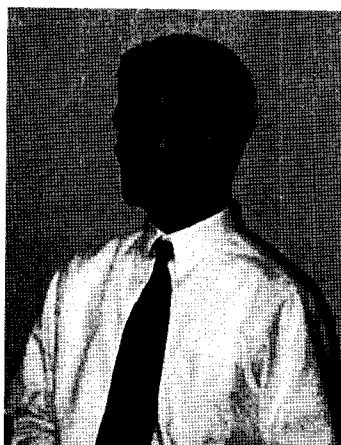


FOCAL POINTS

Big Doings During the Summer Social Studies-Reading Institute

By all accounts the June 18 to July 2 Social Studies Institute was a great success. The staff comprised two experts for each strand: **Dr. Joe Pika** and **Dr. Nora Hyland** in civics, **Dr. Bonnie Meszaros** and **Dr. Jim O'Neil** in economics, **Dr. Peter Rees** and **MaryAnna Taylor** in geography, and **Fran O'Malley** and **Carole Wilkinson** in history. Dr. Pika was the director.

There were twenty participants from K-5, each of whom was already quite knowledgeable in one of the strands. Each person was assigned to one of the remaining three strands



and received **Fran O'Malley** opens the Aug 20 session. a generous helping of content in that area. All were also trained or re-trained in making Binko presentations.

The culminating project was to devise a lesson integrating the two familiar strands and reading. On August 20, the entire group met at the Paradee Center to make their presentations to the staff and to invited district administrators. It is hoped that this experience will encourage them to continue this type of integration and to share with their colleagues what they've learned. We observed one such impressive presentation. If it was a fair sample of the quality of the presentations, some students are in for exciting social studies work this year.

Eight TCs were participants: **Anne Deinert, Jen Frasher, Linda Haley, Betty Hudson, Doriel Moorman, Anabelle O'Malley, Judy Purcell, and Mary Schoettinger.**

National Council for Geographic Education

The National Council for Geographic Education convention was held in Vancouver, British Columbia in August this year. In spite of the distance, several people attended. We're especially proud of the four Teacher Consultants who received the Distinguished Teacher Award. It was awarded to only thirty-nine teachers nationwide this year, so Delaware garnered a more than respectable share.

The recipients, nominated by **Dr. Peter Rees**, were **Claudia Hughes** of Baltz Elementary School, **Becky Reed** of Gunning Bedford Middle School, **Mary Schoettinger** of Star Hill Elementary School, and **Edna Turner** of Woodbridge Middle School.

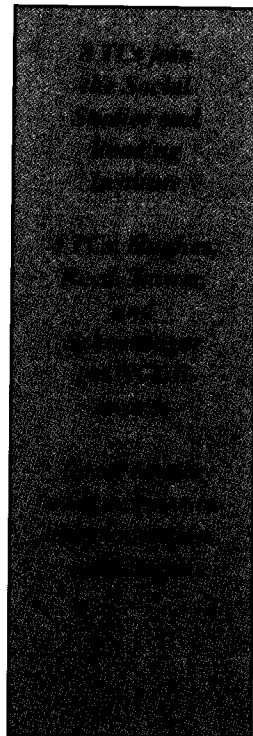


L - R, Becky Reed, Edna Turner, Mary Schoettinger
Claudia Hughes was unable to attend.

Extending the convention Cruising the Inside Passage by MaryAnna Taylor

After attending the NCGE Conference in Vancouver, my husband and I boarded the *Radiance of the Seas* for a memorable trip through Alaska's Inside Passage. The days of the gold rush are long since passed but our trip offered many "golden" opportunities. Launched in April, the *Radiance* is a magnificent gas turbine vessel and it was smooth sailing all the way.

See Taylor on Page 6



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Mourning

Several Delaware families have been personally impacted by the frightful attacks of September 11. All Delaware mourns with them and all who lost loved ones.

The Alliance, in common with the National Geographic Society, has also suffered a loss in the attack. Two long-time NGS employees were on the American Airlines Flight 77, which crashed into the Pentagon. Ann Judge and Joe Ferguson were escorting three middle school teachers and three of their students on a field trip to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary in California, a part of the NGS Sustainable Seas Expedition.

In 1987, Mississippi native Joe Ferguson became one of the first full-time employees of the Society's Geography Education Program, then in its inception. Those of us who attended NGS institutes or NCGE conventions were familiar with his quirky sense of humor, happy mien and steady interest in and support for geography education.

Ann Judge was a Society employee for twenty-two years, working in the travel office. Her skills led her to the directorship of that office in 1997. Barbara Chow of the Society Geography Education Department said, "Her office was filled with mementos of her travels with teachers and with gifts from around the world brought back to her by grateful NGS photographers, writers, and other staff. Ann was an unparalleled travel wiz, a hopeless Diet Coke addict, and infectiously upbeat and funny company."

We shall miss them both and mourn too with the families of the six with whom they

Mission Geography

Are you interested in materials that engage your students in active, "hands-on" inquiry type learning activities? Do you need lessons that develop students' understanding of environment-society relations and earth science?

NASA and the geography community through the Geography Education National Implementation Project (GENIP) have entered into a partnership to produce such materials. **Mission Geography** is curriculum support material that links the content, skills, and perspectives of the *National Geography Standards: Geography for Life* with NASA's missions and scientific results. The materials,

organized at three grade levels (K-4, 5-8, 9-12), are consistent with the National Geography Standards and support the Delaware Standards. The materials focus on ways NASA's missions use spatial analysis and other geographic skills to solve real-world problems. The materials use an investigative approach that teaches interesting and meaningful geography content by modeling geographic thinking and problem solving. They involve students in real-world contexts.

Each **Mission Geography** module consists of 3-4 investigative lessons. Each lesson is complete with background information, images, and briefings that educators and learners need to fully understand the featured concepts of the lesson. A lesson can be used independently or integrated into other curriculum studies. Other related curricular (science, mathematics, technology) standards are included in the lessons when appropriate. The module topics are as follows:

Elementary (K-4)

- Exploring Our Planet From Above
- Water, Water, Almost Everywhere
- Where On Earth Do Humans Live?
- Paths

Middle School (5-8)

- Volcanoes - Local Hazards, Global Issue
- Mars and Earth - The Quest for Life
- Human Footprints on Earth as Seen by NASA Scientists
- Remote Sensing and Geo-Archaeology

High School (9-12)

- What's Up With Earth's Water Resources?
- Where Will Your Next Meal Come From? Inquiries about Food, People, and Earth?
- What Are the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change?

During the summer two Delaware TCs, Mary Alice Aguilar (Redding Intermediate School) and Joel Glazier (George Read Middle School) attended the **Mission Geography** training workshop at Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas. The purpose of the workshop was to prepare teacher-consultants to disseminate the **Mission Geography** curriculum support materials. If you are interested in scheduling a professional development workshop on these materials you may contact the Alliance office (831-6783). More information about the materials may be found on the Mission Geography website. <http://www.missiongeography.org>.

Treasures on the Bookshelf

Our selections this time have a number of themes in common: besides being nonfiction, both are travel accounts in whole or part, and both are at least partly concerned with the developing transportation technology of the nineteenth century.

Nothing Like It in the World, The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863-1869, by Stephen E. Ambrose, Simon & Schuster, 2000

Ambrose concerns himself here with the principal backers, movers and technicians involved in the post-Civil War effort to get a railroad line across the country, from the eastern lines already in existence to the Pacific. Since this endeavor was a huge stretch requiring literally herculean feats of both engineering and actual construction, it needed and got a few men of political influence to ease the way for government participation, a few men of financial power and influence to provide and otherwise find funding, a few men of vision and skill to discover manageable routes through some of the most intimidating terrain imaginable. Last of all, the project employed literally thousands of laborers, mostly Chinese toward the West and Irish toward the East. This was the last great building effort to be accomplished with only hand tools.

Abraham Lincoln was running for President in 1859 when he met Grenville Dodge at a convention in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Dodge was then a highly regarded railroad engineer, and Lincoln was a railroad lawyer, greatly interested in expanding the system westward. He immediately engaged Dodge in conversation regarding the best route (both central and southern were being considered) to the Pacific. After Dodge's assurances that the project was possible, Lincoln became and remained to his death its most prominent political proponent.

Theodore P. Judah actually founded the Central Pacific Railroad and surveyed and settled on the route over the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Along with his wife, he was instrumental in persuading Congress to fund the project, both with actual money and with sections of land. It was he who pushed the project forward during the Civil War years and made it happen before others believed in its possibility; however, he died before any actual work was done.

Grenville M. Dodge, after serving heroically in the Civil war, took over as the chief engineer of the Union Pacific. Like Judah, he was responsible for choosing the important routes, those across the Black Hills, Wyoming and Utah. Before the war, he had convinced Lincoln that following the Platte River through Nebraska was the most practical choice, and he helped to foster bills in 1862 and 1864 that made the road possible.

These two men, along with numerous surveying crews not otherwise named, laid the actual groundwork that

allowed the work crews to push forward, but most people, especially those with money to invest, thought the project was impossible of completion. All equipment and supplies had to be transported from the Eastern cities either by wagon across the plains or by ship around South America or be transshipped through Panama. That in itself seemed insurmountable to most people.

This is where the Big Four of the Central Pacific come in. Leland Stanford was president and also the main politician; Hollis P. Huntington was the money man, raising funds in New York, Boston and Washington, as well as lobbying Congress for funds; Charles Crocker was the general construction supervisor; Mark Hopkins kept the books. They gave hugely of time and support, putting their fortunes at risk, but they gained inestimable wealth.

As always with Ambrose, the prose is crystal clear and the research impeccable. We found it somewhat less smooth than his usual, but the one real drawback, and it is an enormous one, is that there are no maps. Except for the endpapers map which shows a few major difficult areas but no detail, there are absolutely no maps. This forced repeated recourse to atlases, but often they did not label the specific topographical formation one was looking for, not being tailored for those interested in early railroads.



River Horse, A Voyage Across America, by William Least Heat-Moon, Houghton Mifflin, 1999

At first glance, this book would appear to have little to do with the Ambrose one, being as it is a late twentieth century account of a trip taken by one principal and intermittently a few of his friends. However, since Heat-Moon was fulfilling a dream of traveling across the country from coast to coast in a small boat, he of necessity made use of the other major nineteenth century technology, that of canals. Of course, rivers comprised the major portion of his trip.

Some people may be put off by the literary device he uses to prevent embarrassment to any of the seven friends who joined him serially. We could find no reason for the subterfuge, since not one of the seven did or said anything that would cause him or her a blush. It did, however, provide the reader with the fun of trying to distinguish when the change between their stints took place. We were entirely unable to find any seams; Heat-Moon was extraordinarily careful with his pronouns and was so without any apparent awkwardness. His name for his companions was Pilotis, and he uses that title to avoid pronouns.

See *River Horse*, page 4