

**“Divine Appendage”
 to speak at APW meet**

by Asta Corley

Sheila Toomey, a veteran reporter for the *Anchorage Daily News* will be APW’s November luncheon speaker.

Coming from New York, Toomey has been reporting on Anchorage and Alaska since the 1980s and has been compiling the “Alaska Ear” column since 1983.

She began her reporting career in Juneau in radio and television, including a year as producer-host of public radio’s “Alaska News Nightly.” Her first assignment as a paid reporter was covering the Alaska legislature. Over the years, Toomey has been an education, legal affairs, and general assignment reporter for the *News* and recently returned to the court beat . . . “for now, at least,” she reports.

Toomey also writes for “Tales of the City,” an occasional feature column intended to get into the paper people whose stories aren’t traditionally considered “newsworthy,” according to Toomey.

Toomey has been asked to discuss the revival of the “Alaska Ear” column. She says she is willing to answer questions about the “Ear” in return for some good “Ear” items!

The luncheon is set for 11:30 a.m., on Thursday, November 1.

Ella Wright elected NFPW president

by Mariah Oxford

Ella Wright, long-time member and past president of Alaska Press Women, was elected president of the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) at its national conference September 13–15 in Indianapolis. NFPW, of which



Alaska Press Women is an affiliate, is an organization of professional communicators in journalism, broadcasting, public relations, education, publishing, and related communications fields.

Wright, a writer/editor for the U.S. Department of Interior’s Bu-

reau of Land Management (BLM) in Anchorage, said her goal is to broaden efforts to market NFPW nationwide through advertising campaigns, direct-mail marketing, and NFPW’s Web site.

“Our organization is unique because of the varieties of occupations the members hold as professional communicators. I shall support the First Amendment, professional development, advanced training to keep pace with new computer technology, and effective communications. I shall also work to diversify NFPW in terms of skill levels, genre, sexes, racial groups, and cultural ethnicities,” Wright said.

Wright previously held several offices in NFPW and in Alaska Press Women. She has received numerous awards, including Alaska Communicator of Achievement, BLM Patriotic Service Award from Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, and an Alaska Press Women communications contest award for publications.

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Pam Flowers—and her dogs—delight APW members at October luncheon meeting

by Carolyn Rinehart

One might think that, on a 2,500-mile solo journey by dogsled across the top of North America, the cold would be Pam Flowers's worst enemy. But, as she told Alaska Press Women at the October luncheon meeting, the time she almost gave up was during the area's warmest spring in recorded history, when the temperature reached 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

The snow became slushier and slushier, bogging down her eight dogs. Then she came to a region of no snow at all—just several inches of frigid water atop the ice. It rained all day, every day, and the above-freezing weather caused her frozen meat supplies to thaw and spoil.

Seal holes in the ice became whirlpools. Finally, her favorite, "brilliant" little second-lead dog, Anna, fell into one of the holes and couldn't get out. Pam (who stands just over five feet and weighs not much more than 100 pounds) tried mightily to pull the dog out, but her own feet started slipping toward the hole. Pam managed to right herself and then found that all seven of her other dogs, in harness, had joined her at the edge of the hole. "They worked together as a team—they formed a fan and pulled the little dog out," Pam told her attentive audience.

That was near the time when she dug out the emergency beacon in her gear and considered activating it. If she did, a rescue helicopter would come for her and as many dogs as it could carry—but she knew it couldn't carry all eight dogs on her team.

Pam made that almost unbelievable trip in 1993 and has since given her slide presentation about it to hundreds of audiences, mostly in schools. The journey is the topic of her new book, *Alone Across the Arctic*, written with Ann Dixon. The presentation and book contain pictures that Pam took along the way, some with the aid of a self-timer and tripod for her camera.

Her journey is the longest solo dogsled expedition by a woman. At 54 years of age, Pam is a seasoned arctic traveler, having participated in the Iditarod sled dog race and having reached the magnetic North Pole three times.

She told APW members who clustered around her table after the luncheon that she still longed to reach the true North Pole, but realistically thought that a trip to the Russian Far East with her dogs might be next on her agenda.

Pam made it clear that her best friends in the world have tails and four legs. Her devotion to her dogs went beyond needing the team for survival. With the dogs 24 hours a day, she taught them such good manners that she hasn't had a fight in the team in 10 years.



(The team was half male, half female, all but one spayed or neutered.)

Using slides, Pam introduced each dog, with his or her distinct character, to the audience. Some of the dogs have died over the years, and Pam knew the exact dates.

Also critical to the successful completion of her trip were the Native people she met along the way. The warm, watery spring found her at the village of Gjoa Haven in northern Canada. She stayed there for the summer, much of the time in a family's home. Allergic to salmon, she ate caribou and demonstrated how to roast it in the oven—something her hostess had never done before.

Against local advice, she left the village on December 5, when the weak, short-lived sunlight

(continued on page 3)

The Prez Sez . . . by Diane Walters

permitted only three hours' travel each day. By Christmas she came to Pelly Bay, where she watched an unusual sled dog race in which the contestants "took off in all directions," she reported.

A few days later she was off again, determined to reach her goal of Repulse Bay. About 100 yards from the town, her dogs got jammed in river ice. Townspeople saw her plight and came to ask, "Could you use a little bit of help?" They lifted her two sleds and put them down again on smooth ice. "So I guess my trip wasn't really solo after all," Pam said.

To return to her home in Talkeetna, she and the dogs took a small plane from Repulse Bay to Churchill, Manitoba, then went by train to Winnipeg. In Winnipeg, she rented a U-Haul truck for the highway trip home.

Things Pam's listeners learned:

- What the border marker between the United States and Canada looks like on the arctic coast (it's a small obelisk, similar to a three-foot-high Washington Monument)
- How she carried 600 pounds of gear (she took one regular sled and a trailer sled; on the roughest places she would leave the trailer sled and come back with her dogs for it)
- The saga of Molly, the DEW Line pooch, who joined Pam's little expedition for 75 miles

For anyone who missed Pam's story, she will tell it again as part of the Loussac Library's "Trips and Travelogues" series at the Wilda Marston Theatre in Anchorage at noon on Thursday, November 15.

Since joining the APW board several years ago, first as first vice-president and now as president, I've been impressed with the diversity of talent we have among our membership—not just talent as communicators, but as leaders and organizers. I am greatly encouraged by the can-do attitude of our APW members, whether they are serving on the board as an elected or appointed officer or volunteering for a committee or helping out on a specific task.

There's a saying, "those who can, do," and I've noticed we APW members do a lot, not only for this organization but for the many others we happen to be involved with. Immediate past president Judy Griffin touched on this in one of her columns last year as she pointed out our members' various volunteer activities. From church organizations to youth groups to municipal commissions, we, as a group, are

very busy people because organizations are always looking for people with good leadership and organizational skills.

We need to strike a balance among work, school, family, and our other obligations. And as important as APW is to all of us, we need to realize it isn't going to be everyone's top priority all the time. While APW may be my priority one week, it may not even be on the radar screens of others. This is a volunteer organization, and I believe we are all doing the best we can within the time allowed.

I will try to do my part by starting and ending our luncheon and business meetings on time and keeping them focused on the tasks at hand. Together, we can maintain APW's strong reputation as an organization that gets things done.

Diane

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**(Please note: this is the last issue for which
Karen Lew will be editor.)**

APW members help create healing-through-writing process

by **Barbara Brown**

If post-September 11 fears, hopes, and sadness are weighing heavily, writing can be a way to express them, to turn them into something that can heal both our community and ourselves. Several Anchorage writers, including some APW members, will lead an afternoon of one-hour writing workshops to help and inspire people to break their writers' blocks. "Writing From the Heart," a workshop to write, share, speak, or sing your feelings, will be held Sunday, October 21, at Kaladi Brothers Coffee Co., 6921 Brayton Drive, in Anchorage. The schedule is

- 12 noon—**Carol Sturgulewski**, "Sharing Your Story," inspirational writing
- 1 p.m.—Dan Henry, "Civil Disagreements," how to persuade in writing
- 2 p.m.—Andromeda Romano-Lax, "The Art of Letter-Writing in Turbulent Times," letter-writing
- 3 p.m.—Jack Dalton, "The Day Raven Learned to Cry," storytelling
- 4 p.m.—**Barbara Brown**, "The Stories that Make Us Human," turning a personal moment into a universal story
- 5 p.m.—Hilary Morgan, "Placing Experiences Inside the Skin of a Song," song-writing

A \$10 donation is asked for each hour, with all proceeds going to "Not in Our Town" account. For further information: 563-2712 or lax@alaska.net.

APW goes to the "BizBee"



Alaska Press Women's "Spelling Supremes" (from left: Carol Sturgulewski, Jill Shepherd, and Lori Keim) represented us at the Anchorage Literacy Project's "BizBee" spelling contest on September 20, while a table full of APW members cheered.

APW's own Barbara Brown lent her flamboyance and sense of the absurd to a good cause by being mistress of ceremonies at the annual "BizBee."



Wanted: Arctication Editor

Karen Lew has done an excellent job as editor of *Arctication* over the past year, but she is stepping down after this issue.

Our APW newsletter is a valuable communications tool for our organization and is a vital link to our members living throughout the state—as well as being a window on APW to the rest of the world.

Please help us keep *Arctication* going! Any APW member interested in being editor, please call Diane Walters at 753-2640 (work), 338-1966 (home), or e-mail her at

Diane.H.Walters@poa02.usace.army.mil.

What it takes to become NFPW president

Alaska's own Ella V. Wright was installed as the new president of the National Federation of Press Women, September 15, 2001, in Indianapolis. Wright made history as the first African American to serve as president. As of Friday, October 14, she stood a good chance of being the only president to be installed in-absentia. Following the September 11 horrific attacks on America, Wright was grounded in Denver for three days.

"Although my transition from NFPW's ethnic recruitment coordinator to the presidency took 10 years, I endured fewer setbacks within those years than within the three days it took to get from Denver to the conference in Indianapolis," said Wright.

She says she was lucky to reach Denver. "We had been on the ground about 45 minutes when I overheard a United Airlines ticket agent saying something about four planes being shot down and that FAA had ordered all planes to land at the nearest airport.

"When the agent got the real story he picked up the microphone and announced that terrorists aboard two planes forced them to slam into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, that one plane had slammed into the Pentagon, and that another had crashed in Pittsburgh. Next thing, the woman at the counter directed us to vacate the concourse and move on to baggage claim (if necessary) and to United's main terminal. Approximately 10 minutes afterwards, they closed all United's ticket counters.

We've all supported Ella as candidate for president of NFPW for some time, but no one could have expected difficulties of *this* nature . . . well, here's the rest of the story!

"Then they instructed everyone to vacate the airport. The announcement was that 'the Denver International Airport is closed until further notice.'"

That's when Wright checked her NFPW Resource Information Guide and called Ruth Anna, her former NFPW Confernece roommate and former national president. Wright explained, "What started out as an overnight stay with the Anna family in Denver stretched to three nights."

Wright says she won't even bother to concentrate on some of the inefficient and less-than-customer-service-oriented United ticket agents with whom she dealt. The main thing is that after eight scheduled and canceled flights and a total of eight hours standing in lines, she made it to the NFPW Conference. And the other important thing, according to Wright, is that average Americans were polite, joking in line, making acquaintances.

"I even overheard a man explaining to a want-to-be teacher about all the money and benefits she could make as a teacher in remote Alaska. Even though he wasn't an Alaskan, I didn't butt in," commented Wright.

Wright missed NFPW's two main meetings: the executive board meeting and the general member-

ship meeting during which the election was held. Some of those who tried to attend the conference have sent cards and e-mails or have called Wright to wish her well in her new position. In fact, 52 of this year's conference registrants missed the conference, including Marj Carpenter of Texas (former national president and the president who assigned Wright her first position at the national level); Donna Hunt of Texas (the incoming parliamentarian); Peggyann Hutchinson of Oregon (national archivist); Betty Bartley (outgoing protocol chair); and all of Nebraska's delegates. Wright was the only delegate from Alaska who made it to the national conference. Spokeswomen for the North Dakota affiliate participated in a telecon with Vivien Sadowski, immediate past president. The North Dakota affiliate will host the 2002 conference.

Alaska's four delegates tried in vain to be there for Wright. Wright reports that Alaska's Communicator of Achievement Chrystal Carr Jeter couldn't make it either. Catherine Petrini, a gutsy little lady who drove from Virginia to Indianapolis to present the 2001 COA awards, said if NFPW had offered a fourth place runner-up that would have gone to Chrystal. Chrystal will receive her COA certificate and communication contest awards via the U.S Postal Service. Contest awards will also be mailed to other winners in Alaska.



News and Notes of and for Members

Refunds for recent NFPW conference: According to Vivien Sadowski, past president of NFPW, it has been decided to waive the “no-refund” policy for the most recent NFPW conference, given the circumstances of September 11 that precluded many registrants from attending. Fifty percent of the registration costs will be refunded to those who notified NFPW of their inability to attend. Individuals who believe they cannot sustain the loss of the remaining 50 percent, even in the interests of assisting the organization, may apply to Vivien for a full refund. “We hope that a majority of our canceling members understand that such full refunds must be judiciously granted and that if we determine NFPW’s funds will not fully extend to such levels, the president must apportion the funds.”

Alaska Center for the Book and Alaska Sisters in Crime present “Women of Mystery: Three Writers Who Forever Changed Detective Fiction,” November 5, at Wendy Williamson Auditorium on the UAA campus. Tickets for the fundraiser are \$10 per person and will be available at the door beginning at 5:30 p.m. prior to the event. Q&A after the film’s screening.

Job opportunity: Iron Dog, Inc., sponsors of the Iron Dog snowmachine race, is seeking an executive director. This job is a full-time, year-round position for the person who coordinates a single

race per year. Iron Dog, Inc., is looking for “a charismatic event coordinator, a creative fund-raiser, an enthusiastic people person, a penny pinchin’ budget manager, a prepared logistics expert; someone who is ‘you-get-by’ computer literate, can provide extraordinary media relations, and is an exceptional written and verbal communicator.” The position pays “in the range of” \$45,000 annually. For information, check <http://www.irondog.org>, call 563-4414, or send your resume to Iron Dog, Inc., 7100 Old Seward Highway, Unit C, Anchorage 99528.

WritersMarket.com: Writers who have benefited from reading *Writers Market* and *Writers Digest* may wish to consider subscribing to WritersMarket.com, an online version of the two publications. Not only do subscribers have immediate access to the most up-to-date listings in *Writers Market*, but they can also receive e-mail newsletters with information about new markets, special online workshops, and similar topics. A subscription costs little more than a hard copy edition of the *Writer’s Market* book and is definitely more current!

Part-time copy editor wanted: The *Anchorage Daily News* is seeking a part-time copy editor to work 20 to 32 hours a week. Requires editing stories, writing headlines and photo captions, proofing pages, electronic paste-up of stories using

QUARK XPress, knowledge of Associated Press style and grammar, and at least one year of copy-editing experience. Hours are 4 p.m. to 1 a.m. Send resume to *Anchorage Daily News*, Attn: Human Resources, P.O. Box 149001, Anchorage, AK 99514, or e-mail jobs@adn.com, or fax to (907) 257-4472.

Copy writer sought: A full-service advertising agency is looking for an experienced copy writer. Must have proven experience writing for radio, TV, and print advertising. Potential for advancement to Creative Director. Call Marketing Solutions at (907) 569-7070.

Still seeking: APW members to assist with tasks for APW’s annual communication contest. If you can help, please contact Karen Lew at KarenLLew@earthlink.net.

Alaska Press Women luncheons are held the first Thursday of every month.
11:30 a.m.
Golden Lion Hotel
36th and New Seward
Anchorage
\$15.00 members
\$16.00 guests
\$6 coffee & dessert
Reservations:
274-4723

Oops!

Apologies for the several errors made in last month's edition of *Articulation*. Secretary Sherrie Simmonds's first name does have an "e" at the end, and her last name does have an "s," even though the limitations of her e-mail addressing system make her e-mail address *ssimmond@ahfc.state.ak.us*. Meanwhile, the e-mail address of First Vice President Mariah Oxford's e-mail address *also* got messed up; it should be *m.oxford@usa.net*. Further, among those APW delegates who didn't make it to the NFPW convention, Doris Thomas's name was omitted.

How to Contact APW Officers

Elected Officers

Diane Walters, President Diane.H.Walters@poa02.usace.army.mil
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Asta Corley, 3rd Vice President–Programs acorley@adn.com
Barbara Brown, Treasurer brownbs@ci.anchorage.ak.us
Sherrie Simmonds, Secretary ssimmond@ahfc.state.ak.us

Appointed Officers (alphabetical by last name)

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