

I Stand on the Shoulders of a Wonderful Mentor:

2012 Winner of the Ted Hipple Service Award

NCTE and the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE (ALAN) are definitely my professional homes, and I stand on the shoulders of a wonderful mentor: Theodore “Ted” Hipple.

The Ted Hipple Service Award is the most treasured award I have ever received in my life. Ted Hipple was the one who showed me the way life could be in a myriad of ways as he was the model professor, colleague, friend, and father figure. It is fitting that Ted Hipple passed away on Thanksgiving morning (Nov. 25, 2004) as his is a life that so many of us give thanks for, both knowingly and unknowingly. [Please stand if you knew Ted personally. Please stand if you have read a book or article written by him. Please stand if you have been taught by or read a piece written by anyone standing in this room.] Ted’s quick wit, jovial nature, loud ties and suspenders, great laugh, and dedication to the profession were infectious, and his service record humbling. Ted’s heart was at NCTE, his personality at ALAN, and the Florida Council of Teachers of English (FCTE) was his blood flow; he taught me well. He was active and instrumental in so many ways:

- Department chairperson and professor at the University of Florida, joining UF in the fall of 1968; he was colleagues with 1986 ALAN President Don Gallo and 1981 FCTE President Bob Wright for as many years as “the earth’s been cooling.”
- Recipient of the FCTE Honor Award in 1980, FCTE’s most prestigious award, for notable service to advance the teaching of the language arts in

Florida.

- One of the founders of ALAN, an organization for which he served for more years “than most of us have been teaching.”
- A prolific writer—having published numerous books, countless journal articles, and enough congratulatory and thank-you notes to surpass the net worth of Donald Trump and Bill Gates combined.
- Department chairperson and professor at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, joining UT in the fall of 1984, where he mentored his new colleague Lisa Scherff (FSU) and doctoral students David Gill (UNCW), Shannon Collins, (TTU), Melissa Comer (TTU), Marshall George (Fordham), Joellen Maples (St. John Fisher College), and Amy Maupin (Transylvania U.). He also helped to cultivate new YA authors Alan Gratz and David Gill, all while continuing to mentor his former doctoral students, the likes of this year’s ALAN President Jeff Kaplan (UCF) and me (USF) here in Florida.

My relationship with Ted goes back 30 years, though we got close beginning around 1983. It was Ted who introduced me to NCTE, and the next thing I know I am having dinner with my footnotes—the likes of Joe Milner, Tom McCracken, Charles Suhor, and Charles Duke. At the time, I felt like a Lilliputian and will never forget one aspect of our conversation. Joe and Tom asked about my professional goals and I—being young, naive, and ambitious—said something like I wanted to be NCTE president one day. They asked if I had plans to attend the NCTE Spring

Convention—at that time NCTE held two conferences a year—and I told them I could only afford one a year. I was told in no uncertain terms that if I wanted to be an instructional leader, then I needed to attend *all* NCTE conferences and ALAN workshops—PERIOD! I’m pleased to report that I listened, haven’t missed either one since but once, and am here to say it’s been the best investment I could ever have made in my professional career.

Ted Hipple invested in me, and I have been so blessed by having him as a mentor. I was fortunate to be able to attend his memorial service, which occurred on Thursday, December 2, 2004, in Knoxville, Tennessee. The service was a moving display of the far-reaching effects of a gifted teacher and an awesome human being. There were well over 200 people in attendance and so many more who sent cards and gave testimonials as to how their lives were so positively influenced by his passion for teaching, his integrity, life, and service. Here are some samples:

- The world of young adult literature has lost a giant. I’ll always be thankful to Ted for welcoming me, as he did so many others, into the ALAN family. (Bill Mollineaux, 2003 ALAN President)
- Shakespeare gave his highest praise to one of his characters, a person he wrote, for whom “age cannot wither, nor custom stale.” Such was true of Ted, vibrant, outgoing, always interested in life and in us, his colleagues and friends. He is irreplaceable, and he will be missed. (Leila Christenbury, 2002 NCTE President)
- He was a model for everything that was good and honorable and worthwhile in our lives and in our profession. . . . To paraphrase a line from Shakespeare: “We shall not soon see his like pass this way again.” (Jeff Golub, 2002 FCTE Honor Award recipient, USF Professor Emeritus, and author of *Activities for an Interactive Classroom* and *Making Learning Happen*)

He was a true advocate of professional service and practiced what he preached. In addition to serving as ALAN’s fourth president in 1976, Hipple was Executive Secretary of the group for nearly two decades and was the first recipient of ALAN’s service award—named in his honor—in 2000. Not only was he on the NCTE convention program every year for nearly 35 years, Ted’s was a familiar face at the ALAN Breakfast

and ALAN Workshop as well, where he recruited new people into the ALAN fold.

It is no accident that I stepped up to the plate to serve as ALAN’s Membership Secretary with Dr.

Gary Salvner serving as its Executive Secretary up until Teri Lesesne took over in 2011. Please notice that the position Ted held for almost two decades had to be split in two. And now I am deeply honored to join my mentor and 11 others who have served the ALAN family with the love, drive, commitment, and passion fitting an assembly that gives so much to others. Please stand and be recognized as I call your name:

- 2011 Gary Salvner, Youngstown State University, ALAN Past President (1996) & Executive Secretary
- 2010 Chris Crowe, Brigham Young University, ALAN Past President (2001)
- 2009 Wendy Lamb, Wendy Lamb Books, Random House
- 2008 Jeanne McDermott, Farrar, Straus & Giroux
- 2007 Patricia Kelly, ALAN Past President (1989) & *TAR* Coeditor
- 2006 Alleen Pace Nilson, ALAN Past President (1978)
- 2005 Bill Subick, National Council of Teachers of English
- 2004 John Mason, Scholastic
- 2003 M. Jerry Weiss, ALAN Past President (1974)
- 2002 Terry Borzumato, Random House Children’s Books
- 2001 Don Gallo, ALAN Past President (1986)
- 2000 Ted Hipple, ALAN Past President (1976) & Executive Secretary

These folks know the value of service, so now I encourage you to visit the NCTE website (www.ncte.org) for an article written by Hipple the year he received the Hipple Service Award. It’s titled, “Ask Not What NCTE Can Do for You” (<http://www.ncte.org/about/gov/cgrams/res/118813.htm?source=gs>). Ted writes,

Bob [Hogan] . . . said, “NCTE must have volunteers or it will collapse.” So it was then, so it is now. And not just, or even mainly, for the national outfit, but also for state and

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local affiliates. Look about you, please . . . [and] become a volunteer for NCTE or your state or local affiliate. Get involved; be a player. You don't have to run for elective office or give the luncheon address. Those jobs can come later. For now . . . ask to join a committee. And what's in it for you? In addition to helping out, you will find it personally and professionally among the most enriching experiences you can have. Trust me on that last point. I've been around the NCTE volunteer block a time or two and wouldn't have missed it for anything.

I hope you join me in honoring Ted Hipple and

[Serve] the profession in some way: recruit a new ALAN member, volunteer for an NCTE committee or commission, give a professional membership to a brand new teacher.

what he represents by serving the profession in some way: recruit a new ALAN member, volunteer for an NCTE committee or commission, give a professional membership to a brand new teacher, donate an autographed YA novel to the Ted Hipple Special Collection, give of yourself through NCTE's mentor program. "And what's in it for you?" In addition to helping out, you will

find it personally and professionally among the most enriching experiences you can have. *Trust me on that last point. I've been around the NCTE volunteer block a time or two and wouldn't have missed it for anything.*

Thanks NCTE. And thanks to my ALAN family. As Ted would say, "Be Well!"

Joan F. Kaywell is a full professor of English Education at the University of South Florida. She is past president of NCTE's Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN) and served as its membership secretary; she is a past president of FCTE (twice) and has an FCTE Book Award named after her. Dr. Kaywell has edited two series of textbooks and has written two books: Adolescent Literature as a Complement to the Classics: Exploring Critical Issues in Today's Classrooms (2010) and Adolescents at Risk: A Guide to Fiction and Nonfiction for Young Adults, Parents, and Professionals (1993). Letters of Hope (2007) is her first trade book and is available from Philomel. Visit <http://www.lib.usf.edu/special-collections/childrens-young-adult-literature/hipple> for more information about the Ted Hipple Special Collection of Autographed Books or contact Joan at kaywell@usf.edu.

Note

For more testimonies about Ted Hipple, readers are encouraged to read:

Gallo, D. R., & Maples, J. (2005). In memoriam: Ted Hipple.

English Journal, 94(3), 10–12.

Gill, D. (2005). Remembering Ted Hipple: Thoughts and feelings from those whose lives were touched by a great man.

The ALAN Review, 32(2), 22–25. Retrieved from <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v32n2/hipple.pdf>.

Kaywell, J. F. (2007). In memory of Ted Hipple (7/2/35–11/25/04): Survey results to a special collection in his name—USF, ALAN, and authors wish you well eternally! *The ALAN Review*, 35(1), 6–15. Retrieved from <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v35n1/kaywell.html>.