The President’s Corner

In the midst of this holiday season, I know that every one of us is apprehensive about the economy and all its ramifications. No one is exempt from this concern. But I do want you to know that WWCC’s history as a “family” is still intact.

We are already working on budget cuts for next year, and you will know anything I know as soon as I know it.

In the meantime, I hope your Thanksgiving was wonderful and that you have had time to move from turkey leftovers to other meal choices. Christmas is just around the corner, and whether you’re wishing for a snow-laden holiday or a warm family gathering, I hope your expectations are realized.

The new year is less than four weeks away and 2009 promises to bring both its challenges and its positive outcomes. As co-workers, let’s all think of the needs of others as we face the new year. If you know of someone who could use some help—financial, personal or even home maintenance—or if you yourself could use a hand, please tell someone. Make that your New Years Resolution! We all have our pride, but don’t let that get in the way of anyone’s personal needs.

Schulz Recognized for Mathematica Computer Programming Palettes

Eric Schulz, WWCC math instructor, attended the International Mathematica User Conference October 23-25 where he was one of three keynote speakers. His message—announcement of a new software tool (actually three tools in one) that he created for Mathematica 7.

“We use Mathematica here at WWCC,” Schulz explained. “It’s the leading computer algebra software and technical document system used by corporations, colleges/universities and high schools worldwide with a user base of several million.”

The three tools—Classroom Assistant, Basic Math Assistant and Writing Assistant—consumed 11 months of Schulz’ waking hours when away from WWCC. He even noted that “the Mathematica source code which creates the three palettes is a bit over 12,000 lines long or approximately 220 pages or 560,909 characters.” Only a true mathematician would come up with those figures!

“Programmers at Wolfram Research, the marketing firm for Mathematica, even added new features to the Mathematica software itself to support some functionality of the palettes,” Schulz noted with a smile. The tools will support new users and help them become well versed in using the program for writing, presenting and computing needs.

These improvements will make Mathematica more desirable for new users. Beta testers using earlier versions of the palettes were located in the US, Mexico, Germany, India, Japan, Italy, Brazil and Australia. Schulz plans to continue working with local high school math teachers who will be receiving Mathematica 7 as an introduction to the computer program.

Winter begins December 21!
JAN FOSTER - “ALL ROADS LEAD ME BACK TO YOU”

In 2002, in a tiny apartment on a gray dismal day in Aberdeen, Scotland, Jan Foster took a giant step towards a lifelong goal. “It got light about 9 AM and dark again by 3 PM, I had no television, not much to do and lots of tea and biscuits, so I figured there would never be a better time” and she began writing her first novel.

Writing the book was big enough to undertake according to Jan, but finding an agent and selling it was an even bigger hurdle. After contacting about 75 agents, Craig Leslie, a professor at Whitman College read the book and put her in touch with an agent he knows by the name of Janet Reid. In 2004, after reading the book, Janet said she’d accept Jan as a client. However, it wasn’t until January 2008, that Jan received a call from Janet indicating the book had been sold for $12,000 and Janet would keep 15% of that.

The book, a work of fiction about ranch life in the Waitsburg area, also addresses the immigration issue. Titled “All Roads Lead Me Back to You,” Jan’s first book is scheduled to be released by Simon and Shuster’s Pocket Book division in August 2009 under the pen name, Kennedy Foster.

Even though it will be seven years from the beginning until publication, Jan didn’t give up. In the years since finishing “All Roads Lead Me Back to You,” she’s begun another novel which has characters in common with her first novel and is also set in the Walla Walla Valley. Currently, Jan is 2/3’s the way through with her second novel. After all, once we all buy and read her first one, Simon and Shuster will be begging for the next one and Jan intends to be ready with the second Kennedy Foster novel.

While this critic hasn’t read it yet, I look forward to it and am already convinced it’s a bestseller. Just remember Jan, we knew you when!

CATHY NELSON - “THROUGH HALEIGH’S EYES”

One of the things you first notice in talking with Cathy Nelson is the importance of family in her life. Cathy had opportunity to demonstrate that commitment a few years ago when she kept her granddaughter Haleigh for a year when her daughter, Kirsten, Haleigh’s mother, was battling a methamphetamine addiction. “Through Haleigh’s Eyes,” a book written by Cathy from the perspective of a young child, has a happy ending, much like Cathy’s family’s real life experience.

Having a drug addicted daughter was traumatic enough, but the added concern of a two year old granddaughter created a situation that caused Cathy and her husband Denny to feel they needed to step in to a potentially volatile and significantly emotional situation.

Haleigh was 2 ½ when she first came to live with her maternal grandparents. As they parented their granddaughter, Cathy was painfully aware of the impact the situation was having on Haleigh and together, she and Denny did everything in their power to make the situation as positive as possible.

Cathy, who loves to write, expresses herself in her writing, and decided to journal her experience. As her thoughts unfolded, it seemed natural to tell the story of her family’s ordeal through the eyes of her granddaughter. Thus, “Through Haleigh’s Eyes,” came to be. In keeping with that happy ending I promised, it’s important to note, Denny and Cathy’s daughter Kirsten is 5 1/2 years clean, married to her husband, Cody, works full time and Haleigh now has a younger sister, Aryanna.

Once she finished her book, Cathy knew that if her book was to be published and help other families in similar situations, it would be a very expensive undertaking. She didn’t feel she could justify doing this on the family budget, so she kept putting the project on the back burner.

However, Cathy’s co-workers, Melissa Harrison and Linda Thorson, knew of her book and when their Altrusa club was looking for a “Make a Difference Day” project, they shared Cathy’s book with the club membership. “It’s typical of the club to perhaps donate $1000 or so to a project, but upon viewing the book, it was unanimously decided to fund the publication of 1000 copies at $6,100,” Melissa said. Cathy was “overwhelmed” at their generosity and was very excited that her book would actually be printed. The book shipment arrived the day before Thanksgiving.

Cathy hopes her book will “make a difference” and she’s grateful to her colleagues for helping her tell the story. “We all have personal stories, that if told can help others,” Cathy says. “There are more books in me, I’m sure,” she adds, “just as there are books in each of us and I’ve already started the second one.”

An added bonus to Cathy’s experience as an author is her book is illustrated by her sister Nan, keeping it all in the family. We’re proud of you Cathy, not only for overcoming a huge obstacle in your family, but for being willing to share your story in such a meaningful way.
Who Am I?

At four years old and a preschool grad, this redheaded Californian could already read well above grade level.

A good skill for her profession!!

E-mail cathy.nelson@wwcc.edu with your answer.

Person with first correct guess wins a Kudo bar!!

Remember to send in your own photo soon!!

Bragging Rights & Kudos

Our Allied Health/Transitional Studies I-BEST Program has been nominated for the 2009 Bellwether Award for outstanding achievements associated with the program. As of November 11, Marleen Ramsey, Transitional Studies Director and Suky Binney, Allied Health/Transitional Studies I-BEST Instructor/Co-Advisor, submitted the application and presentation proposal for review by the Community College Futures Assembly. Every year this prestigious award is presented to recognize outstanding and innovative programs and practices that are successfully leading community colleges into the future.

Wellness at Work

Holiday Eating Survival Tips

Holiday meals are rapidly approaching. Are you ready to pig out or do you plan to eat sensibly? Here are a few tips on serving sizes that may help eliminate weight gain:

**Interested in Serving Sizes?**

(Visual size of a serving is in parentheses)

1 Pasta Serving = 1/3 to 1/2 cup (half a tennis ball)
1 Meat, Poultry or Fish Serving = 2-3 oz. (deck of cards)
1 Milk or Yogurt Serving = 1 cup (size of your fist)
1 Natural Cheese Serving = 1 1/2 oz. (4 dice stacked on top of each other)
1 Serving Fruit = 1/2 cup (half a tennis ball)
1 Serving Grains = 1/2 cup if cooked, 3/4 cup if cold cereal (oatmeal - an ice cream scoop; cold cereal - a teacup to a fist)

Serving sizes are created for the purpose of giving people healthy and appropriate nutrition information and guidelines. They are established so that what you see on the Nutrition Facts labels on food products is somewhat standardized. It’s also a way for government agencies like the USDA to recommend amounts of different types of foods for optimal health and weight control.

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**Condolences**

Our sincere condolences go to Pat Margerum at the passing of her sister, Linda, two weeks ago following a short illness. Please keep Pat in your thoughts and prayers.

**Updates:**

Lisa Rasmussen wrote that her mom, Jo Anne, was admitted to St. Mary Medical Center on Tuesday. “She is doing fine,” Lisa says, “but I realized we needed to get some things looked at. The doctor said she’ll be there three days although it wouldn’t surprise me if it was longer than that.” While Jo Ann is being evaluated, Lisa plans to get a hospital bed in place on the main level of their home. Lisa said Jo Anne would love hearing from her WWCC friends but since they aren’t sure when she’ll be home, mail should be sent to their home.

**A Message from Kristi**

A note from Kristi after she and Forrest returned home Monday afternoon from Seattle:

“I’m doing well--just in the waiting game now while I heal from the surgery. I had great pathology results, and they believe they were able to get all the cancer with clean margins--great news for us. I feel just good enough to be dangerous (or get myself in trouble), and they cleared me to drive. Good thing I planned all this over the holidays so I can enjoy ordering other people around as I have some limitations on lifting (2-5 pounds, and my doctor reminded me a gallon of milk weighs 8 pounds). Seriously, I’m really doing well and look forward to being back in the office come the new year.

Hope you all have a wonderful holiday!

**Happy Holidays to All!!**