

KPC October Newsletter

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A Letter From The President

OCTOBER 14



A story ran in my local newspaper last month about a way to make students better writers. The story included worrisome statistics.

The story focused on American 8th and 12th grade students. A national test in 2011 showed three-fourths of them lacked writing proficiency. Only 3 percent were advanced writers.

The article described a method of teaching writing by giving students a chance to practice discerning sentences from a sentence fragments. When the simple sentence was mastered, then students would be allowed to construct sentences with “but” and “because” that would introduce complex sentences and complex ideas that compared and contrasted ideas.

Next come paragraphs that next lead to essays. The premise is that poorly constructed sentences produce poorly constructed essays while correctly constructed sentences build to good writing. That makes sense.

Apparently something has gone amiss since some of us were in school. I recall we did start with simple sentences and build.

Thank goodness someone has distilled a method to bring back sentence structure for good writing. The news story, special to the Washington Post and reprinted in my newspaper, was written by Natalie Wexler, chair of the board of trustees for the Writing Revolution.

I looked up the website for the Writing Revolution and learned it is a not-for-profit group founded by Judith C. Hochman, Ed.D. Her method targets students from underserved school districts with a plan to help them figure out how to think clearly and to record that clear thinking in their writing.

The website identifies tools the Writing Revolution uses for better writing:

- Sentence strategies to build complexity and clarity
- Outlines to develop well-structured summaries, paragraphs, expository and argumentative essays, and research papers
- Revisions to enhance unity and coherence.

The website further explains: “As students learn how to use these tools, their writing improves together with their ability to think analytically. Students begin to use writing and classroom discussion to review concepts they’ve learned, construct new knowledge, and generate new networks of understanding.”

Read again that great description above. It describes what we want from writing — the ability to convey our understanding of concepts and generate new networks of understanding. Isn’t that why we gravitated to a profession in communications?

As I read the news story and explored the website, I could feel the passion of this group of educators. They want to pass along to another generation the power of words.

We have a band of dedicated professionals who also care about clear communications. What can our group do to further the cause of the power of words? What are your ideas for KPC professional development? Share you ideas with me at carol.hockersmith@gmail.com.

Thank You Note



Carol -

Please extend my sincere
thank you to your Kansas
Professional Communicators for
their support these past two
years. You have some great
members and I look forward
to the conference next

to the NFPW conf
year. Best wishes
Jeri E. Presman
NFPW president
2013-2015

National Winners

Several Kansans received awards at the National Federation of Press Women conference in Alaska last month. Congratulations, everyone!

Angela Gaughan, Third, Videos for website - Nonprofit, government, or educational

Debbie Elmore, First, Feature story - Print-based newspaper

Gayle Donaldson, Third, Public service

Gwendolynne Larson, First, Reports (including, but not limited to, annual reports)

Jeffrey Ann Goudie, Third, Speciality articles - Reviews (any subject, personal opinion must be expressed)

Jennifer Marie Latzke, Second, Speciality articles - Agriculture, Agribusiness, Aquaculture

Jennifer Marie Latzke, Third, Single photograph - News or feature photo

Kaci Davignon, HM, Single page, section, or supplement regularly edited by entrant - Magazina, newsletter, or other non-newspaper publication

Mark Vierthaler, HM, Single page, section, or supplement regularly edited by entrant - Magazina, newsletter, or other non-newspaper publication

Mark Vierthaler, Second, Social Media Campaign - Corporate or for-profit

Monica Springer, HM, Single page, section, or supplement regularly edited by entrant - Magazine, newsletter, or other non-newspaper publication

Monica Springer, Second, Social Media Campaign - Corporate or for-profit

Monica Springer, First, Videos for website - Corporate or for-profit

MORE NEWS FROM KPC

Membership News

From Gwen Larson:

Membership renewal notices will be going out in November. It's especially important to renew before the end of 2015. NFPW is moving to a new management company Jan. 1, and no one wants to have membership renewals caught in the changeover.

To follow the cost of living adjustment recommended in our bylaws, the NFPW membership dues for active members will increase \$2 to \$79 in 2016. Cost for a retiree membership is \$30 and full-time student membership is \$25. Learn more at: <http://www.nfpw.org/join.php>.

Watch your email for your renewal notice, and don't delay.

Contest Information

From Gwen Larson:

The Communications Contest for 2016 should be live around Nov. 1, which means you can start finding your entries and pulling everything together before the end of the year. Because the contest is electronic, you can start putting your entries together, but not check out with payment until you're ready, meaning you can change your mind if you create something even better in November or December.

This year, there's a new incentive to get your entries completed on time — an early bird discount that will save \$25. Here are



Planning the 2016 NFPW conference

From Gwen Larson:

Thanks to the excitement of Beth Hershberger (via video) and Jill Miller sharing their love of Wichita and exciting program topics, and Gwen Larson showing that Kansas is more than flat landscapes filled with wheat fields. Those who were in Alaska for the conference are excited to come to Wichita in 2016.

Now, we need YOUR help!

Acquiring sponsorships is key to the conference making money for National Federation of Press Women. The conference is one of the greatest income generators for the group.

Please send any and all ideas of companies or businesses that we can solicit for assistance. It doesn't have to be your boss. It could be someone you know. In Alaska, for instance, Diane Walters' neighbor is marketing manager for the company they booked for a Prince William Sound cruise to see the glaciers.

the key dates:

Nov. 1 — Tentative date to open contest

Jan. 18 — Early bird deadline (saves \$25)

Feb. 1 — Last day to take entries with additional \$25 charge

Help Wanted

Kansas Professional Communicators continues to search for a new webmaster to refresh our website and keep it up to date. If interested, contact President Carol Hockersmith, carol.hockersmith@gmail.com.

Like the 2016 NFPW Conference on Facebook!

We have a Facebook page for the 2016 NFPW conference, which will be in Wichita. [Here's the link to the Facebook page!](#)

Our program tracks for 2015 include:

- On Your Own — For solopreneurs, a career is more than completing assignments. It includes taxes, finances and contracts; great self-promotion; and getting published (or publishing yourself)
- Hone Your Skills — Guaranteed takeaways include shooting video with your cell phone, nonverbal communication and on-camera interview tips and techniques.
- First Amendment — Key issues include free speech in the workplace, sunshine laws and citizen journalists

Also on tap — Leadership, agrijournalism and marketing and honoring our NFPW founders

If you know of a company, business (large or small) or association who would like to sponsor a workshop or meal, please send information to Gwen Larson, gazettegl@yahoo.com, or Becky Funke, rfunke3@cox.net.

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