Fall Conference Wrap-up
Colors Ablaze And Languages Abuzz

by Mary Ann Stadtler-Chester

What were nearly 900 people doing on a recent beautiful fall weekend in New England? -advo
cating for foreign language study; speaking French, Spanish, German, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, and Latin; win-
nig raffles; sharing teaching ideas; and … enjoying the beautiful New England fall foliage. Where were all these exciting things happening? At MaFLA’s 46th Annual Fall Conference, at the Sturbridge Host Hotel in Sturbridge, MA, of course. On October 17-19, almost 900 FL educators from MA and neighboring states participated in 20 workshops and attended more than 90 ses-
tions. They came away energized, full of new ideas, both low tech and high tech, to implement in their classrooms. They were “collaborating to promote languages with a collective voice,” bearing out the theme chosen by Co-Chairs Nicole Sherf and Cher- rie Baggs for this year’s conference.

Helena Curtain, Professor Emerita at the University of Wisconsin and co-author of Languages and Children: Making the Match, also bore out the conference theme in her interactive keynote address, Head, Hand and Heart: Supporting the Collective Voice of Language Teachers. Curtain said that greater language use in the classroom, by students and teachers, leads to greater linguistic achievement. Teachers should strive to use only the target language in teaching. “Using L1 to teach another lan-
guage is like teaching a kid to swim without water,” she told an enthusiastic audience. Curtain continued to encourage the use of only the target language in the classroom in her engaging Saturday morning session entitled Staying in the Target Language: Comprehensible Input and Beyond.

MaFLA was pleased to welcome Marty Abbott, the ACTFL Executive Director, to the conference. Abbott was on hand at the ACTFL table in the Exhibit Hall to answer educators’ questions, and she gave an en-
lightening session on Assessment to Inform Instruction on Friday afternoon in which she explained ACTFL guidelines in the as-
essment of performance.

Other conference highlights included the two James Powers Endowed Workshops given by Therese Caccavale, Literacy: The Key to Second Language Development and, by Lisa Lilley, Taking on the Tough Guys: Homework, Feedback, and Assessment. James R. Powers Jr., one of the founders of MaFLA, bequeathed funds to the organization to be used for sessions on theory and research.

MaFLA boasted a TOY trio – three Teachers of the Year – who shared their expertise in outstanding workshops and ses-
tions. Kathleen Turner, 2013 MA TOY, con-
ducted an interactive workshop, Tips from the TOY, on engaging students in language study. Margarita Dempsey, 2013 NECTFL TOY, led a session on Friday afternoon ent-
titled The All-Important 5th C: Communities. She shared concrete ideas on how to extend the language classroom into the community. Lisa Lilley, 2010 ACTFL TOY, gave the James Powers Endowed Workshop mentioned above and shared innovative tech-
niques for encouraging language production in another workshop, A Night at the Museum and More, on Saturday morning.

Between sessions and workshops, con-
ference participants made their way to the Exhibit Hall to browse through the latest textbooks, travel tours, teaching materials, resources, and technology presented by 50 exhibitors, and to try their luck at winning exciting raffle prizes.

A visit to the Exhibit Hall was not com-
plete without a stop at MaFLA’s Advocacy Booth where attendees gathered resources to advocate for foreign language programs and signed a petition to keep funding for language programs from being cut. They were rewarded with a MaFLA water bottle for their efforts. Also on display were the winning posters made by burgeoning lan-
guage students in MA.

Students were on hand Friday night exhibiting other talents – the Woodard Warner Trio from South Hadley High School provided music for the Conference Co-Chairs’ Reception where a light supper was enjoyed by all. Anyone eavesdropping at the door would have thought he/she had stumbled upon the Tower of Babel: French and Spanish, Arabic and Chinese, German and Latin, Italian and English could be heard between the beats of the band.

Languages could also be heard coming from the early birds at the Saturday morn-
ing Immersion Breakfast as they exchanged teaching ideas, travel experiences, and con-
tact information in order to continue their conversations.

The conference came to a close with the Business and Awards Luncheon on Saturday where departing Board members were thanked, new Board members were welcomed, retirees were honored, and teacher and student award winners were recognized.

Participants spilled back out into the beautiful fall colors from whence they had come, happy and energized, replete with resources and ideas, prizes and purchases, looking forward already to the 47th Conference next year!
The MaFLA Newsletter

The MaFLA Newsletter is the official publication of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. It is published four times per year - Winter, Spring, Back To School, and End of Year. Subscription is available through membership in the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. MaFLA welcomes short articles, anecdotes, brief reviews of books and other teaching materials, and other items of interest to members of the profession.

The opinions expressed by the authors of articles published in this newsletter are their own and are not necessarily shared or endorsed by MaFLA or its Board of Directors.

Deadlines are:

Winter - January 5  Back to School - August 5
Spring - March 5  End of Year - November 5

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in MaFLA is open to anyone interested in the learning and teaching of languages. The basic membership runs one year from date of inception. There are four categories of membership - Individual, Student, Retired, and First-Year Teachers.

Individual memberships:
$45.00 for 1 year
$120.00 for 3 years
$25.00 for 1 year (new to profession teacher in first year)

Retired memberships: $25.00 per year
Student memberships: $15.00 per year

For more info and/or a membership application packet, contact:
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Notification to Members of Membership Category Changes:

In order to streamline its operation, the Board voted at its September 25, 2013 meeting to eliminate the category of two-year membership. Two-year memberships will be honored through their expiration dates but are no longer an option.

The member categories 1 and 3 will remain in effect:
Member 1 = a one-year membership for $45
Member 3 = a three-year membership for $120

Please notice that membership dues remain the same without an increase; MaFLA has worked diligently and prudently on your behalf to preserve its price structures for your benefit.

Please help us maintain the dues at this rate by honoring your dues renewal notice! Thanks so much!

With warmest wishes for a wonderful 2014,
Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, Membership Coordinator
Questions: Email Madelyn at membership@mafla.org.
Taking on the Tough Guys
Lisa Lilley

Where’s Fonzie? I was expecting Arthur Fonzarelli to be present at this year’s 46th Annual MaFLA Conference workshop entitled “Taking on the Tough Guys: Homework, Feedback and Assessment.” After all, wasn’t the Fonz a tough guy and didn’t he take them on too? Instead, I found a room packed with a diverse group of foreign language educators, and Lisa Lilley, who was prepared to present one of the two James Powers Endowed Workshops, dedicated to “Theory and Research.”

Lisa Lilley is the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program Coordinator for Springfield, MO Public Schools, a National Board Certified Teacher and the 2010 ACTFL National Language Teacher of the Year. She is President of the Foreign Language Association of Missouri and serves on the Board of the Central States Conference. Lisa is also a Spanish teacher and has taught for twenty years. She is a renowned presenter at foreign language conferences.

As Lisa began the workshop, she personified the three tough guys on a PowerPoint slide. Yes, they did look tough, with attitude, but like the Fonz, they were also good guys. During the workshop we reflected and discussed these tough guys: homework, feedback and assessment.

This workshop was very interactive and participatory as Lisa asked us thought provoking questions about the tough guys. Throughout the workshop, participants shared their ideas with others in the room. For example, she asked us to ponder, which tough guy is the toughest and why? How did homework impact us as learners? What are the reasons teachers give homework? We shared our answers with people that were sitting near us as well as with the entire group. You could tell we were teachers because we were not 100 percent convinced that homework did not have a positive purpose. After all, don’t good homework assignments help students practice and internalize what we teach so that they can become more proficient?

We also saw a YouTube clip of an Alphie Kohn presentation called “Are Kids Like Vending Machines?” Unlike Fonzi’s magical ability of hitting the vending machine and having a soda come out, we cannot expect to put in assignments and get learning from kids. Proficient teachers don’t do that. They know that there is more to learning than feeding kids information and having them memorize it and repeating it out loud. The magical power of learning is when it is meaningful, purposeful and comes from motivation.

Lisa also presented the view of Robert Marzano in Classroom Instruction that Works.

Four important points in regards to effective homework are:

- Homework assignments should not be given simply as a matter of routine.
- Students need to understand the purpose of the homework.
- The purpose of the homework should be to enhance the essential learning goals.
- Homework assignments should be appropriate for the learning goals being addressed.

Psychologists say that attitudes are a major component of predicting outcomes. This is the reason that people like Alphie Kohn don’t believe in rewards or homework. My parents had not heard of anyone like Alphie Kohn when I was growing up, and they told us that our books and our homework were our friends. I think they assumed that the homework was based on Marzano’s principles. They hadn’t heard of Robert Marzano but they knew that the San Marzano tomatoes were the best for sauce.

The second “tough guy” we discussed was feedback. When asked about feedback, it was clear that we all felt there was not enough time to give our students the feedback we would like. Giving valuable feedback is labor intensive. Lisa mentioned that Sadler has pointed out that for feedback to be effective, students need:

- An understanding of the goal.
- Evidence about their present position in relation to the goal.
- Guidance on how to close the gap.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines should be referenced and are very useful in showing progress of different levels of learners. Lisa showed us a “Proficiency Wall Timeline” which shows students where they are and where they are going in respect to proficiency. The timeline is based on the ACTFL Guidelines, but shows the process of learning the language in a visual and linear form as opposed to in a rubric, in bullets or in a narrative. Students can see and understand the process of proficiency as well as where they are in this process. This is good for parents too so that they can see that there are different levels of proficiency and that learning a language takes time. By looking at it and reflecting, students can make “I can…” statements. This allows them to see where they are and where they are going on the proficiency timeline. Check out the Proficiency Wall Timeline at creativelanguageclass.wordpress.com and the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines at actfl-proficiencyguidelines2012.org.

If we want our feedback to be effective, then we should provide opportunities for students to reflect on their language use and try to correct their errors. Remember to give wait time to allow them to correct their own errors. The students should feel as though they can make mistakes and fix them. When we try something new we can...
have three outcomes: success, fail well and fail poorly. In Italian we say, “sbagliando s’impara” “Making mistakes, we learn”. How do you say that in your target language? So often we celebrate the successes, and forget about what it took to get there. There are many successful people who failed before being successful. These people failed well and then succeeded. Ask Michael Jordan or Pedroia. I’m sure you could name others.

Lisa Lilley explained that our feedback is more effective if it is evaluative as opposed to being descriptive. An object such as the gold star or words such as “nice handwriting” and “very neat” represent descriptive feedback. Who doesn’t like descriptive feedback? Alphie Kohn doesn’t. He would probably say that descriptive feedback is a type of reward and rewards don’t work for motivating. “Evaluative feedback gives students prompts and motivates them because it makes them want to go further in their work. Using the conditional when commenting, will allow students to reflect and continue to grow.

For example, “I like how you did this; now how could you add to that in the next line or paragraph?” By reading this, students will reflect and do more; thus moving along on the proficiency scale. Another site to check out is assessment.tki.org.nz/content/download/.../Effective+feedback.ppt

How can we give good feedback when we have a heavy teaching load and school responsibilities? Some examples of ways to do this are:

- Feedback Stations- Students meet with the teacher in small groups for face-to-face discussion of a work in progress.
- Student Generated Feedback-Language Facilitator -- Train students to be “experts” and to look at one or two items with peers.

The third “tough guy” is Grading. In this section we discussed the importance of the grade reflecting proficiency and what the student can do. We discussed types of items we include in the grade that do not represent what the student can do. (extra credit, pretty projects with little language production, homework, giving a zero etc.)

This part of the workshop had us thinking about our own grading policies. Do they reflect what the student can do? Do they motivate and encourage the students or do they discourage and turn off the student? (Think about that zero.)

Like the Fonz those tough guys aren’t so tough and we can make them be part of our team. I can see Fonzie now. He is giving a thumbs up and saying “Aaay, Homework, Feedback and Assessment are not too cool for school.”

Submitted by Anna Tirone

2013 Fall Conference Review

Touching A Rock Star
Paula Patrick

Have you ever touched a “Rock Star”? I felt like I did, when I met Paula Patrick at the 6-Hour Pre-Conference Workshop, which she presented at this year’s 46th Annual MaFLA Conference. Before the session even began, participants approached her and asked if she would sign the book, Keys to the Classroom, and made comments stating that the book was very useful to them. One person called it her “bible”. Another said, “I love this book, it’s simple and essential.”

Paula Patrick has a great deal of experience, both as a teacher of foreign languages, when she taught German for 22 years, and as a K-12 Foreign Language Coordinator for Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia, for nine years, where she supported over 550 teachers and eleven languages. That certainly fits in with our theme of “Collaboration” and here is more proof that teaching keeps us young. Either that, or Paula is another one in the profession that started when she was twelve. She is now a consultant with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and continues to advocate for the teaching of foreign languages in our schools as well as delivers training sessions in the field.

The workshop was entitled, Planning for Effective Teaching in Today’s World Language Classroom. Even though the book is a type of manual for new teachers, it offers many topics and points that experienced teachers would appreciate revisiting. This workshop was definitely designed for all teachers: new, veteran, mentors and supervisors. The participants in this workshop did indeed come with different backgrounds and experiences, from never having taught to supervisors.
and veteran teachers. In addition the participants were from all levels, elementary through high school. Paula shared many of her own experiences with us and helped fill our professional toolboxes.

Our Rock Star’s presentation was in concert with all the hot topics teachers are charged with today and which are reflected in the new teacher evaluation tool (communication, planning, instruction, assessment, evaluation etc). One participant commented that for teachers who are new to the field, this evaluation is all they know so they understand the connections and that perhaps the more experienced teachers are not as comfortable with it and therefore, this workshop could help them too.

This workshop was very informative, collaborative and packed with important information for everyone. The participants worked in paired activities to discuss essential topics and then shared their findings with the group. In addition, Paula personalized her presentation. At one point she explained that we all have growing moments as teachers and sometimes a huge growing moment comes when we are out of our comfort zones. For example, when she took sign language with a teacher who was deaf, she found that the teacher was signing and not giving enough time to process and practice the language. This made her look at her own teaching and say it’s not enough to model it; we must give the students time to practice it, use it, problem solve and even make errors so that they can polish and refine their language skills. It takes time, practice and patience to learn a new language and become proficient.

Another item Paula talked about was setting boundaries and managing the class. This is a topic that interests new teachers as much as veteran teachers. The key is to give and get respect. Paula suggested:

- Posting rules and not to have too many of them.
- Don’t break your own rules - She gave the example of a veteran teacher who doesn’t get respect, but is late, drinks and eats in the classroom, but doesn’t allow students to do this.
- Don’t take time away from the class to address someone who disrupts it; when you stop the class and take away the learning time of other students, it is a lack of respect for them.
- Dress for success – we model behavior with our body language and attire. If students think you run a loose ship, they will behave this way.
- Get feedback when checking homework and mold your instruction from it.
- Be honest.
- Avoid sarcasm – Some teachers might think this is relationship building, but it’s not and it can be hurtful and will work against you.
- Be consistent and only give consequences if you know you can follow through with them. (If you say it, do it.)
- Instructional tips
- Post your agenda
- Have a plan and even a plan B in case the original plan is not doable.
- Correct errors by repeating the answer correctly so that we don’t fossilize errors. Paula had us think to when a baby is talking in the mother tongue and makes a grammatical error. Instead of repeating the error, we say it correctly.
- Use every minute of class time and plan with the end in mind.
- Assign relevant homework that is engaging and reinforces necessary skills. Give choices if possible and be able to explain why you assigned the homework. It is helpful to have the assignments in context. Students need to see the big picture and why they are learning something.
- Have clear expectations: Show the students an example of what you want them to do and how you want it done. They need to know exactly what you expect from them or you will get different quality work. Paula gave the example of a family tree. If you just say bring in a family tree, you will get many qualities of work and everyone will think his is great. Providing a rubric is always helpful. (This is exactly what is done on the AP exam where we show the students and model it.)
- A part of the workshop was dedicated to Backward Design, planning and designing units of instruction and assessments.
- Align expectations to appropriate level of control and aim for function at the next level.
- Have realistic expectations and don’t penalize students for errors if producing language at the next level.
- Spiral and recycle vocabulary.
- Address the degree of control for language structures for each language.
- Ensure that the expectations match the students’ cognitive abilities and age.
- Assess only what has been taught and have assessments match instruction.
- Vary activities; the length of the activity and the number of activities should match the length of the class as well as be age appropriate. We shouldn’t spend too much time on one activity. She said she once observed a warm up activity that lasted 45 minutes; that was too long for a warm up activity.

She explained that some concepts require a long time to control and we can teach them for years before the students reach the next level of using the language outside the learned phrases.
In addition to the assessments and lessons, Paula talked about the different levels of language learners from Novice to Intermediate to Advanced. We want to push our students to the next level and stretch their abilities. At the novice level, they can make lists if we ask them. For example, we can ask, “What kind of foods do you like?” and they can make a list of foods they like. In aiming for function at the next level, we can ask them to create more language by asking them to describe their school cafeteria or how they spend their lunch hour. Asking them to describe instead of giving us lists helps to aim for function at the next level. We don’t want the students to feel like they can only work with memorized material.

There was a time when we talked about the four language skills and the Five Cs. Today we also talk about the three modes of communication which we need to address and activate:

- Interpretive- reading and listening (song, advertisement, poem)
- Interpersonal- speaking and listening (interaction and discussion)
- Presentational – writing and speaking( create a poster, song, comic strip)

As the students work together on these skills, we need to embed culture, products, practice and perspectives. Students should be able to understand and express “why.”

Throughout the workshop Paula Patrick discussed best practices in foreign language teaching. She recommended using authentic material, even in level one. She mentioned that a good resource is inviting native speakers to interact with the students.

In addition to instruction, Paula talked about performance-based assessments and formative assessments as a way for students and teachers to gain insight for improvement.

It was heartening to see that ACTFL has shown how our foreign language standards are aligned to the Common Core and 21st Century skills and that we are actually ahead since we already had standards before the Common Core was on the radar. It is clear that foreign language teachers are on the cutting edge and that we support and reinforce the English Language Arts Common Core Standards.

Submitted by Anna Tirone

iPad Featured Workshop
Renee Dacey Daniela DeSousa

On Thursday, October 17, I had the privilege, and pleasure, of facilitating an extraordinary workshop at the MaFLA Fall Conference. i Pad Resources in the Foreign Language Classroom was an amazing and informative workshop presented by two extraordinary Spanish teachers from Burlington High School: Renee Dacey and Daniela DeSousa.

Within the first five minutes of the 4-hour workshop, the audience was “plugged-in,” “hooked-up,” and “online.” The presenters brought with them a plethora of energy to share their passion for Spanish and technology, even after putting in a full day of work! Their goal was to present to the teachers in the audience new apps and resources available on iPads that can enhance foreign language reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Burlington High School has adopted the use of iPads in all classes.

Renee and Daniela made all attendees send them their email addresses and from there they received, via Google docs, their agenda and helpful apps for the classroom. Two apps which really got the attention of the audience were Sphere and Arounder. When you cannot take your class to Madrid you can take Madrid to your class! These apps offer virtual tours of museums and historic sites, as well as landscapes and outdoor monuments. For example, from my chair I viewed “Las Minas” in El Prado de Madrid and The Eiffel Tower in Paris, and all without jet lag. Technology was brought to life and given reason for those of us not as fortunate as Burlington High School to ask our School Committees for these incredible learning tools in our classrooms.

¡Gracias a Renee y Daniela!
Submitted by Rochelle McFarland.

Moving Students Along The Proficiency Spectrum
Chantal Thompson

Chantal Thompson, a native of Brittany, France, and teaching professor of French at Brigham Young University in Utah, ACTFL Certified Tester and Trainer (in French and English) since 1986 and contributor to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, provided a phenomenal six-hour workshop providing participants with concrete ideas, tools and resources to move students along the proficiency spectrum.

Chantal focused the presentations on the premise that what matters most in today’s foreign language classrooms is not what students know about the language, but what they can DO with it. The workshop familiarized educators with assessment criteria of the ACTFL scale and walked us through processes that pinpoint proficiency levels within Novice, Intermediate to Advanced ranges.

In terms of instructional implications, Chantal walked participants through a series of steps that examined the strategies of integration of functions, content, accuracy and text type in course design and lesson planning. We spent time during the workshop discussing the balance between structured and creative practice and empowering students through pre-speaking activities that emphasized content and form.

Participants were reminded that proficiency does not mean perfection nor does it imply limitation of instruction to one level at a time. Teachers should consider that at different levels of proficiency different levels of control should be expected. Conceptual control focuses on form and accuracy, and
2013 Fall Conference Review

the objective is on ‘how it works’; partial control focuses on language use where a greater tolerance of inaccuracies should occur and the objective centers on use, recycling and expanding. Finally, full control comes with extensive experience with function in a variety of contexts and focuses on functional language use with correctness of form where the objective is full integration.

For practical classroom application, participants were motivated to reflect on the challenges of group work and were reminded that it can be problematic if not well managed. A number of strategies were shared such as tools to specifically define the task, develop pre-speaking activities, follow-up responsibilities, effective monitoring strategies and examples of meaningful follow-up.

I left this workshop with ideas for my classroom and my department and a more in-depth understanding of proficiency levels, how to better assess the different levels and how to facilitate movement between those levels. If you weren’t able to attend this workshop a great starting point is to revisit ACTFL’s website where the 2012 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are posted.

Submitted by Tiesa Graf

Cherchez la Femme!
Amale Bourhim

Amale Bourhim’s six-hour Thursday morning workshop gave a glimpse into the lives of women who have had an impact on French society through the ages. More than 20 women over the course of 1,000 years were featured, including many we know and some less well known characters. It’s often the men who are featured when we read about and study the past, so it was very refreshing to learn about important women as well. Aliénor d’Aquitaine, Jeanne d’Arc, Marie Curie, and Edith Piaf were a few who were featured. Marie Olympe Gouze, France’s first feminist, and Edith Cresson, France’s first woman Prime Minister, certainly make great role models for girls (and boys) studying French. It would be easy to include these women in your curriculum as short bits of trivia, or have students do more in-depth reports on these women. Bravo to Amale for sharing the stories of these strong and brave women!

Submitted by Valerie Kerxhalli.

Notre-Dame de Paris:
le spectacle réanimé!

Jonathan Shee

Young people love music so what better way to engage them than by teaching a unit on the rock opera Notre-Dame de Paris. Jon’s passionate presentation, full of ideas and examples, inspired participants to include this well-loved story using a novel approach into their curriculum. His students’ enthusiasm and success demonstrate the value this type of unit can bring to your classroom. Kudos to Jonathan!

Submitted by Valerie Kerxhalli

Focus: Higher-Order Thinking In FL Class

Chantal Thompson
Engages And Challenges Us!

On Friday morning, Chantal Thompson presented an extremely informative three-hour workshop on Higher Order Learning and Proficiency.

At the beginning of her session she talked about activities such as repeating and memorizing which are often common activities in second language classrooms but at the same time are associated with lower order learning. On the other hand, she posits, the use of authentic input (reading, listening and viewing) can provide an entry point into the language while, at the same time, promoting higher order thinking.

She further elaborated on the authentic input theme with the concepts of bottom-up reading, which focuses on an isolated item, and top-down reading, which allows students to look at the whole picture. Ms. Thompson says that students need to read top down first then bottom up. If students are trained to listen for general meaning, they will develop confidence and the ability to understand.

Chantal also discussed authentic material as a great starting point to begin looking at grammar structure. As for edited texts, Ms. Thompson cited a study by Dolly Young in Foreign Language Annals that found that edited texts are more difficult than authentic because most of the most of the clues to help comprehend the text are edited out.

Chantal then discussed how to choose authentic text. She noted that the text chosen should correlate to the function. For example, if you are working on narration then choose an authentic text that narrates. She also noted that authentic texts need to have some degree of interest to the students. Also the degree of cultural knowledge required in a text should be considered. If the students have very little cultural understanding of the topic of the text, they will have a difficult task. She suggested that we keep our choices of authentic texts to universal topics.

She also reminded us that students can understand much more than they can produce. Novice level speakers, for example, can understand intermediate level reading.

Next, Ms. Thompson shared a hierarchy of tasks to help students with these higher order interpretive tasks (reading, listening, and viewing). She recommends pre-activities, global activities, specific information activities, linguistic activities and post activities. Pre-activities activate knowledge and anticipate content. They allow students to recall what they already know about a topic and help them to anticipate. Global activities are completed in class with the students. They help the students to consider the text in its entirety and to wean students away from
their tendency to translate word for word. It also is the time to verify students’ predictions about the text.

Specific information activities train the students to look for and find vs. look at or listen to and get lost. In these activities we should ask students to locate specific information and details as a real-life task. Activities might be to complete grids, charts, diagrams, etc.; recognize cognates; or select, match or identify specific information.

Next on the hierarchy are linguistic activities. These train students to use the known to learn the new, to infer meaning and/or structures and to focus on specific aspects of language.

Finally, Ms. Thompson recommends ending with post-activities. These relate reading, listening and/or viewing to the original purpose. These are a springboard for other student activities such as discussions, debating issues raised, re-telling the story in their own words, analyzing point of view or style, and sharing personal opinions.

This dynamic and informative workshop ended with all attendees working together with a text Ms. Thompson provided to develop each of these hierarchical activities for the text. Attendees shared their varied ideas, each focusing on different proficiency levels, and everyone left with lots of ideas for their classes. Ms. Thompson’s workshop certainly provided everyone with some excellent training for incorporating more challenging thinking activities into their classes.

Submitted by Ronie R. Webster

German @ MaFLA 2013

Teachers of German attending this year’s MaFLA Conference were inspired by a fascinating and informative series of sessions and a dynamic workshop.

Friday morning began with Detlef Gericke-Schönhagen’s compelling 3-Hour Workshop: Kurz und Gut Macht Schule II. Instructors were introduced to a series of award-winning short films designed for the classroom. Teachers of German at Goethe Institutes in San Francisco and Bangalore, India developed teaching materials available free of charge online to those using the films in class. All participants regularly use full-length films in class, but are hampered by time constraints in expanding their usage. Short films of high quality are more easily incorporated into instruction and offer a multitude of advantages. Usually just 15 minutes in length, very innovative, often animated, they are much less costly to produce than full-length films. Short films deal with one topic, often a serious one or inter-personal issues such as the film “Liebeskrank” (“Love Sick”), an animated short which silently and cleverly illustrates a variety of figures of speech relating to heart and head, i.e. “mit dem Herz in der Hand” and “Sie hat ihm den Kopf verdreht”. “Kurz und Gut Macht Schule II” is available from the Goethe-Institut-Boston.

Heidi Rex of the German Saturday School, Boston, gave a thoughtful and thought-provoking presentation Creative Writing for Advanced Middle and High Schoolers. She encourages her students to write by giving them 15 minutes to write freely without thinking about spelling, punctuation or grammar. Initial texts are not graded, but she encourages her students to give their work a form and write correctly in order to communicate effectively what they have to say. Many students enjoy expressing themselves by writing poetry, particularly when the words create a visual form, so called “konkrete Poesie”. Some of her most ardent writers are “characters,” who initially balked at their first assignments.

Heidi Rex

Picture This! Engaging Visual-Spatial Learners at All Proficiency Levels was a lively presentation by Gisela Hoecherl-Alden of Boston University. With STEM subjects in the forefront of education today, FL professors are adapting their language teaching techniques to the learning styles of Science, Tech, Engineering, and Math students. So how do engineers teach each other? By drawing or creating charts, by demonstrating. Instead of a linear presentation, teachers create a multisensory experience. Spatial categories are very important. STEM learners often need prep exercises as they can be overwhelmed by auditory texts. Hoecherl-Alden suggested multiple techniques for teaching STEM learners using pictures. Each student brainstorms questions and words for a picture or draws a picture based on another student’s description of a picture. Visual items can also be introduced one by one and then, be manipulated by the students, i.e. they put furniture into rooms in a house plan. The context is very important; activities change depending upon where you are. Images aid in prompting speech, so cartoons without texts are a very creative activity for STEM learners. Among the many sources for materials mentioned was: www.makebelievecomix.com

In Tailoring Culture and Society to Language Proficiency, Brigitte Buehler-Probst and Eva Kopf-Rideout of the Goethe Institut-Boston gave an excellent explanation of the GER (Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen – the Common European Frame of Reference) for evaluating language competency, a rubric similar to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Using classroom games, they demonstrated how at a variety of competency levels, German Traffic laws regarding cars and bicycles could be taught. Participants were actively involved in the games and had the opportunity to demonstrate how they would plan the lesson.

Maren Blanchard of the German Saturday School, Boston and Northeastern University offered a great tool for getting students speaking in Introducing Prezi to Your Language Classroom. Prezi is definitely a new and exciting form of presentation for language learning. Unlike Power Point, it’s not just slides (linear), but a more dynamic form, what Donna van Handel calls “A New Age flow chart.” Although not required, Blanchard encourages students to use Prezi for their final semester presentation about their hometowns (or music or food). Speaking is the number one goal for this assignment. They must speak in complete sentences and use compound tenses, but the Prezi images may
The students engage with their audience and speak without reading directly from the screen. Blanchard grades her students using the European Framework of Reference. She also shared many valuable tips for enhancing students’ learning, particularly those who are in the STEM fields.

In Sprachspiel: Language Play Through Drama, Lisa Parkes of Harvard University and graduate students, Arndt Luemers and Nicole Burgoyn, demonstrated - through a series of games and dramatic activities - her mantra that “students should always be performing in the classroom”. Attendees were actively involved in language games with groups of four tossing imaginary balls to each other while calling out alliterative names to the catchers, i.e. artige Arndt, clevere Carla, etc. In her Spring Semester course, Parkes uses creative and authentic interaction (Drama) leading to a product (Theater), which her students present when they compete each spring in the annual Deutsches Theaterfest at Mt. Holyoke College.

The creative language play connects to other disciplines, links language learning to one’s identity, and involves positive risk-taking. Putting on a hat or scarf or adopting a certain posture allows language-learners to explore other identities and possibilities. Some had the opportunity to wear masks, which required them to use their hands and bodies to communicate emotions, but also gave them “Maskenfreiheit”, the freedom to “become” a different person. Others practiced walking like a duck or tipsy.

Parkes also uses short film clips such as one scene of several people riding in a train compartment. She shows the clip without sound and allows groups of students to imagine the dialogue among the characters. Body language and facial expressions suggest what is being said. Prior to showing the film: Soul Kitchen by Fatih Akin, Parkes gives some students descriptions of the characters and has them act silently in character. During the presentation, others are writing down a description of what is happening. This scaffolding activity acquaints the students with the characters before viewing the film, enhancing student comprehension.

Ulrike Brisson of Worcester Polytechnic Institute presented a lively hands-on session: Vocabulary Learning With Mind, Body, and Heart. An overflow crowd of participants sought a solution to the eternal dilemma of language teachers: How do we help students learn vocabulary in more creative ways? Brisson has grappled with this question and offered some interesting ideas. After a brief discussion of ways in which the participants learned FL vocabulary themselves, she quickly moved to demonstrating some creative techniques by teaching the participants Dutch.

Group 1 practiced pronouncing a series of phrases in Dutch with varying emotions in front of a mirror. They then completed a “cloze” text, testing their ability to retain knowledge of the phrases. Group 2 was required to create a drawing of a story/mind map of a phrase in Dutch. Group 3 practiced repeatedly with flash cards and then, dropped them on the floor when they were confident that they knew them. Group 4 created a “memory” game with index cards to help them learn the words and tell a story.

In summary, each group shared their results and commented on the efficacy of their group’s method. In a final three-part activity, groups 1 and 4 garnered the most positive comments and attendees left with some creative ideas for teaching vocabulary to active teens or STEM students.

As German language learners become increasingly tech-savvy at the secondary level and STEM subjects become ever more important at the collegiate level, the ability to effectively teach tech-oriented and all students with active, engaged instruction is an imperative for German language instructors. German@MaFLA 2013 successfully met these needs.

Submitted by Kathleen Gallogly

Top Chef: New Trends In French Cuisine

Amale Bourhim

Everyone admires and appreciates French cuisine, and no French course is complete without introducing students to the wonders of French soupe à l’oignon and pâtisseries, so it was a real treat for us to learn about what’s current in French cooking (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage. Food viewing (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage. Food viewing (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage. Food viewing (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage. Food viewing (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage. Food viewing (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage. Food viewing (and a tease as our mouths watered seeing photos of delicious dishes). Attendees learned about regional specialties such as choucroute and petits farcis. Cooking TV shows are also quite popular. Masterchef, Un diner presque parfait, and Qui sera le prochain grand pâtissier? are a few which are quite popular. New trends such as molecular cooking which is half cooking, half chemistry class are also the rage.

Submitted by Valerie Kerxhalli

Eric Vincent Performs at AATF Session

The AATF session, which took place on Saturday before the Business and Awards Luncheon, began with a vote to ratify the slate of Officers and Directors for 2014. Re-elected as Officers are: Brian Thompson, President; Catherine Ritz, Vice-President; Johann Sadock, Secretary; and Joyce Beckwith, Treasurer. Janet Wohlers will continue as Contest Administrator and Carole LaPointe as Hospitality Chair. Directors re-elected are Beckie Bray, Jada Williams, Kathleen Turner and Corinne Etienne. Executive members are Magali Boutiot from the French Cultural Services in Boston and Laurence Gagnon from the Quebec Delegation, also in Boston. After the vote, member Olga Shaknovsky gave a brief report about the summer program which she attended at Cavilam in Vichy, France, thanks to a scholarship from AATF and the French Cultural Services. She encouraged attendees to apply for all scholarship opportunities.
President Brian Thompson introduced the singer/songwriter Eric Vincent who had arrived from Paris a few days before for his Fall concert series in New England and in New York. Vincent began by talking about his most recent world tour and paid homage to his friend and collaborator, Georges Moustaki, who passed away in May 2013, by singing Moustaki’s most famous song, “Le Métèque,” in both Greek and in French. There was not a dry eye in the room! Vincent continued by singing several of the songs on his most recent album and accompanying himself expertly on the guitar. With every selection, he gave an introduction and talked about the songwriting process. Vincent also invited all of the attendees to join him on his houseboat which is docked on the Seine river in Paris if they bring students to Paris during the summer or plan a trip for themselves. A visit to Vincent’s houseboat includes a gourmet dinner cooked by his wife Claudine, who was also present at the session, a wine-tasting and an excursion on the Seine. Session participants, many of whom know Vincent personally because he had given concerts at their schools, felt privileged to be a part of this special recital.

The Eastern MA Chapter of AATF was the proud sponsor of both the French Pre-Con workshop presented on Thursday by Amale Bourhim on “Cherchez La Femme,” and the Friday morning French Feature workshop, also given by Amale, on “Top Chef.” Amale is planning to return to the MaFLA Conference in 2014 where she will present a six-hour workshop on a retrospective of French Cinema and a three-hour workshop on French fashion. Stay tuned! Submitted by Joyce Beckwith, AATF New England Regional Rep.

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The Culture Connection: Linking Language, Learners and Life
Cherice Montgomery

While emphasizing the following basic but important questions: 1) What is culture? 2) Why is it important to embed culture in second language lessons? 3) How might teachers design opportuni-
2013 Fall Conference Review

...ties for students to experience and explore culture in meaningful ways that develop students’ proficiency in Spanish? 4) How might teachers guard against reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices when teaching culture? 5) How might teachers assist students in recognizing the diversity that exists within the target culture? Dr. Montgomery presented participants, in her 6-hr workshop, with a very detailed and varied agenda of goals and tasks to:

- explore online cultural resources and experiment with engaging tech tools which can be used to create meaningful student projects with culture at their core
- participate in and collaboratively create culturally-infused activities that develop the proficiency of beginning level learners
- use the rich cultural and linguistic resources that children’s literature provides to motivate communication in the classroom
- challenge teachers to explore and try various tools and technologies to enhance and enrich lessons

Teachers came out from this workshop not only reinvigorated and energized to challenge their students to new levels of learning while making sure that culture is embedded in all lessons, but also came out equipped with a 9-page packet of free technology websites to explore and incorporate into their lesson.

Submitted by Beatriz desLoges

Del batey al diamante: azúcar y béisbol en el Caribe
David Gómez

In this 3-hr workshop, the presenter took us through an amazing and fascinating visual journey which started back with the introduction of the sugar cane in the new world brought from the South Pacific many years before Columbus even discovered America. Mr. Gómez explained the historical, economic and cultural impact of the sugar cane and its sugar production in the Caribbean countries. Through history, literature, a poem by Nicolás Guillén, La Balada de los Dos Abuelos, songs such as Llegó la zafra by Celina Cruz, El carret-ero from Buena Vista Social Club, Tumba la caña by Celina y Reutilio and La zafra by Ricardo Ray y Bobby Cruz, and scenes from the movie Azúcar, and the documentary Rumbo a las grandes ligas, participants were able to understand the connection of the life and struggles of the slaves brought to work the sugar cane fields and its sugar factories in the Caribbean to the development of the baseball training camps for young boys in San Pedro de Macorís, the Dominican Republic baseball player producing capital of the world. Mr. Gómez complemented this terrific workshop with several strategies and activities which teachers can use to engage their students in the four linguistic skills while helping them to make comparisons between the sugar and baseball industries in the Dominican Republic. The workshop concluded with a great cultural partida de dominó.

Submitted by Beatriz desLoges

El Camino de Santiago
Jessica Clifford

The presenter showed how El Camino de Santiago in Spain has experienced a revival in the number of people who participate in this pilgrimage each year. Ms. Clifford presented on the origins of the camino which dates back to the Middle Ages; how the camino is today, and what the meaning is for each of the cultural symbols pertaining to it. She explained the kinds of things that one would need to walk the camino. She also presented some ideas for activities that teachers can do in the classroom, as well as some games and apps that are available on the Internet, which can be used to present this historical and cultural event to our students.

Submitted by Beatriz desLoges

Teaching Puerto Rico
Lillian Ramos

The presenter explained how the richly diverse culture of Puerto Rico is the result of a mixture of many different cultures that have blended together over the years. Ms. Ramos talked about the history of the island, the food, the music, the celebrations and traditions, which make Puerto Rican culture so rich. She showed a video clip on cooking plantains that teachers can use in the classroom, and shared some plantain chips with us. She also demonstrated some salsa dancing and shared other ideas for application to the classroom in a packet distributed to participants.

Submitted by Beatriz desLoges

Latin Strand

It seems like a monumental task to try to sum up the incredible Latin workshops and sessions that were held October 18 and 19 at the MaFLA Fall Conference. For some of us, it may have felt like learning a new language as minds were stretched with Game-Based Learning techniques used in creating a student-engaged classroom. The language of the iPad and its many useful apps spoke to everyone as we considered all the technology available in making the learning experience more interactive. Many brave attendees participated in the oral Latin presentations where basic but helpful ideas were shared on how oral Latin can be implemented easily into every classroom. Additionally, for the first time, a Conversational Latin Hour was held where many participants stretched themselves in oral skills. Many wonderful projects were also presented that connected us to topics of art, science, technology, engineering, math, writing and etymology...

After the conclusion of the annual CAM Fall Meeting we ‘travelled’ with Skye Shirley on a virtual tour of her time spent in Italy this summer as our Elaine G. Batting Award winner.

Our deepest thanks go to CAM who graciously supported the conference and workshop financially and to each presenter who so carefully worked to broaden our understanding of and inspire our passion for ancient Rome, its culture and language.

Gratias vobis agimus!

Submitted by Brenda Cook

Watch for our 2014. . .

. . . Awards and Scholarships

Coming in the

Winter Newsletter
2013 Fall Conference Review

21st Century Chinese: Collaboration For A Brighter Future

2013 MaFLA Conference sessions brought creativity and innovation into modern Chinese language classrooms from private and public schools, weekend heritage schools, total immersion programs and curriculum development of many publishers all over the New England area and across the United States of America. In total, seven academic sessions, including one three-hour workshop regarding the application of classroom games into advanced Chinese language proficiency led by Professor Mary-Ann Stadtler-Chester of Framingham State University, all demonstrated collaborative 21st Century global perspectives into contemporary Chinese teaching and learning from Pre-K to 16 classrooms and beyond.

Dr. Shan-Lee Liu leads discussion about digital media collaboration.

All the participants and volunteers at the 2013 MaFLA Conference made these marvelous sessions possible. The New England Association of Chinese Schools is one of the proud sponsors of the Friday night Conference Co-Chairs’ Reception. Their president, Mr. Shih-Yi Chen, was there at the conference Friday night and at the Saturday Business and Awards Luncheon providing invaluable support and future opportunity for collaboration. Dr. Yu-Wen Wang, the past president of New England Chinese Teachers’ Association, brought along members from all over the New England Area. Newly elected Director on the MaFLA Board of Directors ChinHuei Y eh and current Director Dr. Mary-Ann Stadtler-Chester were also present lending their expertise and hearty support on site. Chinese in Focus, Better Chinese, Cheng & Tsui, Association of Chinese Schools were among the many proud sponsors and exhibitors of MaFLA for the past couple years. We sincerely thank all the sponsors, volunteers and MaFLA members who made this year’s conference a wonderful success.

Looking ahead to the year of 2014, innovation, integration and collaboration in the modern Chinese language classrooms are an exciting trends. Here in MaFLA, as a big family, we welcome your continuous support, creative energy and global collaboration for many years to come!

Respectfully submitted by Shan-Lee Liu

Italian Strand

Great Success!!! What a wonderful way to recharge our batteries!! The Italian Strand at this year’s MaFLA Conference, sponsored in collaboration with the Massachusetts Italian Teachers Association (MITA), welcomed many old and new friends and colleagues from all over the state, and beyond, giving them an opportunity to meet and share experiences, best practices and common concerns.

Friday morning, at the three-hour workshop, Nicoletta Villa-Sella, returning to us from West Virginia, outlined a very detailed way to scaffold AP themes in our daily teaching in order to build a gradual and cohesive curriculum through four levels of instruction. The audience, made up of Italian, Spanish and French teachers, agreed that great teaching techniques that strengthen your students’ oral and written abilities must begin on the first day of language acquisition. All teachers, at all levels must introduce authentic, varied materials in order to develop all skills. Nicoletta, author of the most widely used workbook to ace the Italian AP exam and generous to a fault, walked us through a plethora of Internet sites, audio recordings, newspaper ar-

WS-16 Classroom Games to Advance Chinese Language Proficiency

Applying technology into learning Chinese language and culture through iPad and digital media to create e-portfolios and meaningful learning paths for students was evidenced from several session presenters including Chin Huei Yeh from Sherwood Middle School, Dr. Shan-Lee Liu of Boston Latin School and Esther Lee from Better Chinese. Traditional performance, classroom projects, Chinese raps, psychology and human development theories, Chinese art and craft, music and poetry all reflected the multi-dimensional depth and width of Chinese languages and cultures. Different global perspectives were demonstrated through the presentation of educators including Huifong Bao from the Academy of Pacific Rim Public School, Yanhong Li of Dover-Sherborn High School, Dr. Yu-Wen Wang and her colleague Yijie Wang from Needham High School. Educators from different school districts, colleges, universities, and publishers also joined in the focussed discussions.

Respectfully submitted by Shan-Lee Liu

2013 MaFLA Newsletter
2013 Fall Conference Review

Heather Arrigo from Lexington High School gave a very informative presentation on using content language to review structure and encourage active use of the target language. Heather showed us how she uses up-to-date technology and true and tried activities to introduce and re-introduce vocabulary and structure and give her students the confidence to speak Italian without fear of failure. BRAVISSIMA Heather! In the coming months she will continue presenting to members of MITA at Lexington High School.

Our compliments go to Richard Strag- er and Amanda Minervini from Salem State University who presented to us for the first time and gave excellent examples on using films and short videos as text. Dan Indiciani and Stella Cocchiara shared games, music and active ways to enhance our classroom experiences. Our thanks go also to Maria Figueroa who, once again, warmed our hearts with her most delicious freshly baked scones...

In conclusion, once again the MaFLA Fall Conference offered teachers of Italian a unique opportunity to socialize, review new textbooks, share experiences, welcome new members to the profession and solidify long-standing friendships. All who attended walked away with free books, many, many ideas and a heart full of laughter and collegiality. A tutti, auguroni per un anno accademico pieno di successi, arrivaderci a presto e come sempre INSIEME PER L’ITALIANO!!

Submitted by Stella Cocchiara

Arabic Strand

MaFLA Teachers Enjoy an Arabic Strand for the Second Year!

Several area Arabic teachers presented and attended Arabic teaching sessions at MaFLA this year. Luluah Mustafa and Kheireddine Bekkai from Boston University discussed how they use Voice Thread and blogs in their Arabic classes to help students share information and demonstrate their oral and written skills. Students are able to create stories using these tools, allowing different students to contribute to various parts of the story. Luluah stressed that even though there are errors in the message, the message is clear. Students have created study groups using these tools and then kept them even after leaving the class. Through the use of the blogs, students can build a cultural portfolio, discussing important events in the target language countries and the world. This may be done in English or Arabic, allowing students to begin to understand the nuances of the variety of cultures in the Arabic-speaking world.

Steve Berbeco, from the Marhaba Project, discussed how administrators can begin Arabic programs in their schools. He reminded us that three critical elements for a successful program were necessary: current curriculum choices, an effective Arabic teacher who is licensed, and funding to sustain and support the program. He provided a variety of sources for these three elements.

Finally, Arabic teachers enjoyed a swap shop. Each teacher provided handouts of information to stimulate student thinking in the language while building their literacy skills. Culture was integrated as an essential element of each activity. We hope to continue this new language strand at MaFLA each year!

Submitted by Jane Rizzitano

Another Energizing Year

At The Advocacy Booth

The Advocacy Booth had a great year at the 2013 MaFLA Fall Conference Collaborating to Promote Languages with a Collective Voice. Our mission is to help people find a voice to advocate for foreign language education at the local, state and national level. Foreign language teachers need to collaborate together to make that voice louder and stronger.

At the Advocacy Booth, all sorts of information could be found! For Everyday Advocacy there were pamphlets for language weeks, open houses, language trips, and language clubs. These highlight opportunities to increase the profile of foreign language in a school community. It’s the things we do on an everyday basis that make a difference in how administration or a school committee views a language program. As we know in tough budgetary times this can come down to whether language programs are cut or defended. Visit the MaFLA website to find all of these pamphlets and start your local advocacy today!

The MaFLA Advocacy Booth supported ACTFL by encouraging members to take action. Computers were set up to send messages to Congress asking for the elimination of funding levels established by the Budget Control Act. It only took a few minutes and many members supported the initiative. Members that participated received a MaFLA water bottle or a MaFLA chapstick! It’s important for us to have our voice heard in Congress so we don’t lose critical funding for language education.
**Update:** At last year’s conference, the Advocacy Booth encouraged members to sign a petition to Commissioner Chester at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to reinstate a foreign language DESE committee supporting high expertise teaching. After the conference, the petition with 660 signatures was mailed to the Governor, the Board of Education and the Commissioner. Since then, foreign language committees have been supported by the DESE for the creation of model S.M.A.R.T. goals as well as DDMs specific to foreign languages. Please visit the DESE website for more details.

Every year, more and more people are remembering to bring in their postcard for the Advocacy Booth’s raffle. This was a record year for entries. We were glad to raffle off $100 itunes gift card to winner Alison Nelson. Congratulations Alison!

Lastly, the Advocacy Booth was decorated with the most beautiful posters done by the students of our members. We love taking pictures of our members in front of the posters to have published in their local newspapers. Thank you to all the submissions and remember to have your students submit artwork or an essay entry for next year’s contest! This year we also need to thank Kathleen Turner, Massachusetts 2013 Teacher of the Year. She volunteered much of her time at the Advocacy Booth and was happy to pose for pictures with our members. Thanks, Kathleen! And thanks to our members for another productive year at the Advocacy Booth!

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**Retirees Reception**

On Friday afternoon, October 18, during the Annual Fall Conference of MaFLA, a gala reception was given for its retired members. The event took place at the Presidential Suite of the Host Hotel Conference Center, Sturbridge. This event, which is held annually and by invitation only, is in honor of MaFLA’s retired and emeritus foreign language teachers, professors and administrators who held positions in public and private schools, colleges and universities in Massachusetts.

The afternoon social event was well attended, bringing together many old friends and colleagues bonding together and sharing a delightful and enjoyable afternoon. It was hosted by Dr. Phyllis Dragonas, former Director of Foreign Languages and Deputy Superintendent in Melrose.

*Submitted by Phyllis Dragonas*

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Dan Godden, Olga López, and Kaylee Hotchkiss, Spanish teachers at Palmer Public Schools, pose with Massachusetts 2013 Teacher of the Year Kathleen Turner at the MaFLA Annual Fall Conference.

*Submitted by Christina Toro and Amy Mihailidis*
Exhibits and Sponsorships

The Exhibit Hall at the 46th Annual MaFLA Conference was bright and welcoming with new colors, a new layout and several new vendors, exhibitors and language organizations. We switched out the burgundy and silver for burgundy and gold and the hall had a fresh new look and feel. Another addition to the Exhibit Hall was complimentary coffee from 7:00 AM-10:00 AM, thanks to the generosity of Vista Higher Learning. The Hall opened earlier at 7:00 AM to allow conference attendees time to visit with exhibitors before heading to their first sessions and workshops.

The Exhibit Hall was filled with 57 companies and organizations that provide foreign language teachers with excellent resources for classroom instruction, cultural enrichment, fundraising, educational travel and advocacy efforts. Though the current economy continues to be a challenge for many companies and budget cuts and organizational restructuring have become common, the MaFLA Exhibit Hall has remained full. It continues to be clear that many of our loyal exhibitors make MaFLA a priority in their conference schedules. We are fortunate that MaFLA has not followed the trend of lower conference attendance, as our number of attendees has remained strong. Exhibitors regularly comment on how much they look forward to the MaFLA conference because of the dedicated, thoughtful and creative language educators that they meet in the Exhibit Hall.

There were several new exhibitors with us this year: Equal Exchange, Global Youth Leadership Institute, Lingo Jingo and Mango Tree Artisans. We also had a second visit from a few companies as well as a return to the Exhibit Hall after a year or two away: Miraflores, Better Chinese, Chinese in Focus, Lectorum Publications and WorldStrides International. Also present in the Exhibit Hall were representatives and materials from AATF, AATSP, AATG, NECTFL, ACTFL, the French Cultural Services, the Spanish Embassy and the Goethe Institut-Boston. We are also very appreciative of the companies (20+) who have been consistently present in the MaFLA Exhibit Hall for many years.

A cornerstone of the MaFLA mission is advocacy for foreign language teaching and the Advocacy Booth doubled in size and had lots of resources, including MaFLA water bottles, MaFLA Chapstick, opportunities to learn about making language teaching more visible in our communities and a very impressive display of posters from the MaFLA poster contest along with quotes from the MaFLA essay contest. The Advocacy Booth was the headquarters for raffles this year and posted the individual raffle winner names. Kathleen Turner, French teacher at Sharon High School and the 2013 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, was at the booth throughout the conference. Kathleen will be joining the MaFLA Board of Directors in 2014.

MaFLA is also very grateful to those companies who sponsored various events and initiatives at the 46th Annual conference. Our Grand Sponsor was ACTFL; the Corporate Sponsors included Chester Technical Services and Salem State University; the Benefactors were Tandberg Educational and Vista Higher Learning; and our Patrons were Visit Canada, AATF Eastern Massachusetts and Chinese in Focus. We hope that you will continue to visit our exhibitors and sponsors virtually throughout the year. Links to all of the exhibitors are on the MaFLA Website (www.mafla.org) under the Events tab. Thank you for continuing to support the companies and organizations that provide great opportunities and resources to our membership.

The 46th Annual MaFLA Conference was my last conference as the Exhibitors and Sponsorship Coordinator. I have enjoyed working with exhibitors and attendees over the past seven years and I wish you all lots of success in the future as you continue your involvement with MaFLA and the new Coordinator, Pat Dipillo, who will take over the position beginning in 2014.

Submitted by Joshua Cabral, MaFLA Coordinator of Exhibits and Sponsorships
The 2013 MaFLA Conference Co-Chairs, Cherie Baggs and Nicole Sherf, were thrilled to welcome an estimated 300 conference attendees to the Conference Co-Chairs’ Reception on Friday evening, October 18, after the day’s sessions, workshops and other events had concluded. Energy was high as all enjoyed complimentary drinks, food and the lovely jazz of the Woodard/Warner Trio from South Hadley High School featuring Will Warner on piano, Benny Woodard on drums and Leo Szydlowski on bass. The room buzzed with happy chatter as attendees debriefed the conference, networked and unwound after a busy and productive day.

A testament to the collaborative co-chairing of the conference and the theme Collaborate to Promote Languages with a Collective Voice, the reception was co-sponsored by a variety of language organizations and our conference host hotel. We are so grateful for the generosity of ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), AATG (American Association of Teachers of German), AATSP (American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese), MITA (Massachusetts Italian Teachers Association), New England Association of Chinese Schools and the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center for making this reception possible through this collaborative co-sponsorship effort. The raffle prize for the evening seemed very appropriate -- a Host Hotel Weekend for two nights and guest passes to Sturbridge Village. We do hope that you will join us next year at the Friday evening Chair’s Reception!

The Co-Chairs would like to extend a special thank you to all who came to the conference and the reception. We have lived our theme of Collaborate to Promote Languages with a Collective Voice over the past year of planning, and we hope that our conference itinerary and nationally renowned presenters will help expand the message of our theme across the state in the year to come. It was truly a labor of love of languages, of teaching and of service to our discipline and we are grateful for your active participation.

“I loved the co-chairs’ reception. So much fun and a great opportunity to unwind and have a good time with colleagues.”
Comment from Conference Evaluations

2013 MaFLA Awards

Each year, MaFLA supports foreign language teachers and students with a variety of awards and scholarships. Please be sure to check the MaFLA website and/or winter newsletter for a full description of awards available as well as the criteria for these awards. Nominate your colleagues, staff and students. Below is a brief summary of our award winners.

MaFLA was honored to present the MaFLA Distinguished Service Award to Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin. Madelyn is a MaFLA Past President and our Membership Coordinator and continues to serve the profession in a variety of ways both locally and nationally. The Distinguished Service Award is presented for “exceptional and meritorious service to the foreign language profession in the Commonwealth… and acknowledges individuals who have, through their dedication and commitment to the field of foreign language education, made a significant contribution to the profession.”

The Friend of Foreign Languages Award recognizes outstanding leadership for the cause of foreign language education in someone outside the field of foreign languages…” Larry Webster was the recipient of this award. Larry has been supportive of MaFLA’s efforts for years in many ways behind the scenes.
Other award winners are:

**Helen G. Agbay Scholarship**  
Kessena Alcántara Goncalves  
West Middle School, Brockton

**Elaine G. Batting Memorial Scholarship**  
Skye Shirley  
Newton Country Day School, Newton

**AATSP Spanish Embassy Fellowship**  
Shannon O’Neill  
Wellesley High School

**Spanish Embassy Technology Scholarship**  
Melissa Candon  
Longmeadow High School

**ISE Language Matters Award**  
Spencer Wolf  
Newburyport High School

**MA German Educator of the Year Award**  
Spencer Wolf  
Newburyport High School

**Cemanahuac Award**  
Rachael Umbrianna  
Brockton High School

**CAM for Excellence in Teaching Award**  
Mary Lou Markarian  
Milton High School

**25 Years of Service**  
Nicole Sherf  
Salem State University

**Retirees**  
Joyce Beckwith  
Wilmington Public Schools

**Joanne DiGiandomenico**  
Natick Public Schools

**Linda Lannon**  
Dover-Sherborn Public Schools

**Yu-Lan Lin**  
Boston Public Schools

New Teachers Award winners were each awarded three years of MaFLA membership to familiarize them with MaFLA and encourage their participation in professional development. Awardees were:

**Kevin Fender**, French Teacher  
Glover Elementary School, Milton

**Rebecca Lewis**, Spanish Teacher  
Thornton W. Burgess Middle School, Hampden

**Meaghan McSherry**, Spanish Teacher  
Brimmer and May School, Newton

**Patricia Sánchez**, Spanish Teacher  
Quincy High School

**Jimmie Wooten**, Spanish Teacher  
South Middle School, Brockton

Two MaFLA Conference Registration Awards were provided to:

**Lydia Haile Fassett**  
Academy Hill School, Springfield

**Laurie Moore**  
Galvin Middle School, Canton

In addition, four Past Presidents’ Scholarships were awarded to students. Recipients were:

**Lindsay Chow**, Spanish Student  
Bishop Feehan High School  
Teacher: Joan Drobnis

**Jacquelyn Morrissey**, Chinese Student  
Brockton High School  
Teacher: Ren Li
Six students won contests that are run in March each year. For the Essay Contest, the Essay of the Year went to Nicole Ellis of Northbridge High School. Her teacher was Susan Thulin. The Middle School recipient was Daniel Bailey of Wood Hill Middle School in Andover. His teacher was Patricia Gregory. Poster Contest Poster of the Year winner was Shabina Wigneswaran of Burlington High School. The Middle School winner was Kailee Silver of the Academy Hill School and Elementary Winner was Grace Ostrander of the Academy Hill Elementary School. Sandra Flower was the teacher of both students. Finally, Emily Reilly of Triton Regional Middle School won the Podcast Contest. Her teacher was Shirley Faulkner.

MaFLA extends sincere congratulations to all recipients of awards and scholarships!

I am honored to present the MaFLA 2013 Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Madelyn G. Torchin. Madelyn has served on our Board for over ten years, first as a Director, then as an Officer and for the past three years as Membership Coordinator. As Conference Chair in 2007, she chose the theme: “Languages: Mirroring the World – Shaping the Future,” brought in national and international presenters and hosted over 900 attendees. As President in 2008, her focus was advocacy and organizational structure. As Membership Coordinator, she has updated and managed our database of present and past members, initiated a reciprocal policy and created a new brochure. Madelyn has also chaired our Needs and Policies Committee for five years, revising our By-Laws and serving as our Parliamentarian during meetings.

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If the Latin strand is flourishing at MaFLA, it is because of Madelyn’s tireless efforts to coordinate programs, recruit presenters and personally fund scholarships for beginning teachers. She received an “Excellence in Teaching” award from CAM, the Classical Association of Massachusetts, and has given numerous workshops on cultural topics and best practices in the Latin classroom.

Madelyn never says NO to MaFLA. She willingly accepts whatever needs to be done, whenever it needs to be done, even if she is on vacation on a remote island and has to borrow a computer from the hotel concierge to answer emails or proofread the Newsletter. Her passion for languages, her professionalism, her dedication and her exceptional and meritorious service on the state, regional and national level truly exemplify the criteria of this award.

AVE Madelyn! TE SALUTAMUS!
Hail Madelyn! We Salute You!
Congratulations!

Submitted by Joyce Beckwith

H.O.W. (Hot on the Web) is your place on the MaFLA Website to check out great resources that are found on the internet. The following are some of the latest posts.

- **6 Ways to Motivate Your Students in the Foreign Language Classroom** on the Lingua Garden site has some excellent tips. Don’t miss this great article.
- **Gateway to Chinese, Multimedia Learning Materials for Learning Chinese** at COERLL.
- **Y tú, ¿Crees en los Reyes Magos?** is a great article with Multimedia on the Veinte Mundos site.
- Sign up for the upcoming webinar with Dr. John Reed on February 19, 2014. Sign up on the LARC website.
- Do you know about **Vault – Video Assistance for Understanding Language Teaching Techniques**? It is a collection of original videos highlighting various aspects of language teaching in the classroom.
- Great information about the Best Christmas Markets in France – **Les meilleurs marchés de Noël de France**. Let us know how you are using this authentic resource in your class?

H.O.W. is updated regularly so check back often. Let us know how you are using some of these resources or better yet, pass along a great resource you have found!!
At the end of every MaFLA conference that I’ve ever attended, or any of the other MaFLA events or board meetings I’ve gone to, I’ve left feeling inspired. The conversations and the opportunity for collaboration that MaFLA provides leaves me feeling invigorated and ready to return to my school and push forward with innovative ideas, new teaching strategies, curriculum, or programming. The energy and enthusiasm I feel propels and challenges me to continuously improve as a teacher and as a department leader. In this year of new state-mandated initiatives, we all need times like these to step away from our daily routines and take in a breath of fresh air.

MaFLA has provided me the opportunity to be a leader in my profession, and I’d like to take a minute to reflect on the challenges we all face this year and how we can turn them into opportunities for leadership and collaboration, both for ourselves and for our students.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing all of us this year is the new teacher evaluation system. Another department chair in my district noticed what she called a “free-floating anxiety” that was almost palpable throughout the school. This evaluation system requires much more of teachers than the old one, with more frequent observations, the need for teachers to collect evidence, and the dreaded SMART goals we’ve all spent months writing. But having just completed my first round of observations, I’ve noticed a positive side-effect to all this new stress… the opportunity for discussion and collaboration. In writing SMART goals, teachers in my department collaborated like I have never seen before. In collecting evidence, teachers have the opportunity to show off and feel proud of the excellent work they and their students are doing. And through observations and the follow-up meetings, teachers have a chance to discuss with their department chairs, reflecting on their lessons and contemplating ways to continuously improve instruction. In my department, the most common goals that teachers are working on this year are: teaching in the target language to reach the national standard of 90%, integrating authentic material to improve reading comprehension, and developing strategies to differentiate instruction in the world language classroom. While teachers may have individually tried to move forward with these goals in previous years, the structure of the new evaluation system gives them a chance to work together, inspire and support each other, and for teachers to step forward as teacher leaders as they become increasingly expert in each area of focus.

Another dreaded aspect of the new evaluation system that is being developed at schools across the state are the DDMs—District Determined Measures. At first glance, this is just another aggravating, state-mandate designed to make us crazy. But after looking more closely, DDMs give us a chance to define our own assessment measures. Rather than being tied to MCAS results, foreign language teachers can decide for themselves what progress should look like for their students, focusing on proficiency rather than the recitation of facts or formulaic understanding. We all know that assessments influence instruction, so what an opportunity for us to define our own assessments and be able to positively influence the instruction that precedes them. I cannot help but smile every time I walk down the World Language hallway in my school, to see groups of students using iPods or iPhones to film interpersonal conversations as they prepare for the DDM we developed focusing on interpersonal speaking skills. We have an opportunity in developing quality DDMs that are not bound to state-developed tests to show our districts what real performance-based assessments look like, and what amazing things our students can do with their language skills.

A lesser, but equally important state-mandate that has recently come down the pipeline is the Common Core State Standards. I don’t know about you, but when I read the ELA Common Core Standards, I thought… wait a minute, this is what I do! With an emphasis on the four skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—as well as interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communication, World Languages is a natural support for the Common Core, and we should make sure our superintendents know this. We have an opportunity to step up and demonstrate the excellent teaching methodologies we employ as foreign language teachers, sharing our knowledge and experience with our colleagues throughout our schools.

Not a new challenge, but an area of constant frustration for all of us, is the perceived lesser importance of foreign language education when compared to math, English, social studies or science. I wanted to tear my hair out last year when the new Math Director in my district got $100,000 in new Math books by snapping his fingers, and I had to spend the year begging and pleading for new French books to replace a series from 1998. (I got what I wanted, by the way!) We plead our case to—most likely—a monolingual administration that supports foreign languages “in theory.” But on our sides, we have parents, and most importantly, we have our students. Students who experience a foreign language education in which proficiency and communication is emphasized over grammar and repetition are our best advocates. By helping develop language skills in our students, we also develop global understanding that can only be gained when students speak and understand a language other than their own. Recognized as a crucial 21st century skill, developing language proficiency is growing in importance, and our students and their parents look to us to prepare them to be globally proficient and globally competitive.

(concluded on pg. 20)
President’s Message

Reflections

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. —John F. Kennedy

It’s been an amazing two years! I am honored to have served as President of MaFLA and so proud of the many accomplishments of our all-volunteer Board.

When I joined the MaFLA Executive Board in 2010, I was impressed by the number of innovative ideas and accomplishments of the organization. MaFLA was already doing so many great things – the role I wanted to play was to support the all-volunteer Board to continue moving forward with their great ideas and initiatives. I was inspired right away in thinking about my theme as President and knew that I wouldn’t emphasize one specific area, but would focus on developing a culture of continuous improvement through the lens of member services. Therefore, I generated the following eight reflection questions to focus my energies:

● What are MaFLA’s priorities in the next few years? What are our goals?
  ○ Through Board member collaboration, MaFLA’s new five-year Strategic Plan has been updated for 2014-2018. The new version can be found at www.mafla.com where you can learn about the areas of focus for Professional Development, Advocacy and Member Services for the next five years.

● How can event registration and member management be improved to better meet the needs of MaFLA members?
  ○ Through careful research and review, MaFLA made the decision to adopt the services of 123signup to manage event registration and membership management. This decision has helped MaFLA to modernize our services for members and while we continually review the service and improve the process – this update has been cost saving, easier and incredibly beneficial.

● How can communication with our members be more effective/efficient?
  ○ Communication with our members has been updated as well! Through 123signup we are able to send quick eblasts to members of focused subsets to alert them of legislative action, upcoming event deadlines, post event survey requests and more. We have also utilized Constant Contact to periodically inform our members about the publication of our quarterly newsletter, updates on professional development events and member opportunities.

● Does the organizational structure of our Board of Directors need to be changed to attract potential future leaders and to better support those serving?
  ○ The organizational structure of the Board was carefully analyzed and a number of proposed changes were considered to improve our overall effectiveness and support. The agreed upon changes in our organizational structure were nearly unanimously approved by the membership in 2012, and we feel that these changes will better support our leadership track.

● How can we measure member satisfaction of MaFLA’s member services?
  ○ A number of data collection tools have been utilized by the Board to collect feedback from our members. The Board carefully considers this feedback when looking forward and regularly reviews and compares member survey results at our Board meetings. In the past two years we have made a number of decisions based on member input and made strides in improving member services.

● How might Board members be more involved in committee meetings and initiatives?
  ○ Prior to to 2011 all committee meetings between Board meetings were held in person. The Board adopted GoToMeeting as an online meeting tool for our committees. We all recognize and value face to face meetings, but this new online option has significantly increased participation and productivity of committees.

● Given the numerous initiatives of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), how can the MaFLA Board best support our members?

Notes to the Profession (cont.)

As foreign language teachers, we have an opportunity to be leaders in our schools by turning challenges into opportunities for strengthening our instruction and our programs and sharing our knowledge with others, while also developing real global understanding in our students. To highlight the importance of languages in the global world we live in, the MaFLA conference theme for 2014 will be: Multilingualism the foundation of global leadership.

The proposal form will shortly be available online, and I would encourage you to submit a proposal or to encourage other teachers in your department to do so. Presenting at the MaFLA Fall Conference is a wonderful chance to demonstrate expertise and leadership, to collaborate with others, and to take a deep breath, recharge your batteries and return to school invigorated and inspired. I wish you all a wonderful school year, and look forward to seeing you again next year.
MaFLA Board members have been very active in working with DESE!

- Starting in March of 2012, several members participated in the High Expertise Teaching project which was initiated by DESE to define the knowledge and skills essential at key developmental stages across a teacher’s career, and in doing so delineate a “quality career continuum” to be shared with all education stakeholders, from policymakers to practitioners, and support stronger professional practices in teaching. Despite numerous volunteer hours, the DESE discontinued this committee work.

- In June of 2013 a number of Board members participated in the development of model S.M.A.R.T. goals which were posted on the DESE website.

- Starting in May of 2013, many Board members helped to create Core Course Objectives which the DESE has posted on their website as a basis for DDM development.

- In light of the Senatorial election in the state and the continual need to advocate for foreign language education, how might our Advocacy Committee continue to voice our concerns and be heard?
  - Advocacy team members have visited Senators and Representatives in their offices in Washington, DC through participation in JNCL.
  - The Boston Globe published a letter to the editor authored by Advocacy Coordinator, Nicole Sherf and myself in June 2012, Renew our Commitment to Foreign Languages.
  - Interviews with key legislative and DESE members have taken place (namely Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Scott Brown and Secretary of Education, Matt Malone) See our Advocacy pages at http://mafla.org/.

- Considering technology advancements and the need to include 21st Century Skills as an important focus of member professional development, how might MaFLA best meet this need?
  - Starting with the 2011 Conference, MaFLA purchased unlimited internet availability for all attendees. We have continued to offer this service for Conference attendees in 2012 and 2013.
  - MaFLA has developed a presence on Facebook and twitter. Our likes/followers have increased steadily in the past two years.
  - MaFLA offered a Technology Day workshop in western MA in June 2013, which sold out. We have plans to increase technology offerings for our members in 2014.
  - MaFLA has surveyed members about their interest in Webinars – the results have been predominantly positive! Look forward to updates in 2014!

In conclusion, it has been my pleasure and honor to serve the organization and its members over the past two years. I hope that you might consider serving on the MaFLA Board in the future or tap the shoulder of a colleague who might not realize his/her own potential. Indeed, it’s how I gained the confidence to grow into the leader I am today. Step up. Tap a shoulder! If I can do it, so can you!

The most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born—that there is a genetic factor to leadership. This myth asserts that people simply either have certain charismatic qualities or not. That’s nonsense; in fact, the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born. – Warren G. Bennis

I look forward to working with you in the coming year!

Tiesa Graf
Advocating For Foreign Language Education With Our local Congressman

At a recent charity event in my local congressional district, I had the opportunity to speak with the Congressman from the Fourth District of Massachusetts, Joseph P. Kennedy. Here is his written response regarding House Bill H.R. 2170, sponsored by Rush Holt of New Jersey.

Gonnerman Torchin:

Thank you for hearing the concerns of world language educators in the Fourth District of Massachusetts. Please let me know how you stand on H.R. 2170, the Foreign Language Education Partnership Program Act.

Joe Kennedy writes:

As you may know, H.R 2170, the Foreign Language Education Partnership Program Act, was introduced by Representative Rush Holt of New Jersey on May 23, 2013. This bill would provide incentive payments to public elementary schools for foreign language instruction as well as establish partnership programs to improve foreign language learning for high school students. This bill has been referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce for further consideration.

I remain committed to fighting for fairness and opportunity for students. When we invest in them, we sustain a solid middle class, a world-leading economy, and the sense of fairness and opportunity that has always defined this country. I will certainly keep your views in mind should this bill or any legislation regarding this issue come before me in the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote.

Gonnerman Torchin:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me; I am honored to represent the constituents of the Fourth District of Massachusetts.

Have you contacted your Congressman? Please do so and help us ensure strong world language education for all students!!

Together, our strong voices can make a difference!

News

MITA Congratulates Anna Tirone

The Massachusetts Italian Teacher Association congratulates one of its fine members, Anna Tirone, FL Department Chair at Winchester Public Schools, on joining the Board of Directors of MaFLA. She will serve well our foreign language community with her commitment and enthusiasm!!

Congratulations Rita Oleksak!

MaFLA Past President and 2010 Distinguished Service Award winner Rita Oleksak was named the National Foreign Language Supervisor of the Year by the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL) at their Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL. In addition to the leadership positions in a virtual alphabet soup of organizations (ACTFL, NADSFL, NNELL, NECTFL and of course MaFLA), Rita is Coordinator of one of the most historic and successful foreign language programs in the country, Glastonbury, CT. She leads a department of over 50 foreign language professionals offering instruction in multiple languages over a long sequence, starting, in many cases, in elementary school.

If you’ve had the pleasure of meeting Rita or working with her, you know how deserving she is of this honor.

Food such as Pan de Muertos, bread of the dead, and Mexican cookies. It was truly a day where different cultures and customs were honored.

Two teachers, still made up in face paint, even went so far as to visit a grave, with flowers, to honor a deceased family member. To be sure, Lawrence students will have an unforgettable memory of the holiday because of their dedicated and enthusiastic teachers taking the time and going the extra mile to make the day special for them, complete with candy from Latin America!

From time to time, important efforts such as these need to be recognized and applauded. When teachers share with one another, it is a significant opportunity for growth as well as an effective way to enhance instruction. At this time, I would like to acknowledge Ed Priest’s fun and engaging sing-along session at the recent annual conference held by the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. Ed energized and serenaded a room full of 50 language teachers with his special brand of musical talent complete with guitar. I am proud of my teachers’ efforts to promote the study of a foreign language and want to share their achievements!

Submitted by Pat DiPillo

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MaFLA Interviews
Matthew Malone, Ph.D.

On October 24, 2013, MaFLA President Elect, Jane Rizzitano, and Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, MaFLA Past President and Membership Coordinator, interviewed Dr. Matthew Malone, Secretary of Education in Massachusetts. Dr. Malone is a supporter of early foreign language education. As Secretary of Education, Dr. Malone directs the Executive Office of Education and works closely with the Commonwealth's education agencies: Department of Early Education and Care, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Higher Education and the University of Massachusetts system. Dr. Malone brings a wealth of experience to this position, working in urban as well as suburban settings. Prior to his appointment as Secretary, he served as the Superintendent of the Brockton Public Schools, Superintendent of the Swampscott Public Schools from 2005-2009, and previously as a Special Assistant to the Superintendent/Instruction Leader in the San Diego City School District. Prior to his work in San Diego, Dr. Malone was the Headmaster of Monument High School in South Boston, and also served as a middle school assistant principal in Duxbury, Massachusetts. He taught Social Studies at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School in Boston as that school successfully worked to regain its state accreditation. Dr. Malone began his career as both a paraprofessional and long-term substitute teacher in Boston Public Schools at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School. Before beginning his career in education, Dr. Malone served as a Sergeant in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and is a Combat Veteran of the Persian Gulf War. Dr. Malone received a Bachelor of Science degree in History from Suffolk University, and earned his Master of Education and Doctor of Philosophy from Boston College.

Following is MaFLA’s interview with Dr. Malone:

MaFLA: Did you have an opportunity to study a language in K-16? If so, what language did you study and why?

Malone: Yes, I did. I studied Spanish in grades seven, eight and nine and again in college at Suffolk University. I even studied Italian for a semester, but when I was in the Ph.D. program, computer languages were accepted and that fulfilled my language requirement. I was on an IEP for dyslexia and it made foreign languages very difficult for me so they were waived in high school. I regret not being able to become fluent in Spanish, but want to learn more. Knowing a foreign language would be an asset as I travel around the Commonwealth.

MaFLA: Former Department of Defense Secretary Leon Panetta spoke of the national need for competency in multiple languages. Do you agree and why or why not? Which languages do you feel are the most important for the U.S. to know?

Malone: Yes, I agree. For Massachusetts, Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin and Hindi are important. However, I would not say that German, Portuguese, and French are not important. They are. We also need more people who speak Russian. I support a requirement for learning world languages because we never will be able to be competitive in our work force development without the next cadre of folks who are bilingual.

MaFLA: Our Foreign Language National Standards and MA State Foreign Language Curriculum Framework dovetail with Common Core State Standards, and advocate a long sequence of language study in order to achieve functional language proficiency. Many other states have foreign language graduation requirements or have established exit foreign language proficiency levels for graduates. Though Massachusetts is known nationally for providing high quality education, we have not yet adopted this type of mandate. What role do you believe that foreign languages play in a world class education beginning in elementary school through college? How can we, in Massachusetts, remedy this situation?

Malone: The Common Core Standards speak to literacy and non-fiction reading. I consider World Languages a part of the Core and view it as academic inquiry. We have to stop looking at it as an elective. If we shut kids off from world languages, how can we say that they are college and career ready if we don’t give them access?

MaFLA: Massachusetts has not had a state supervisor of foreign languages in many years. What is the importance of this role and do you see the chance of this position returning in the future?

Malone: Why is that? Tell me more about this. Who is serving in this capacity now and what is being done?

MaFLA: Massachusetts has a representative to the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) who is recommended by MaFLA and approved by the state. This representative has associate rights only, so does not vote on important matters before NCSSFL. Also, the NCSSFL representative connects with DESE through the Director of Literacy and Humanities, Susan Wheltle, but does not have a direct voice at the table. Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin is the Massachusetts representative to NCSSFL.
Malone: Let me investigate this situation. I'll have to get back to you on this one.

MaFLA: As you travel throughout Massachusetts, what do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of foreign language programming?

Malone: I see strengths in the types of programs we have in communities such as Newton and Brookline. Burlington connects world languages and technology and Brockton High School has the Medical Interpretation and Translation program. I would like to see other types of world language college and career ready programs emerge that target public safety capacity, hotel and restaurant work, tourism, etc. We need to think differently about how we count languages. American Sign Language options could be expanded, as well as more Latin at the middle levels in order to promote reasoning and analytical thinking.

MaFLA: As is to be expected when new guidelines are being put into place, educators are anxious about the new state evaluation system, especially District Determined Measures and the lack of MCAS or other state assessments for foreign languages. What are your thoughts on testing for world languages?

Malone: The good news is that an extra year has been added for developing local assessments. Schools have an opportunity to create their own measures for determining progress and foreign language educators are in the strong position to guide the process within their districts.

MaFLA: Final thoughts regarding world languages in the Commonwealth?

Malone: We need forward thinking and creativity, along with technical infusion, to create strong world language programs. I view world language not as an academic requirement or an elective, but as an essential.

MaFLA: Thank you very much for your time, your support for a state supervisor, and your strong advocacy for foreign languages.

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**Brockton Hosts 100k Initiative And Gateways To China**

On October 22, 2013, the Brockton Foreign Language Department had the honor of hosting Travis Tanner, COO of the 100,000 Strong Foundation, started by President Obama and Former Secretary of Defense, Hillary Rodham Clinton, along with Grant Rhodes and Charlotte Mason of the Gateways to China Program. Our visitors stopped in to view five Chinese classes at Brockton High and Plouffe Academy. They enjoyed watching the Chinese teachers in action and hearing students actively use Chinese to communicate. They talked with administrators and students about their efforts to raise funds with the support of the Massachusetts Department of Education to provide scholarships over the course of the next few years to students in gateway cities who want to study Chinese in China. What an opportunity for Massachusetts Gateway City students!

The 100k Strong Foundation is an independent non-profit organization. According to the information provided by the organization, the mission of the 100,000 Strong Foundation is to diversify the number of Americans studying Chinese. By fostering people-to-people ties through study abroad, and encouraging the study of Mandarin here at home, the Foundation seeks to narrow the gap between cultures, strengthen U.S.-China relations and promote global stability as well as to expand and diversify the number of Americans studying Mandarin and studying in China. China is the second-largest economy in the world, a major strategic power and the United States’ fastest-growing trade partner. Virtually every future global challenge will require our two countries to work together. We must invest in this critical partnership.

Some interesting statistics speak to why our students need to become proficient in Chinese. More than one third of China’s population studies English. This is twelve times more than Americans who study Chinese. English is a part of China’s National Curriculum. Foreign Language in the U.S. is NOT part of a national curriculum. Only 60,000 U.S. K-12 students study Chinese. This means that 600 times more Chinese study English than Americans who study Mandarin. The number of Chinese studying in the U.S. jumped 23% last year, while there was only a 5% increase of Americans studying Chinese.

Massachusetts Commissioner of Education, Mitchell D. Chester, has expressed support for the concept of the Gateways to China Program. Depending on funding and administrative tasks, the first group of Gateways to China students would travel to China in the summer of 2014. More information is available at 100kstrong.org/study-in-china/.

Submitted by Jane Rizzitano

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**News**

**Coming Attractions in Professional Development**

**2 TECH DAYS – 1 East & 1 West**

NOT TO BE MISSED!!

**DIVERSITY DAY – Watch for the May Dates**

**SUMMER INSTITUTE – Coming in August**

PLUS OUR EXCITING

**FALL CONFERENCE 2014**

Multilingualism the foundation of global leadership

October 23-25, 2014
MaFLA would like to express its sincere thanks to the following companies and organizations whose loyal support makes our conference possible

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ISE – Intercultural Student Experiences  
EMFLA – Eastern MA Foreign Language Administrators  
New England Association of Chinese Schools
MaFLA Poster/Essay Contest Rules

THEME: Multilingualism the foundation of global leadership.

GENERAL RULES CHECKLIST

___ Each entry must be an original work of a current foreign language student (including students enrolled in an ESL class) whose teacher is currently a MaFLA member. No group entries will be accepted.
___ LIMIT: 5 (five) entries per contest per school.
___ Teachers must submit the official entry form on the following page with their entries.
___ Teachers are required to put the requested information on the back of the poster/essay. (See next page)
___ All entries become the property of MaFLA.

Poster Checklist

___ All posters must incorporate the exact wording of the theme.
___ Posters must measure the standard poster size of 22” x 28” & have a flat surface with no moving parts. No three-dimensional posters will be accepted.
___ Use lightweight poster material. Posters should be mailed in a 3” or larger tube.
___ Paints, markers, pencils, crayons, inks, gel pens may be used. Glitter, glue, charcoals, or tape on the front of the poster will not be accepted nor will computer generated posters.
___ Illustrations must be used in addition to words and must be relevant to the theme.
___ There must be a two-inch margin on all sides free of design and/or lettering.
___ No copyrighted figures such as Snoopy, Disney characters, Family Guy, Simpsons etc. may be used.

Please note: Any posters that do not meet all of the criteria will be disqualified.

Essay Checklist

___ Essays must be written in English.
___ Essays must state theme and content must be relevant to the theme.
___ Each entry must have a title, be typed/word processed using Times New Roman font at 12 point size and double spaced.
___ Each entry must have identification on the back only. No identifying marks are allowed on the face of the essay.
___ The identification sheet on the next page must be replicated on the back of the essay.
___ If outside sources are used they must be cited appropriately.

ESSAY LENGTH - By Division

- Grades K-5: Maximum 150 words
- Grades 6-8: Maximum 250 words
- Grades 9-12: Maximum 350 words

Judging Criteria Checklist

Posters

- Visual impact, overall appealing effect
- Theme relevance
- Neatness
- Originality
- Accuracy

Essays

- Theme relevance
- Clarity of thought
- Organization of ideas
- Creativity
- Overall impact of message

Prize Information:

- One poster will be selected as Poster of the Year; artist will receive a check for $50.00; poster will be displayed at the MaFLA Conference.
- One essay will be selected as Essay of the Year; author will receive a check for $50.00; essay will be featured at the MaFLA Conference.
- There will be only one winner per division. (grades K-5, grades 6-8, and grades 9-12) For the division producing the Poster of the Year and the Essay of the Year no division award will be given.
- Division winners for the essay and poster contest will receive a check for $25.00. These awards may be presented by a MaFLA Board Member at the student's school awards ceremony in the spring.
- Several honorable mention posters and essays will be selected and featured at the MaFLA Fall Conference.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of participation.
- A letter of appreciation will be sent to all MaFLA members whose students participate in the contests. In addition, letters of appreciation will be sent to the principal and superintendent of participating schools.
- Winners will be posted on mafla.org. Certificates and acknowledgements will be sent out at a later date.

Poster information contact:
ChinHuei Yeh
33 Camelot Drive
Shrewsbury, MA 001545
chyeh@gmail.com

Essay information contact:
Stuart Gamble
646 Granville Road
Westfield, MA 01085
gamble_stuart@hotmail.com
MaFLA Poster/Essay Contest Entry Form

Please submit this form (make a separate copy for each contest) along with your 5 (maximum) posters and/or essays and mail each to the appropriate person at the address indicated below. Mail posters and forms together in a 3” (or larger) diameter tube.

#1. General Information: (please type or print legibly)
School:__________________________ School Phone #: (____)________________

School Address:  (street)_______________________________________________________________
(city/town)__________________________ (zip) __________________

Superintendent’s Name: ____________________________________ Principal’s Name: ________________________________

Superintendent’s Address: __________________________________________________________________________________

#2. Entrants’ and Teachers’ Information: (please type or print legibly)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Teacher’s name/dues paid through</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ________________</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ________________</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>________________________________</td>
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<td>3. ________________</td>
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<td>4. ________________</td>
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<td>________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. ________________</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#3. Item Identification: (Photocopy the form below, fill it out and attach it to the back of each essay and poster)

Student’s Name:_______________________________________________________ Grade:____________________

Language:__________________________ Level:_____ School:________________________________________

School Address:_________________________________________________________________________________

School Phone #: (____)______________________ Teacher’s Name:______________________________________

Teacher’s Email:______________________________________________________________

Deadline for both contests is March 15, 2014

NOTE: Only five entries per school (in each contest)

Send Posters to:
ChinHuei Yeh
33 Camelot Drive
Shrewsbury, MA 001545

Send Essays to:
Stuart Gamble
646 Granville Road
Westfield, MA 01085
2014 MaFLA Student Video Contest

Theme

Multilingualism the foundation of global leadership

Premise

In the state of Massachusetts, students need to demonstrate the ability to use technology for the purpose of communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation. Consequently, through the use of a variety of media formats students develop technology skills that enable them to communicate effectively, to multiple audiences, a variety of information and ideas to satisfy both foreign language and technology standards.

Summary

Podcasting is a method of communication that is more and more used and it allows anyone to create video files and post them to the Internet for others to download and view at any time. MaFLA is pleased to offer again in 2013 an exciting opportunity for all students in the public and private schools in Massachusetts to participate in an audio/video contest.

Contest Specifics, Categories, and Prizes

All foreign language teachers of Massachusetts are invited to get their students involved in celebrating the 2014 theme Multilingualism the foundation of global leadership.

In a one-minute video, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate in English or a foreign language, how they understand and interpret the current theme of the year in order to raise awareness of the role that foreign languages play nationally and internationally.

Students may be entered in one of four specific categories corresponding to their grade level.

Category 1: Elementary School – Students enrolled in K through grade 5
Category 2: Middle School – Students enrolled in grades 6-8
Category 3: High School – Students enrolled in grades 9-12

In order to enter the contest teachers who are members in good standing with MaFLA can mail only one entry per category of the audio/video podcast to Adina Alexandru, Contest Chair. Only the first 15 entries will be considered in each category.

Please note: Students should only submit their own original work (no copyrighted material should be included).

List of suggested activities for all categories:

- a speech/soliloquy/address
- a poem,
- a song (raps included),
- an advertisement,
- a public service announcement,
- a skit,
- other

The contest will take place during Foreign Language Week in March 2014. It will begin on March 1, 2014. The submission deadline is March 15, 2014 or until the first 15 entries are received in each category, whichever comes first.

A MaFLA committee will select one winner in each of the three categories. The prize for the winner in each category will be $50.00 awarded to the student creator of the video (to be split if there are 2 students). The videos of the winners, and up to two runners-up from each category, may be showcased in an area of the MaFLA website.

Submission Guidelines - Submissions that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered

1. Participation is limited to students attending public or private schools who are enrolled in a Pre-K–12 foreign language class at the time of submission.
2. The total video length is not to exceed one minute in English/foreign language.
3. A maximum of 2 students can perform on one video entry.
4. Participating teachers need to fill out and mail the Contest Entry Form to the contest chair Adina Alexandru. Mailing instructions can be found on the entry form.

Judging Criteria - videos in all 3 categories will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Content: Is the audio/video clip engaging and appropriate to the theme of the contest?
2. Creativity: Is the message innovative and creative?
3. Execution: Is the use of technology effective and appropriate?
4. Effect: Was the overall effect achieved in communicating to the audience?
MaFLA Video Contest Entry Form

Please submit this form along with your video and mail to the address indicated below. Mail videos and forms together in a single package. Please use a separate entry form for each video submitted.

#1. General Information: *(please type or print legibly)*
School:___________________________________________________         School Phone #: (____)_____________
School Address:  (street)________________________________________________________________________
                  (city/town)____________________________________________       (zip) __________________
Superintendent’s Name: ________________________________   Principal’s Name: ____________________________________
Superintendent’s Address: __________________________________________________________________________________

#2. Entrants’ and Teachers’ Information: *(please type or print legibly)*

Student’s Name                 Grade                Language and level(s) enrolled for 2013-2014
1. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
2. _____________________________________________  _________  ________________________________________________
Teacher’s Name:_______________________________________________________     Dues Paid through __________________
Teacher’s Email:_______________________________________________________

Release

I, the undersigned, hereby grant permission for my/my child’s video entry to be used and posted on the MaFLA web site. I understand that the videos of finalists and winners are to be archived in a public area on this web site to promote the teaching and learning of world languages. The video shall be used for educational purposes only.

I hereby release MaFLA, their agents, personnel, directors, and officers from any claims or liability regarding any use that may be made of the video in accordance with this consent and release.

Student Name: (please print)   _____________________________________________________
Student Signature (18 or Older): _________________________________________            Date: ___________________
NOTE: by signing above, student attests that he/she is 18 years of age or older.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print):  _____________________________________             Date: ___________________
(required if student is under 18)

Mail your completed application to:

Adina Alexandru
67 Silver Birch Rd.
Longmeadow, MA 01106

Entries must be postmarked by March 15, 2014
ARE YOU FEELING LEFT OUT?

If you feel you have not heard from MaFLA, YOUR professional organization, lately, perhaps it is because you have indicated in your profile that you do not wish to receive communications from us. If you want to be aware of our special events, offers, and news updates then be sure to change your status in your profile. Need help with this? Contact our membership chair, Madelyn Gonnerman Torchin, at membership@maflu.org and she will help you to update your profile.

Send YOUR contribution to the next issue to:
Ronie R. Webster  ronie@maflu.org
41 Glenn Drive
Wilbraham, MA  01095
Phone 413.596.9284
Deadline for the Winter Issue is Jan. 5

THOUGHT FOR THE WINTER

“You cannot control what happens to you . . .

“. . . but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you.

Brian Tracy