening”], so I read everything on the website, including an invitation to submit a proposal for ILA’s 2015 Conference in Virginia Beach. Now, living in West Virginia, Virginia was certainly in close proximity for travel :), but it also seemed like the perfect venue for a Spring Conference. My proposal was accepted, and I presented at the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. I was absolutely convinced that the ILA Forum offered that something missing I was looking to include in my professional activities. The sessions were fascinating and I discovered numerous resources that I could use in my field. I was also able to share new energy and ideas with faculty in my Department upon my return. Convinced that I selected a reputable organization, I immediately identified and followed ILA’s plans for the 2016 Conference, and submitted a proposal so I could continue to learn more about becoming a member of ILA.

### MEMBERSHIP GIFT IN 2016

Membership for 6 months was a great “gift” from the organization in 2016 when I registered for the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference hosted in Tucson, Arizona, March 10-12. What an outstanding idea to WELCOME new members exploring professional development options! After attending the Conference this year, I discovered the same energy present as last year with an extensive selection of interesting and exceptional sessions. It is obvious that the leadership and those who understand the “roots” of the organization are deeply committed, and I admire their efforts to move ILA forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And, for what is worth, “don’t forget your roots . . . the history of the International Listening Association and what you can learn from those who formed the organization.” For me, the International Listening Association has brought new meaning to the importance of listening as a language process. As a precursor to speaking, reading and writing, LISTENING is key to building language.

## The Pfeil Grant Proposal: an Update

Kent L. Zimmerman

A select sub-committee of the International Listening Association conducted an in-depth analysis of the organization. The conclusion was this. ILA continues to suffer from: a lack of membership numbers, a decline in the retention of members, limited diversity of existing members, no supporting sponsors, and problematic financial viability.

At the ILA Convention in Virginia Beach, a gentleman by the name of Richard Pfeil from South Bend recognized these troubling issues as well. He was so impressed with the mission of the ILA that he made an offer. He agreed to provide seed money for a full-time executive's salary for one year in order to grow the ILA membership to the point where the executive's salary could be sustained by the membership income that was generated. Mr. Pfeil added that if measurable results were made at the end of the first year, but the final goal had not yet been attained, he would fund the executive's salary for a second year.

Mr. Pfeil noted the organization had a solid group of committed and capable volunteers. Since their time is very limited he opined the ILA needed the services of an experienced full-time executive. In addition to continuing present programs, this executive would have the mission of sharply expanding the application of listening training, building the membership base, securing sponsorships, and improving the financial success of the organization.

At the recent Spring Executive Board meeting, Mr. Pfeil introduced himself and his proposal to the elected members of the Association. He reiterated the fact that the new executive would report to the Executive Board. Staff may be hired to assist the executive.

A motion was made by First Vice-President Charles Veenstra that the Board empower the ILA President to work with Mr. Pfeil on a job description for the new executive and a plan to move forward on this grant proposal. The motion was adopted unanimously. As the details of this proposal are developed, the Executive Board will have ample opportunity to comment upon them.

On behalf of the ILA, the Executive Board wishes to commend Mr. Pfeil for his vision for the ILA and for his generous offer. We look forward to sharing details with the membership in the coming months.

## Possible Title: Crossing the Digital Divide

Michael Z Murphy

"Wagons, ho-ooooo," was a refrain of a favorite cowboy show from my childhood. It was Wagon Train starring Ward Bond as the intrepid leader of a collection of Conestoga wagons headed west with a different cast for each episode even though the journey could take a year--give or take! And with each episode it was critical that no one be left behind no matter the crisis. It's time for the ILA to load up, saddle up, and move on out. I refer, of course, to the internet and social media, in a way 21st century Conestoga wagons. The Executive Board with the help of many others, including some new members, is busy creating a transition. Several ideas are being floated, but no matter what, it is clear social media must be a significant part of ILA renewal.

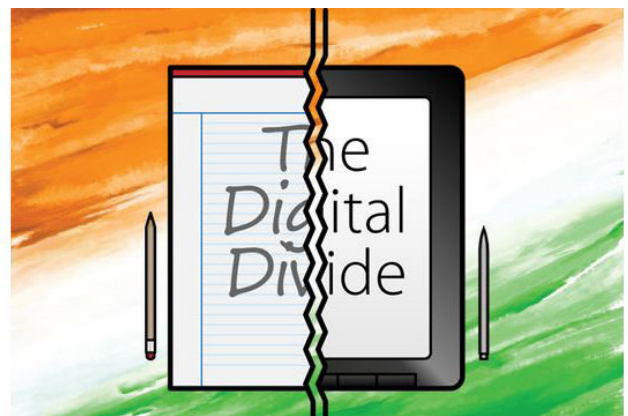
We can all recognize shrinking traditional publicity outlets. Here is the vision: move towards a Media Committee in which the ILA amps up our presence on (in alpha order) Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Twitter. In speaking with several individuals who serve as moderators for these media within different organization, they have conveyed to me just how vigorous an undertaking it can be. So, it would seem that one way to handle this is to have a different ILA member for each medium for a period of perhaps 3 months after which it would be handed off to a different ILA member.

The advantages of this new method are three-fold:

- members who serve as the moderators are less likely to experience burnout;
- there would be more membership representation and, therefore, greater input; and
- it would move ILA closer to both a younger demographic as well as a more connected demographic.

We have to load the ILA Conestoga with more than our name painted on the canvas. The connections will allow all of us to better monitor, manage, and more actively PROMOTE the ILA and the skill in which we so fervently believe.

Please send me any feedback you might have on this idea (emzemur@aol.com). I am listening to the world of PR and to all ILA members.



## PRINCE, DEATH, AND LISTENING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Sherry Wien

Prince died on April 21, 2016. I grew up a fan of Prince Rogers Nelson, an “iconic musical genius” according to Billboard magazine and many people around the world. His death at the age of 57 was a shock to millions. I learned of his passing a few hours ago and I’m crying as I write this article. My purpose here is to show how social media platforms are playing a large part in my grieving process and how listening is part of social media.

I learned the news from Facebook. I saw pictures of Prince on my news feed from my personal Facebook account. Friends were posting photos, videos, and GIFs. My thoughts were “Uh oh, something is wrong with Prince.” In the top left corner of my screen, I saw TRENDING as the top story, “Prince: Singer Found Dead at Age 57 in his Minnesota Estate, His Publicist Confirms.” I was in shock. Immediately I clicked on the trending story article to read the details. I quickly shared the article with my friends and typed my status as “Oh my god, WHAT?! NO!!!! I might cry during class. David Bowie and Prince in the same year - no, no, no, no, no, no, no.” Then I posted a moving GIF image of a cartoon figure curled up on the floor crying. Within five minutes, I had learned of Prince’s death and expressed how I felt to 319 people who are my Facebook friends. Within seconds, friends across the United States responded with sad emoticon faces. A college friend who currently lives in Pully, Switzerland responded to me one hour later with the comment “Also shocked! Never expected that!” Friends and fans across the world were responding to the news of Prince’s death, hours (and even minutes) after the announcement.

This afternoon, I went to YouTube to watch videos of Prince. All I had to do was type “Prince” in the search box and over 19 million video results were listed. I watched and listened to him perform at the 2007 Super Bowl XLI Halftime Show (posted by the NFL). I watched him win numerous awards at the 1985 American Music Awards (posted by a fan named purplesnowlove). I remember watching that television awards show when I was 15 and I was watching it again as a video clip when I’m 46. YouTube is like a time machine. In seconds, I can revisit moments in history throughout the life of this musician. I can feel like a kid again as I listen to his music.

I “googled” Prince to read more news. I read his obituary from The New York Times (nytimes.com). I saw a video segment from NBC News (nbcnews.com). I read “in memoriam” from Billboard (billboard.com). All this information was instantly available to me through the internet and social media. Even as I’m writing this article, I’m listening to “Prince Radio” on Google Play (<https://play.google.com/music/listen#/sr/prince>).

While I’m working in the Communication Department at Monmouth University in New Jersey, USA during the last week of the semester, I’m also grieving with friends around the world. People are sharing thoughts, memories, and testimonials. People are posting emoticons of shock, sadness, and crying. Friends and fans are sending little heart symbols to one another. Perhaps the strangest social media moment was on Facebook. My ex-fiancé messaged me privately. (We are not friends on Facebook but we can still send texts to each other in the rare occasion of communication). He and I became high school sweethearts when the movie *Purple Rain* was released and we became Prince fans together. He simply typed “Sad day indeed. RIP Prince.” That started a texting conversation between us. He would type and I would see “.....” in the message box so I would wait until his comment was posted. I wouldn’t interrupt by typing while the “....” was moving on the screen. Sometimes our comments would cross topics awkwardly. Sometimes neither of us would type with no action on the screen. I waited in silence for a minute or two thinking of what to type next. Sometimes while I waited

for him to finish typing, I scrolled up and down in the message box and reviewed the words we had typed to each other. We never saw each other’s face. We never heard each other’s voice. But we listened to each other as we reminisced and grieved together for an hour and a half. Then we typed goodbye and I clicked out of the message box. I logged out of Facebook. I cried. Then I started to write this article for the International Listening Association’s newsletter *The Listening Post*.

ILA member Debra Worthington posted an email message earlier this week on CRTNET (an email listserv called Communication Research and Theory Network [CRTNET@LISTS.PSU.EDU](mailto:CRTNET@LISTS.PSU.EDU) – an earlier form of social media) with an invitation to submit papers for a special issue of the *International Journal of Listening*. She started the call for papers by saying, “The growth of social media and evolving technology have significantly impacted who people listen to as well as how and when they listen.” She provided a list of thematic examples such as supportive listening via social media. Prince’s death has given me an opportunity to examine my own experience with grief and supportive listening through social media. Perhaps I can create an autoethnography and use my own self-reflection about grieving Prince’s death and witnessing how I listen and how others listen to me through social media. It would be a tribute to Prince and a contribution to the study of listening. I’ll end with a lyric from one of my favorite Prince songs. “Why do we scream at each other? This is what it sounds like...when doves cry.”



Prince

Photo image from <http://stereoembersmagazine.com/>



## Announcements From Teri L. Varner

COMM 2357 - Active Listening an undergraduate course at St. Edward's University. Photos & Fifteen (15) Abstracts from Final Papers forthcoming (May 5, 2016). Ciara Morena, a second semester freshman and Communicat Major is willing to share her full paper, "Listening Barriers for University Students" with the *Listening Post*.

New Undergraduate Research: Teri L. Varner, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Communication at St. Edward's University has recently been awarded a \$5,000.00 Teaching, Learning and Technology Roundtable (TLTR) innovation grant that coincides with a new undergraduate course (FSTY 1321 LLC - Listen, Learn & Positively Communicate) in the FA16 semester that examines the role of active listening in understanding complex communication issues. Teri's TLTR innovation grant supports her \*Wicked Problems Living Learning Community (LLC) course to purchase 20 copies of this software. An integral part of this course is teaching the students to use a sophisticated qualitative research software tool called Nvivo to code and analyze communication patterns in speech as a way to tease out themes that can be useful for interpersonal and professional listening.

<http://think.stedwards.edu/residencelife/wickedproblems>

FSTY 1321 LLC - Listen, Learn & Positively Communicate  
Course Description: Listening is an important part of the communication process, yet there is a tremendous lack of skill and training in this area. This course provides a comprehensive approach to listening strategies and depending upon the context teaches students different ways to listen in the 21st century. Students will learn to improve their listening skills through exposure to a wide range of listening materials, such as instructional videos, taped conversations, practice application activities and through continuous self-monitoring. Students should expect to demonstrate a higher level of listening competency inside the classroom, in personal and social situations and larger communities. Students will gain exposure and basic training using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. Students will identify wicked problems in Austin, Texas so that they can learn what the major problems are by actively listening as they interview people and communicate possible solutions.

<https://www.stedwards.edu/directory/employees/teri-lynn-varner>



## How To Talk So That People Will Listen?

Helen Ralston



Sandra  
Bodin-Lerner

She says "It'll be fun!"

I am not so sure.

Having spent years studying the theory and practise of Listening, I feel that I know something about it. However the question: 'How can I talk so that people will listen?' has always intrigued me. What do listeners like to hear? I am a member of the International Listening Association because I like to listen. I do not often like to talk. However I believe that I will improve my listening skills if I also develop the other ways in which I communicate.

In order to pursue these questions, I have been given the opportunity to work with new ILA Member, Public Speaking Coach and Communications Expert, Sandra Bodin-Lerner . She has an MA in Instructional Media and Technology from New York University. For 15 years, she has been an adjunct professor in the School of Communication, Media and Journalism at Kean University, Union, NJ where she was the first adjunct to be awarded the prestigious Quality First Initiative Grant to provide teacher in-service training. She launched Kean's first Listening course, which she has been invited to teach at Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ.

This new ILA member has been communicating with, and engaging audiences for over 25 years and she is willing to teach me about public speaking, online – from her office in New York to my home in rural England. I have always known that the ILA is full of talented people - I have benefitted from ILA expertise in business, in education, in research - however the opportunity to work with an executive coaching expert such as Sandra is a benefit of ILA membership that I had not expected. She works with a corporate groups, public officials, business leaders, educators, and young adults. Her methods are practical and can be immediately applied to all professional and personal situations.

From the beginning of our first session, I am beyond impressed with what she does. Her skills in questioning and coaching are outstanding. I can thoroughly recommend the work she does. If you want to know more, you can contact Sandra direct at [Sandra@be-compelling.com](mailto:Sandra@be-compelling.com) or at [www.be-compelling.com](http://www.be-compelling.com).

What a huge range of talent we have in the International Listening Association.



COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE IN A SUSTAINABLE WORLD CONFERENCE:

Melissa Beall

August 2 - 5, 2016  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Canada

This event has gathered global attention from speakers and attendees alike. Communication and culture affect everyone therefore a pillar of the conference is to promote an awareness of communication and culture across the economy. Non-traditional (non-communication) disciplines such as Engineering, Transportation, Law, Medicine and Education have taken an interest in this event.

**August 2**

The conference will start at noon with the opening ceremonies consisting of a keynote speaker and a keynote panel of six. There will be a break for delicious comestibles then entertainment of North American Indigenous Dance and Drum. A reception will follow the entertainment.

**August 3**

Presentations begin and will continue through the day with two catered breaks to help keep you going. A selection of spousal tours will be available starting in the afternoon that can be undertaken on your own or as part of a group. You can registration for tours when you register for the conference. Maps and directions for intrepid adventurers will be available onsite. Onsite registration may be available for select tours.

**August 4**

There will be a full day of presentations. The evening will offer a Gala Dinner and entertainment.

Dinner will be a delicious multi-ethnic buffet in keeping with Winnipeg's famous Folklorama Festival. After dinner entertainment will consist of a mix of traditional multi-ethnic entertainment based on the Folklorama Festival.

**August 5**

There will be a half-day of presentations. After presentations, you can take a short walk to The Forks National Historic Site (dating from 4000 B.C.) for the afternoon with tour guides there. Alternatively parties might also be inclined to trace a path of their own and venture off on a more exclusive, personalized experience.

Students will have opportunities for Poster Sessions, as Presenters, Interdisciplinary Feedback Sessions from Content Experts on Research (mentoring, methodology, issues, networking, etc.).

There will be a Story Telling component of life stories and traditional / heritage Indigenous stories, Spousal / Partner tours, a Cultural Exchange tour and Much, Much More.

The diversity of this event will provide for considerable innovative and transferable information and thinking.

Culture influences everyone, and everyone is responsible for competent communication. Select organizations and companies view this intercultural communication conference as an excellent training and professional development opportunity for people at all levels. Opportunities in this conference are as diverse as culture itself.

Some of the many great speakers are:

Mr. Dave Courchene, Ojibwa Elder

Ms. Elizabeth May, MP and Leader of the Green Party of Canada

Ms. Patricia Ningewance, Ojibwa Heritage Story Teller

Rev. Dr. Glen Horst, Workshop, Improving Culture and Communication  
In Health Care

Dr. Chris Bond, Smoking Cessation Workshops

Dr. Melissa Beall, Intercultural Listening

Ms. Erica Jung, Workshop, Striving for Intercultural Competence

Mr. Dwight Harfield, Workshop, Listening and Profitability

## CONFERENCE FEES



Early Bird Fees (Ends May 30, 2016)	\$350.00 US
Regular Registration (after May 30, 2016)	\$400.00 US
Student Fees	\$200.00 US
Registration fees include GST	
Membership (optional)	
1 year	\$50.00 US
2 years	\$75.00 US
Gala Dinner and Entertainment	\$36.75 US
Dinner fee includes GST	
Tour to The Forks National Historic Site	N C

Trips to Lower Fort Garry can be paid for at that site. All other tours can be registered for and are payable directly through links on the WCANA web site Conference Tour page and payable in Canadian funds.

Fees are payable: online, by phone at 204 – 475 – 2448, or by mail (certified check please) or in person.

For more conference information please visit the WCANA

Website at: [www.uni.edu/chen/test](http://www.uni.edu/chen/test)

or Google: WCA North America UNI

or

Facebook: World Communication Association NA

### For more information contact:

Dwight Harfield: 204 – 475 – 2448

Email: [info@listeningolutions.net](mailto:info@listeningolutions.net)

Dr. Melissa Beall at 319-273-2992

Email: [Melissa.Beall@uni.edu](mailto:Melissa.Beall@uni.edu)

Education Committee, Melissa L. Beall, chair

We have tentatively set up an education pre-conference for Wednesday, June 7, 2017 the day before the 2017 ILA convention. This will be an afternoon and evening event and will be open to 25 registrants. Estimated cost is \$100.00 to cover room and refreshments.

There will be two, two-hour blocks followed by dinner on one's own, and then a final two-hour session after dinner. If you are interested in working on this pre-conference, or wish to present, we welcome your input even if you are not a member of the education committee. If you are not yet a member of the education committee, we welcome your participation. One need not necessarily be a member of the education committee to be a presenter, facilitator, or moderator.

Also, we seek a vice-chair of the education committee who will become chair after the 2017 convention. If you are interested in doing this important work, please contact both Melissa Beall ([Melissa.beall@uni.edu](mailto:Melissa.beall@uni.edu)) and Kent Zimmerman ([listeningprof@gmail.com](mailto:listeningprof@gmail.com)).

There are exciting possibilities for enhancing the teaching of listening at all levels. New ideas and new energy are needed! Will you step up to take on this important charge?

Contact Melissa with any questions: [Melissa.beall@uni.edu](mailto:Melissa.beall@uni.edu) or phone 1-319-273-2992.



Elected 2014-18	1--President (3rd year of 4 year term)	<a href="#">Kent Zimmerman</a>
Elected 2015-19	2--1 <sup>st</sup> VP (2nd year of 4 year term)	<a href="#">Charles Veenstra</a>
Elected 2016-20	3--1 <sup>st</sup> VP Elect (1st year of 4 year term)	<a href="#">Helen Ralston</a>
Elected 2013; 2015; 2015-17	4--Secretary	<a href="#">Kae Van Engen</a>
Elected 2013; 2015; 2015-17	5--MAL, PR	<a href="#">Michael Z Murphy</a>
Elected 2013-15; 2015-17 + Previous 2 year term as secretary	6--MAL, Global	<a href="#">Michelle Pence</a>
Elected 2016-18	7--2 <sup>nd</sup> VP Membership	<a href="#">John Backman</a>
Elected 2016-18	8--MAL Special Projects (2 year term)	<a href="#">Sheila Bentley</a>
Elected 2016-18	9--Student Member (2 year term)	Vacant
Elected 2013-17	10--Immediate Past President (4th year of 4 year term)	<a href="#">Philip C. Tirpak</a>
Appointed 2007	Executive Director (non voting) (no term)	<a href="#">Nanette Johnson-Curiskis</a>
Appointed 2011-14; 2014-17	IJL Editor (non voting, ex-officio) (3 year term; 4th year as mentor)	<a href="#">Margarete Imhof</a>
Appointed 2013-2016; 2016-19	Listening Post Editor (non voting, ex-officio) (3 year term; 4th year as mentor)	<a href="#">Gayle Pohl</a>
Hired 2014-17	Web Editor (non voting, ex-officio) (3 year term; 4th year as mentor)	<a href="#">Beth Montgomery</a>
Appointed 2012-2015; 2015-2018	Listening Education Editor (non voting, ex-officio) (3 year term; 4th year as mentor)	<a href="#">Erica Lamm</a>

