

A Publication of the  
Global Awareness  
Network of NAGC

# Global Visions



Issue 3  
April, 2010

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## In this issue

- The Power of One— Reflections from our Chair
- Linda Kreger Silverman offers inspiration and new insights to change worrying into wonderment!
- Get an insiders view of the NAGC proposal selection process.
- A look at how gifted education has changed in America—and how some countries are at the beginning of their gifted education journey.
- Resources and ideas to generate global awareness in your field.

## A message from our Chair, Michele Kane...

### The Power of One

By Michele Kane; Chair, Global Awareness Network



Growing up in a small Midwest town in the 50's and 60's it would hardly be expected that political events would consume much of the activities of the town or be a place for political protests. However, as the home of the world headquarters for the manufacturing of napalm and the site of a proposed nuclear power plant, our little town saw plenty of action. Marches, rallies, speeches, protestors (for and against), neighbors chaining themselves to the gates of the plant and constant rhetoric was the norm. Against this backdrop, the nightly family dinner table conversation was lively and often heated. The issues of the sixties were debated as we learned to develop our points and do our homework before venturing an opinion. My parents were well-read, involved and thoughtful and were teaching us those same values of political engagement through modeling. Consequently, I have always been interested in the political arena while understanding the need to delve deeply and to do something about the issues I care about passionately.

From an early age, I learned that I could access political power by devoting my energies to those causes that consumed me. Whether it was working at a local senior center, distributing leaflets at a rally, learning more facts about nuclear proliferation or organizing a fund-raiser, I was encouraged and supported in learning to access and then share my own voice. This issue of *Global Visions* has a focus on providing information and inspiration with ideas offered that are both personal and interdependent.

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The Power of One

(cont. from page 1)

Personal narratives that share the journey as well as opportunities for being actively involved in the change process are presented. Our own stories shape our work just as the stories of those we guide are shaped by their personal experiences.

Regardless of whether we live in a rural or urban environment there are multiple ways to encourage the expression of self through service-learning or personal action. We can help gifted youngsters to experience the *Power of One*. We can model the goals that are specific to the Global Awareness Network:

- **To serve as a source of information and inspiration regarding global issues that impact gifted education and all the children in the world.**
- **To serve the psychological needs of gifted and talented children by creating avenues that generate hope and enable active involvement in constructive change.**

The *Power of One* when multiplied is power indeed!! Can you think of something you can do to provide information regarding global issue or to support active involvement in constructive change? When you do then write and let me know—let's see what our collective efforts can yield on behalf of gifted and talented children.

Or send a thank you note to someone who is working on behalf of those who are making service their life work. Often they work long days without recognition or thanks. Offering gratitude and appreciation can help to support and hearten their efforts. By experiencing the *Power of One* gifted youngsters will begin to become familiar with their own capabilities and potential. Through collaboration we can ensure that those who follow will continue our work and share in the joy of service. Together we will generate hope in the days ahead.



## **Taking a closer look at each of our network goals...**

For the next several issues, our focus will be on one or two of the particular goals that the Global Awareness Network has established. We will highlight these goals by providing related materials, research and information specific to each goal. This issue will focus on the first two goals of the NAGC Global Awareness Network:

**To serve as a source of information and inspiration regarding global issues that impact gifted education and all the children in the world.**

**To serve the psychological needs of gifted and talented children by creating avenues that generate hope and enable active involvement in constructive change.**

*Linda Kreger Silverman offers a timely piece about changing perspectives. During this stressful season in the academic year, perhaps we can still find time for wonderment in our students and our lives.*



## From Worry to Wonder to Wonderment

Linda Kreger Silverman

I want to share an epiphany. One of the blessings of giftedness is an exquisite ability to worry. If they gave grades in school for worrying, gifted people would earn A+ in this subject. You don't have to be gifted to worry, but it really helps. Think of it this way. To be a truly great worrier, you have to have a wonderful mind (Intellectual Overexcitability) that has greater awareness, can generate possibilities, can predict consequences and can see trends. And you need heightened imagination (Imaginational Overexcitability), so that you can envision all kinds of catastrophic outcomes. Add to this mix deep empathy (Emotional Overexcitability), so that you can feel and experience what other people have suffered, might be going through or could possibly endure.

Top it off with feeling responsible for everything that happens. "If only I had..."; "I should have..."; "I need to..." If it is your job to prevent problems from happening, or to fix problems—whether or not you created them, there is a great deal to worry about. If you paid attention to how much time you spend worrying, you might find that you spend more time with this preoccupation than with anything else you do or think about.

Years ago, Betty Maxwell introduced me to the work of Peace Pilgrim. I remember being struck by Peace Pilgrim's view that worry was simply a habit that the nicest people develop.

How often are you worrying about the present moment? The present is usually all right. If you're worrying, you're either agonizing over the past which you should have forgotten long ago or else you're apprehensive over the future which hasn't even come yet. We tend to skim right over the *present moment*... If you don't live in the present moment, you never get around to living at all. And if you do live the present moment, you tend not to worry. For me, every moment is a new and wonderful opportunity to be of service. (Peace Pilgrim, 1991, p. 64)

While moved by these words, I wasn't ready to let go of worrying. I'm very attached to this habit, having practiced it my entire life. It was instilled in me as a child that it is my responsibility to repair the world. A "wise" child, I was taught, accepts this obligation with an open heart. I began making To Do lists at the age of 11. As the years piled up, the responsibilities piled higher and higher, and the To Do lists got longer and longer—ridiculously so. It became increasingly apparent that if lived to be 100, it was impossible to **do** all the things I promised myself I would accomplish. I add to the list much faster than I subtract tasks I've completed.

In January of 2009, I was introduced to the work of Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, a brain researcher who had experienced a left-hemispheric stroke in her mid-thirties that robbed her of her abilities to talk, walk, write, calculate, plan and all the life skills we take for granted. But in their place, she discovered Nirvana. Thankfully, she recovered and is teaching the world that Nirvana is available to all of us. It means letting go of the past and future, and staying in the *present moment*: the same message Peace Pilgrim and other enlightened beings have told us for ages. This time it's coming from a brain researcher and supported by science. Jill's story is very inspiring. You can find it on YouTube. Just type in "Dr. Jill" to see her TED presentation; this may be the most life-changing 18 minutes of your life. I've watched it over and over again. And then order her book, *My Stroke of Insight*, for concrete suggestions on how to change



One little person giving all her time to peace can make news. Many people, giving some of their time, can make history. ~ Peace Pilgrim



In her book, Jill says that the part of your brain that gives you negative messages is the size of a peanut. She calls it the “Peanut Gallery.” “I give my story-teller full permission to whine rampantly between 9-9:30 am and then again between 9-9:30 pm. If it accidentally misses *whine time*, it is not allowed to reengage in that behavior until its next allotted appointment” (Taylor, 2006, pp. 152-153).

So what was my epiphany? One evening I was worrying about two inconsequential things, and asking myself, “How am I going to (make them happen)?” I caught myself and changed the question in my mind to, “I **wonder** how ... will happen?” Instantly, the phone rang and one of the problems was solved. A few minutes later, while wondering what would happen with my other concern, there was a knock on the door, and, again, the problem solved itself! I didn’t have to **do** anything. All I did was change **worry** to **wonder**. It felt like an exhilarating message from the universe.

**Wonder** is curiosity. Gifted people excel at curiosity. “I wonder...” is what usually gets me out of bed in the morning. As I began to tell other people about changing **worry** to **wonder**, it seemed to have a positive impact. But not on everyone. “I wonder where my keys are” doesn’t have the same effect. It took a couple weeks to find the missing piece of the equation: **wonderment!** According to the Microsoft thesaurus, **wonderment** is “amazement,” “astonishment,” “awe,” “surprise.” I would like to add **joy, delight** and **appreciation** to that list. What a gift not to have to figure everything out myself. Instead of **making** things happen—my usual way of being in the world, I **allowed** them to happen. Not a new concept, but one I needed to “get” at a deep level. (When we moved to the mountains, our daughter, Miriam, wrote in a college paper, “My father came to the mountains to enjoy them, and my mother came to move them.”)

We live in uncertain times. There is no such thing as job security. We can’t rely on our investments. We don’t know what the future will bring. Those of us who need to feel in control of our lives are swept into worrying frenzies. Sleeping pills and antidepressants are becoming household staples. We ask ourselves, “*What are we going to do?*”

Maybe we’re not supposed to **do** anything. Maybe we’re supposed to ride the wave, experience life as an adventure, and see what happens when we turn the page. Maybe it’s all about **allowing** and experiencing **gratitude** when things turn out OK.

The formula is **changing worry to wonder to wonderment**. This is probably a life lesson I will need to re-learn often.

### References

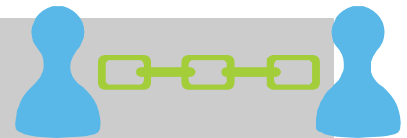
*Peace Pilgrim: Her life and work in her own words*. (1991). (“Compiled by some of her friends.”) Santa Fe, NM: An Ocean Tree Book.

Taylor, J. B. (2006). *My stroke of insight: A brain scientist’s personal journey*. New York: Viking.

Teach your students about the Peace Pilgrim. Find out more by visiting this website dedicated to her mission:

[www.peacepilgrim.com](http://www.peacepilgrim.com)

# UPDATE ON OUR SISTER ORGANIZATION, NZAGC!



*Establishing a sister relationship relates directly to our first network goal...*

The New Zealand Association for Gifted Children (NZAGC) exists to promote the needs of gifted kids at national level and support and foster initiatives at local level which meet those needs.

Their Constitution puts this more formally as:

"NZAGC will champion the cause of gifted children at home, in their schooling and beyond. NZAGC will foster the educational and social development of gifted children through the achievement of a climate in which giftedness is recognized, understood and accepted as

a valuable human attribute and in which the special needs of gifted children are met fully, effectively and with generosity."

The NZAGC provides an environment where gifted children, their parents, teachers and other education professionals can meet, learn from each other and help each other. Please use this website to make contact with members or others who can assist.



Sister organizations abound. Have you checked or researched the sister relationships in your city? To find out more, visit <http://www.sister-cities.org/>

## Inspirational quotes that relate to our first two goals...

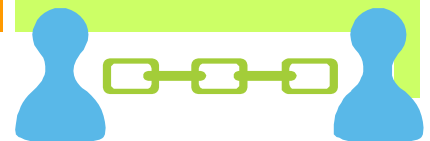
In the present circumstances, no one can afford to assume that someone else will solve their problems. Every individual has a responsibility to help guide our global family in the right direction. Good wishes are not sufficient. We must become actively engaged. ~Dalai Lama

The thing that lies at the foundation of positive change, the way I see it, is service to a fellow human being. ~Lech Walesa

You can't be afraid of change. You have to embrace it and you have to turn it into a positive. ~Theo Epstein

The people are learning that you cannot leave decisions only to leaders. Local groups have to create the political will for change, rather than waiting for others to do things for them. This is where positive, and sustainable, change begins. ~Wangari Maathai

## HEROES GENERATE HOPE... FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN, TOO!



*Generate Hope (goal #2) by sharing and reading the following resources*

<http://myhero.com/myhero/home.asp>

If you have never visited this website, today is the day. If you have created a class page with your students, or used this as a resource to show teachers how to post relevant work with their students, be sure to suggest it to someone new this month. This amazing

resource allows anyone to establish a special webpage for a hero of his/her choice. Heroes are classified in a number of ways.

Just one example of an interesting hero to highlight from this site: Benjamin S. Carson, MD. This gifted student was completely failing 5th grade until his mother intervened.

Read his story at the site, or his books: The Big Picture, Think Big (In this book, each letter in Think Big stands for another word: T is for Talent, H is for Honesty, etc.) and Gifted Hands.

**Nominate your own hero at CNN**

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/>

*Barbara Mitchell Hutton sheds light on the process for submitting proposals to NAGC for conference presentations. Barbara has also worked diligently on our upcoming Action Lab! You will want to be a part of this innovative adventure!*



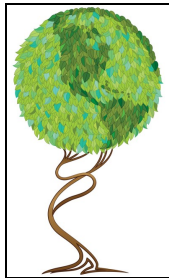
### **Proposal Submissions Reaches all Time High!**

Thank you to the 48 members who submitted proposals to the Global Awareness Network this year. Each proposal was reviewed by at least three reviewers. The six volunteers had their hands full reviewing between 18 – 22 proposals each in a blind review process. The proposals were randomly assigned by the national office. The proposals were measured on a scale from 1 – 5 against the goals of the Network.

It then fell to the Program Chair to take the reviewers evaluations and other factors such as diversity of topics and the like to build the recommended Global Awareness Network program to the national program committee. This is quite a challenge. Global Awareness had 14 regular session slots and two additional slots for “Super Sunday” a new feature of the convention this year. We had unlimited Poster Session slots. Based on the preferences indicated on the proposals, we were able to schedule 14 regular sessions, two Sunday sessions and 15 poster sessions. Many high quality proposals were not scheduled because the presenters indicated they would not accept a Poster Session slot.

How is the number of presentation slots determined? It isn't quite rocket science but it is a combination of factors. The number of rooms available at the convention venue is the first restriction. Following that, the total number of network members, the number of proposals received and the number of attendees historically attending the Network strand sessions are all factored. In the past decade the Global Awareness Network sessions have varied between a high of 39 sessions in 2003 when there were 7 international presentations (which occasionally became it's own strand) as well as a marketplace (which eventually became poster sessions) and the lowest number of sessions in the past decade was 13 in St. Louis last year.

Whether your proposal was accepted for the convention this year or not, *Global Visions* is an effective way to reach at least as many people as would hear your message at the convention. I urge you to consider submitting an article, art work or some other medium to share with our Network.



***Be there when the Global Awareness Network puts  
Our Mission into ACTION in Atlanta!***



The Global Awareness Network is very excited to announce that beginning in Atlanta in November 2010 and continuing in New Orleans in 2011 and Denver in 2012, the Network will be sponsoring a Community Action in the host city. We are partnering with local organizations to impact local needs. In Atlanta, we will work with Habitat for Humanity on homes that are in the process of being built. Our crew will complete projects not finished from the weekend before and begin tasks to be completed by other volunteers on the following Saturday and Sunday. The number of participants is restricted to the number of homes in process. We can have up to two crews of 15 people working on two homes. These GA signature events will be scheduled on Thursday as one of the Action Lab choices and will have the same cost associated with it as the other Action Labs.

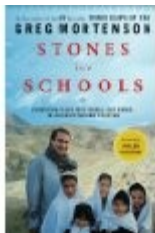
In addition to the calluses you may get, you will also receive a curriculum outline for developing your own community action projects, the obligatory volunteer t-shirt, lunch and other “premiums” being developed. You will need to bring work gloves and pack some work clothes as well as your convention best. Registration for this event will open in April with the other Action Labs. We'll be putting together a slide show of our adventure to present at the Global Gala (more on that in the next issue) on Saturday night.

***Sign up early to be sure you are a part of this real Putting it into Practice!***

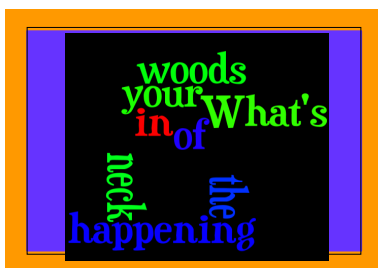


## Member Showcase: What's happening in your neck of the woods?

Michele Kane and Belinda Veillon will host their annual book study again this year at the upcoming convention. The featured read will be *Stones into Schools – Promoting Peace with Books, not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan* by Greg Mortenson



This book is the sequel to *Three Cups of Tea*. Be sure to stay global and make this a "must" for your summer reads!



In The Oak Hills Local School District located in Ohio, art teacher Reyne Davis had her students craft "House Pins" out of cardboard and then shellac. The house pins were sold at district schools to collect money for the homeless in Haiti.



What's happening in your school or district that promotes global awareness?

Let us know by sending an e-mail to: [Sylvia.stcy@gmail.com](mailto:Sylvia.stcy@gmail.com)



**Are you ready for Atlanta? The Global Awareness Network is going to have an Action Lab that is as dynamic and innovative as you can imagine. Hint: It will be a collaborative project with Habitat for Humanity! We will also host a Global Gala that will top off the list of events at NAGC this year! Stay tuned for more details soon!**

### *In the end*

The Human Kindness Foundation helps prisoners and prison staff recognize their depth as individuals so that they behave accordingly.

<http://www.humankindness.org/>

*Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate. ~ Albert Schweitzer*

### Random Acts of Gratitude!

Have you thanked someone yet in the name of our network, as was suggested in our last issue? Let's make this list grow...Sending an e-mail counts, too! Just let us know who you thanked and how they have impacted our vision.

**Annemarie Roeper**- Founder of the Global Awareness Network.

**Joe Ricketts**- Founder of Opportunity Education.



### *Only kindness matters...*

Visit the website link to start learning more about Acts of Kindness you can participate in with your staff and students. This organization's mission

statement:

**Generosity.. Got It . Give It. Good!**

Includes teachers guides, lesson plans and everything is free for you and your students.

<http://www.actsofkindness.org/>

Read this blog compiled by editor Sylvia St. Cyr for an interesting comparison of gifted education in our country and Botswana. The roots of our cause are evident in the writings of Dr. Akinsola. United States educators have blazed a trail for others to follow as we continue



## Looking forwards... Looking Back....

Two pieces of information worth reading can be found at the links below. The first link launches a website that NAGC established to show the history of gifted education in the United States. Perhaps you are aware that a major catalyst for gifted education was the launching of Sputnik in the late 1950's. Did you also know that the initial process for gifted education began in 1868 when William Torrey Harris, Superintendent of Public Schools for St. Louis, instituted the earliest systematic efforts in public schools to educate gifted students? How interesting that our recent convention brought us back to the doorstep of St. Louis where the hard work of establishing gifted programs was initiated.

<http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=607>

Contrasting the historical piece from NAGC is an paper written by a professor from The University of Botswana. In his recent paper, **“Nurturing Gifted and Talented Students in Botswana: Setting an Agenda for Policy Framework”** Dr. Mojeed K. Akinsola stresses the need for gifted education. How frustrating it must be for an educator to stand at the same chasm in his country that we found ourselves at in the United States in 1868!

The following excerpt depicts the situation as described by Dr. Mojeed K. Akinsola.

*In Botswana there is actually no policy prescription as regards the education of the gifted (Biakolo & Afemikhe, 2002). The nearest thing is a statement in the special education section of the revised national policy that “Government is committed to the education of all children including the disabled ones and therefore will intensify efforts to increase access to education for all disabled children: Government will also expand support for non-governmental organizations which have considerable experience and expertise in this field to enable them to provide free education to disabled children” p 11. Nothing was mentioned about gifted and talented children. The inference is that such provision as is made in the regular curriculum should suffice for the learning needs of all children...Gifted students – who will be the creators and the leaders of the next generation – are the hope of Egypt in its advancement in keeping pace with civilization and progress (Elmenoufy, 2007)*

When comparing the elements of our history around gifted education in the United States with our global partner in Botswana, we see that there is still so much work to be done in the name of our highest achieving students.

[www.templetonfellows.org/projects/docs/nurturing\\_gifted\\_botswana.pdf](http://www.templetonfellows.org/projects/docs/nurturing_gifted_botswana.pdf)

**Certainly we are thankful for the pioneers in our country that brought the needs of gifted students to the forefront.**

### Excerpt from the film, “Across Time & Space”...

For a look back in time, visit this YOUTUBE link to discover more about how Annemarie and George Roeper founded the Roeper School. Did you know that they believed they survived war-torn, Nazi infiltrated Germany because they were called to serve by founding a school? This brief, excellent clip of the documentary about this remarkable school and family will be well worth your time.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNUJGM0RpFk>



“The Marienau School in Germany and the Roeper School in America were founded by the German Jewish Bondy family to teach children to find success in solving problems through tolerant, nonviolent, workable school democracy. The tragic events of the Holocaust increased the family’s dedication to their mission, that equal rights for all people – particularly children —should be a priority.”

<http://www.sffff.org/film/detail?id=370>

## Global, Creative and Fun: Things to Do

What's unique about these word equations? They are all anagrams!

Arctic expedition = An exotic iced trip

A sore throat = Orators hate

The Apple Macintosh = Machines apt to help

English children's books author Beatrix Potter = Can explore old kin stories through the rabbits

To create an anagram list of names, words, or anything, visit this wordsmith.org link.

<http://wordsmith.org/anagram/index.html>

Join this ning to stay in touch with other teachers trying to collaborate globally...

<http://globaleducation.ning.com/>

**Register for the FREE Edutopia Webinar featuring Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*, on April 15th at 1:30 p.m. at <http://www.edutopia.org/images/webinar/AW-1.html>**

Mortenson's latest book will be the topic of discussion at the Global Awareness annual 2010 Convention book chat


**EDUTOPIA WEBINAR**  
WEBINAR DATE: April 15, 2010

**REGISTER**

Thursday, April 15  
1:30 p.m. EDT/10:30 a.m. PDT

**REGISTER TODAY!**

**PRESENTER**



**The Power of One: Greg Mortenson's Crusade to Promote Peace through Project Learning**

Can one person really make a difference in the world? Join us as Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*, describes his own unlikely path from mountaineer to humanitarian.

**Presenter:** Greg Mortenson, best-selling author of *Three Cups of Tea*

**Host:** [Suzie Boss](#), journalist and Edutopia.org blogger

**Date:** Thursday, April 15

**Time:** 1:30 p.m. EDT/10:30 a.m. PDT

**Audience:** Ideal for K-12 educators and students interested in building global awareness through service learning. Excellent for school assemblies and classroom participation.

<http://www.globalawareness.com/forkids.asp>— Meet your global neighbors at Global Awareness for Kids

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