The Reading Connection

By Jordan Fabish

Honoring Ruth and Hallie

For demonstrating lasting contributions in

**Extraordinary SERVICE to local reading councils and to the California Reading Association,**

**Outstanding DEDICATION to the cause of literacy,**

**Effective LEADERSHIP in the field of reading/language arts,**

**Recognized SCHOLARSHIP by professional peers,**

**and for serving as a MODEL, inspiring those who follow,**

Drs. Hallie Kay Yopp and Ruth Helen Yopp of California State University, Fullerton, were inducted into the California Reading Association Hall of Fame at its annual conference held in early November in San Jose, thereby bringing honor to themselves, to the university, and even to us CSUF grads. As you worked through your masters program here, do you remember reading your second or third "Yopp and Yopp" journal article and realizing that these renowned authors with the unusual names were actually here at your university? Remember the warm confidence you felt, knowing the esteem your program merited because of the quality of the CSUF faculty? Yet, perhaps you came to class every Monday and Wednesday, wrote up your requisite journal articles, enriched your understanding of the reading process, and went your way without ever seeing or hearing Ruth and Hallie Yopp, without experiencing these "legends in their own time," as my friend from UCLA calls them. If you can ever plan to take one of their classes or to hear them speak, DO IT! Meanwhile, I hope you will enjoy getting to know a bit about the California Reading Association's choice for its Hall of Fame, 2000, via your R.E.G. newsletter.

Hallie Yopp Slowik, Ph.D., is the university's graduate coordinator of the bilingual/bicultural education and elementary curriculum and instruction concentrations in the master of science degree program in education. Ruth Yopp-Edwards, Ph.D., is co-chair of the Elementary, Bilingual and Reading Education Department. But they were once students in Dr. Bishop's READ 508 course, just as we were! While teaching full-time in the public schools, Hallie obtained her degree in Reading, Ruth in Curriculum and Instruction, and both received the Edwin Carr Fellowship for their "potential to make significant contributions to the field of education." Talk about living up to your potential! Both young women, thoroughly dedicated to teaching, were persuaded by the late Harry Singer of UC Riverside to enter the Ph.D. program under his mentorship. They did so, but with the earnest intention of staying in the K-12 classroom and simply becoming the finest and most educated teachers they could be. Dr. Singer accepted their choice until, as they neared the end of their doctorates in 1986, two positions opened up at CSUF, and he urged them, "Please apply." They have been Fullerton faculty members since that time, becoming the finest and most educated teachers they could be, and much more.

Ideally matched with Fullerton's academic atmosphere of energy, scholarship, research, and service, Ruth and Hallie have authored nearly 100 articles, policies, and position papers; three books, Literature-Based Reading Activities, recently released in its third edition, Oo-pples and Boo-noo-noos: Songs and Activities for Phonemic Awareness, and Ready for Reading (co-authored with Ashley Bishop), with book contracts for two more; have served on influential national, state, and local literacy committees; travel...
frequently to speak on their current research or signature subjects, phonemic awareness (Hallie) and comprehension (Ruth); continue to earn the affection and admiration of their students, and only yearn for time to pursue yet another education-based interest. Although the voluminous paperwork that accompanies their positions of responsibility can be tedious, they say it is more than balanced by the university's incredible, highly committed faculty, stellar students, and great opportunities for their own learning.

It is easy to see, then, why one day Hallie opened her mail to find that she and Ruth had been chosen for CRA's Hall of Fame. "We were surprised and delighted." Already slated to speak on the topic of vocabulary development at the annual Research Institute, Ruth and Hallie were also honored at an awards dinner where they were touched by a standing ovation from the appreciative crowd of fellow-educators that included a beaming Ashley Bishop, beloved colleague whom they brought as their guest. The next day their Hall of Fame address urged teachers to "fit the curriculum to the child." Citing their own children's individual paths to literacy, how many more approaches to teaching and learning must educators create for our increasingly diverse population? This theme correlates with their concern that scripted curriculae debases children and teachers' individual needs and commitment, which, instead, need to be respected and valued. Fortunately for the educational community, the scholarly opinions of Ruth and Hallie Yopp influence a wide base—which is exactly why they are now in CRA's Hall of Fame.

More personally, yes, they are twins. Raised to be comfortable together, they clearly are. I asked if they recalled how they learned to read, which they did not, but said their parents read to them, their father even reciting poetry from memory. Hallie remembered a "horse story" stage, reading the Marguerite Henry books like Sea Star; Ruth went for Nancy Drew and Cherry Ames. Both named E. B. White's Charlotte's Web and Madeleine L'Engle's A Wrinkle in Time as childhood favorites, The Watsons go to Birmingham as a recent one. And speaking of favorites, they hold researcher-writers P. David Pearson, Richard Allington, and Keith Stanovich in especially high regard. Their current pleasure-reading is likely to be an Oprah "airport book" grabbed on the way to catch a plane or, happily for them, any number of children's books on which they must always stay current in order to revise their own publications.

Hallie: "Oh yes! Must read for fun. It's what keeps one alive."

Ruth: "It's part of my bedtime ritual, even if I only stay awake ten minutes."

They both have husbands and children, whom these women quite cheerfully and naturally put first, despite a rather astonishing workload. It means a lot of 10:00 P.M. projects.

As Hallie's graduate assistant during my last two semesters in the reading program, I got a pretty close look at her and Ruth in action. I still marvel. Accomplishing about three times more than anyone should, they do so with grace and skill. Their generosity of spirit and enthusiasm for life and learning are unforgettable.

R.E.G.: "From the outside, everything looks easy for you, but something must be hard. What do you struggle with?"

Ruth and Hallie: "Exercise!"

Hallie: "If I could exercise regularly, then I would feel very much in balance."

Ahh, they're human!
Faculty Footnotes

By Kathi Bartle Angus

The Reading Program, along with all other education units, has just completed a review process. California Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) representatives concluded their four-day examination on November 15 by issuing a preliminary report. Prior to the visit education units conducted and wrote an Institutional Self-Study Report. The report examines the state and program standards and how they are met in a course by course basis. During the visit, faculty, students, alumni, and employers of alumni are interviewed by both CTC and NCATE representatives. Reading Educators Guild representatives, Peggy Hammer and Melanie Haeri, were part of the interview process. Faculty are grateful to the students, alumni, and employers who generously gave of their time to participate in the interviews.

The preliminary report indicates a recommendation of accreditation for all units. Although a few concerns were identified, CTC and NCATE determined that there were numerous compensating strengths in both the institution and program areas. To put this in perspective, a unanimous recommendation without stipulations is extremely rare. Faculty in the Reading Program are delighted and gratified with the result. We are honored to be an integral part of such a dynamic and highly respected education unit.

Some of the strengths of the Reading Program identified by CTC include:

Candidates, graduates, and professionals commented that reading faculty are highly valued for their scholarly and professional contributions to the reading community.
Teachers and administrators commented on the positive impact of Reading Program graduates at the school district level. Candidates and graduates are involved in leadership activities including staff development, curriculum design, and mentoring.
Cohorts meeting at off-campus locations provide strong links with school districts.
Technology is being infused throughout the program.
Reading clinics provide an excellent opportunity for the application of theories as well as a service to at-risk learners.

The leadership provided by Ash Bishop, as program coordinator, cannot be underestimated in view of this report. His dedication, expertise, and management skills laid the groundwork for this highly successful review.

Hancock Fund

The Hancock Fund was established to honor Dr. Deborah Osen Hancock for her contributions to the field of reading and specifically to the Reading Department. The fund is solely for use by the CSUF Reading Clinic. Over the years, the fund has supplied books and technology for use by clinicians and students. REG would like to thank the following members for their generous contributions to the Hancock Fund:

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If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, by being a regular column writer or just an occasional article donator, please contact Jan Bagwell at jbagwell@fullerton.edu. We need all of you to help make REG great!