



Presidential Ponderings

by Pamela Cooper, President

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you as your President. I truly appreciate your trust and confidence in me. As I end my term as President, I want to thank all of you for your help and support. The success of our professional association is not possible without the active support and participation of the current Board members; past Board members; and most importantly, our members.

When I began my presidency, I knew what the theme of my convention would be. For I, like George Guidall believe: *It's a phenomenon that people treat lightly, and it should not be treated lightly. It's something that's essential to human beings: listening to stories.* I have been privileged this past year to listen to many of your stories. I have gotten to know some of you better as a result.

We are the stories we tell and so I want to share with you some of the stories about what the Board has been doing this year. We met several times during this term to deal with several important issues.

First, after much deliberation, we suspended the CLP, but of course, those in the present cohort will be allowed to finish. Those interested in reviving the CLP in a different form will meet at the convention. This session will be listed in the convention program.

We have posted four Constitutional changes, and the rationale for them on the ILA website:

Configuration of the Board: These changes deal with membership regarding the Editor positions and the Past President position. You will see the rationale for eliminating these as Board members in two separate motions.

Nominating Committee: This involves downsizing the Committee from seven to four members. Finally, you will see a change to student membership.

Student Membership: This is basically a change, which will clarify the parameters of student membership.

We will discuss these at the Annual Business meeting and then for another 30 days online After 30 days, we will have 14 days to vote.

We have hired a new Web Editor, Beth Montgomery. She is attending the Virginia Beach Convention and you can meet her there. She has developed our new logo and web page. She is a graphic artist and designed our new logo. She has changed the look of the web page and eliminated the redundancy of some parts. In other words, she simplified how visitors can easily access information. As always, the web page is a living document. The major changes have been made. However, there are other changes, which Beth has suggested and will discuss with the Board when it meets at the Convention. The web page was my top priority during my presidency. We all know how important a web page is to growing membership and staying in touch with our members. Please remember that Beth cannot do what you ask without some direction from you. So when you send Beth a request, you will need to be specific and to send her the content. As I have discussed before, Beth does not

THE LISTENING POST

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create content. So, if you think something on a page should be changed, be specific about what that change should be and how you wanted it worded.

Beth will also be setting up a new ILA Facebook page and Twitter account. Phil has already set up a Facebook page (<http://10times.com/ila-virginia-beach>) and Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/ilaconvention>) specifically dedicated to promoting the Virginia Beach Convention.

Membership is something with which the Board is always concerned. We have discussed ideas to increase our membership. In the near future, we will be asking you for your feedback on our ideas and gather ideas which you have.

The Board has also spent time examining the Constitution. Several changes to this have been made over the past several years and the Constitution contradicts itself in certain areas. I have started the review of Constitution and made suggestions for change. After the Convention, if the motions we have proposed are approved, I will make sure the changes are reflected in the appropriate places. I will also go over the Constitution and Bylaws to mark any contradictions or areas to be discussed and send to the Board.

In addition to all the above, we have discussed changes to the silent auction, member pictures on the webpage, QR Code, and special recognition at the Convention of our members who have passed during this past year.

My story as your ILA President is ending. A new story, under the direction of Phil Tirpak is about to begin. Phil has created an absolutely wonderful program for you—new types of sessions as well as more traditional ones. I will leave him to fill you in with the details. Suffice it to say that you won't want to miss the 36th Annual Convention, March 26-28, in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Thank you for making ILA the strong organization it is—one that is committed not only to listening, but to inclusiveness, professionalism and collegiality as well. Let's continue to tell the stories of ILA and share them with others.

I am looking forward to seeing you in Virginia Beach!

Pam





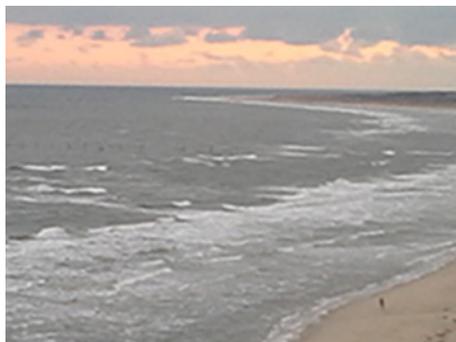
Sunrise/Sunset: Make Your Reservations Now!

By Philip Tirpak

The 36th Annual Convention will be meeting at the Virginia Beach Resort Hotel & Conference Center, March 26th – 28th, 2015. This is an all-suites hotel on the Chesapeake Bay. The special convention rates are \$109 per night (Single & Double,) \$119 per night (Triple,) and \$129 per night (Quad.)

The large two-room suites feature free Wi-Fi and a private balcony with views of the Chesapeake Bay. Reserve before 5:00 pm Eastern for convention rates. You must call the hotel for reservations; there will be no online reservations. Be sure to ask for the International Listening Association room block and your choice of a “sunrise” or “sunset” view. You can also reserve a shuttle through the hotel; the price is \$12 each way.

The Virginia Beach Resort Hotel & Conference Center
2800 Shore Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23451
(757) 481-9000 or (800) 468-2722 (Toll-Free)



Sunrise in Virginia Beach

Sunset in Virginia Beach



Countdown to Virginia Beach: Listening: The Key to Life

By Philip Tirpak

It's hard to believe but our 36th Annual Convention in Virginia Beach is almost here. We return with an exciting program that continues to tell our story in new and challenging ways. With over 55 panels, workshops, round-table discussions, and though-provoking sessions there is something for everybody, including the beginning of new traditions. Among the highlights are:

Bling it to the Bay: We will convene at 12:30 pm on Thursday, March 26th with an opening plenary session. Following an afternoon of sessions join us for our Welcoming Reception. It will be a festive atmosphere and a chance for you to reconnect with old friends. Wear your favorite Bling and be prepared for some surprises!

Listening Booth: Here's your opportunity to share your stories, talk about your work, send a message to friends, family, colleagues, etc. Our trial run was in Minneapolis, this year we are setting up a studio for you to relax and share.

The Listening Quilt: Master Quilter Sharon Tindall has been hard at work creating a quilt that incorporates the fabric that you have shared as a new tradition. Our Convention Logos from Minneapolis and Virginia Beach will be weaved into the quilt along with a special Remembrance Panel. The Listening Quilt will be unveiled at the end of the Convention. The Listening Quilt will grow with new panels added over the next year; become part of the rich story of the ILA, here's how:

Share ¼ yard of 100% cotton fabric, (colors, patterns, and designs are your choice,) place it in a clear plastic bag, (baggie, zip-lock, or similar,) along with a card that has your name, state, affiliation, (if there is a story that goes along with the fabric include that as well.) Bring your fabric with you.

Remembering Our Colleagues: Beginning another tradition we will take time to remember those who have passed since we met last year in Minneapolis through a medial presentation at the Awards Luncheon on Saturday, March 28th. Sheila Bentley will introduce the presentation and share with us. Send digital photos to Kelly Brion, kbrion1971@verizon.net so he can include them in the presentation. Please send your photos no later than February 27th.

Awards Luncheon: Executive Chef John Maclure is putting together a special Beach-Themed Menu as we gather to celebrate another year with our Awards Luncheon. Relax and enjoy yourself without having to worry about rushing off or having to leave before the festivities have ended. There will be a closing plenary session following the luncheon that will also leave you time to explore Virginia Beach on Saturday night!

Final details of the Convention Program will be coming soon, if you have questions please email 1st Vice-President & 2015 Convention Planner Phil Tirpak at listenusa@gmail.com

Looking forward to seeing you at the Beach!

Something Old: Something New: Remembering ILA Members

By Diana Corley Schnapp

Many ILA members compare the organization to a family. Like families, when some of our own leave us, we want to remember them and their time with us. In light of that desire, this convention in Virginia Beach will honor members who have passed away in the year since the convention a year ago.

Rather than schedule a memorial to just one person during a program session, a tribute will take place on Saturday, March 28 during the noon luncheon featuring photos of our colleagues and friends with a few words about each person's contribution to ILA and to the field of Listening. At the risk of creating a label for this effort, think Academy Awards' "In Memory." Perhaps this program spot will become a yearly tradition. In addition, there will be opportunity throughout the convention to record a message in the Listening Booth. There is also to be a table set up for members to write messages. Names of will also be added to the Listening Quilt, which is being prepared by Sharon Tindall.

The decision to try this method of honoring our departed members comes out of a discussion by First Vice-President and Program Chairman Phi Tirpak, several members of the ILA Board, former presidents, and friends of some of those to be recognized this year.

Please send photos via electronic media about someone you want included in the video tribute to Kelly Brion at kbrion1971@verizon.net. Kelly is a veteran videographer who has worked to produce excellent videos for a number of organizations. Sheila Bentley will read the accompanying verbal tributes. You may send comments to Sheila at BentleySC@aol.com. Watch for the pre-convention blast to learn more.

ILA Convention on Facebook & Twitter

By Philip Tirpak

You can get the latest information about the 2015 Convention including information about our speakers, panelists, and presenters, media resources, news about listening, practical tips, reviews, and more on our new Facebook Page, **ILA Convention**. Help us to build the excitement as we countdown to Virginia Beach and Like us on Facebook. You can also follow us on Twitter **@ILA Convention**.



Listening: A Labor of Love!

Get ready for the Southwest US in 2016! After soliciting ILA member feedback and conducting a careful deliberation, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation to meet in Tucson in March of 2016. A survey of the membership was conducted last fall, and the results were quite revealing. A majority of those responding wanted to keep the ILA Annual Conference in March. The members also wanted to head to the southwest section of the United States. They preferred a convenient, quality hotel with spacious rooms, along with a free shuttle, free wi-fi throughout the property, a business center, a pool, an exercise facility, and good meeting accommodations; all at a decent price.

In keeping with the practice of rotating the geography of the ILA Conference meeting, and since we were not yet on the international meeting cycle, we believe we found that conference site. Since late March and beyond is much more expensive in the southwest, we explored early March as an option. There was only one hotel which met all of our criteria: the DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Tucson Airport. Check out the hotel's [website](#).

The standard room is a two-room suite. We secured a rate of \$119 per night. That rate is good three days before and after the conference. The hotel is very close to the Tucson Airport. The hotel's shuttle will also run other trips for guests within a three mile radius of the hotel at no charge. Stay tuned for more information about program submission deadlines and conference registration. The hotel will offer a direct online registration link.

Keep the Date: March 9-12 for the 2016 ILA conference. By the way, the average high temperature in Tucson in March is...74 degrees.

See you in Virginia Beach next month,
Kent Zimmerman
2016 Conference Chair

Mission San Xavier del Bac



A Blog for Listeners

[How We Listen](#) is a blog designed for sharing information on listening with the general public. It is authored by two people who share a deep interest in listening and learning to do it better: Dick Halley and Susan Eliot.

Our goal in writing the blog is to inspire everyday people to improve listening and listening outcomes in both their professional and everyday lives. Listening is the highest form or respect we can show one another. We believe that all jobs and life interactions profit from the ability to listen with awareness and skill, reflect on what others have to say, and respond in a meaningful and productive way.

Through our writing, we aim to provide insight and understanding of listening processes so that anyone with an interest in doing so can become more intentional and skillful in how they listen and thoughtful and empathic in how they act on what they hear.

Our blog articles are written either from our own experiences, the latest research in the field, or the wisdom of expert interviewees. Many of our entries will be developed from interviews with experts in the field; some will be summaries of interviews with people whose jobs depend heavily on good listening, i.e. health care workers, educators, law enforcement people, mediators and others. We will also periodically contribute articles that we have authored. We plan to cover a breadth of topics and are open to your suggestions.

We have only just begun to write (3 articles so far) but plan to produce no less than one article per month. We hope you will subscribe (which means that you will be alerted whenever we publish a new post--of course you can unsubscribe at any time). We also hope you will let others know about our blog. Of course, we welcome your discourse in the comment box at the end of each blog spot.



Dick Halley is lead facilitator of the Certified Listening Professional (CLP) program sponsored by the International Listening Association, of which he is past president, and professor Emeritus (Communication) at Weber State University.



Susan Eliot, a Certified Listening Professional (CLP) and member of the International Listening Association, is owner and principal of [The Listening Resource](#), a qualitative research firm designed to collect useful and meaningful data by listening to people with intention, equanimity, and curiosity.

Listen up if you want to be successful

By Harvey Mackay

Reprinted with permission from nationally syndicated columnist Harvey Mackay, author of the New York Times #1 bestseller "Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive."

Two friends were walking down a busy street one evening when one paused and said, "Listen to those crickets chirping."

"What crickets?" said the other man. "I don't hear any crickets. Hey, you!" He waved down a woman passing by. "Do you hear crickets around here?"

"No," the woman said, and went on her way.

The first man closed his eyes for a moment, then walked to a mailbox on a nearby lawn, reached down, and picked a cricket up from the grass.

"That's amazing!" said his friend. "How did you hear that?"

"Watch," the first man said.

He dug into his pocket for a handful of change and tossed some coins onto the sidewalk. Immediately the door of the house opened, a car stopped, and two passersby stopped to look for the coins.

The first man shrugged. "It all depends on what you're listening for."

We were born with two ears but only one mouth. Some people say that's because we should spend twice as much time listening as talking. Others claim it's because listening is twice as difficult as talking.

Whatever the reason, developing good listening skills is critical to success. There is a difference between hearing and listening. Pay attention! Your next job/account/paycheck may depend on it.

These statistics, from the International Listening Association website, really drive home the importance of listening. At the same time, they demonstrate how difficult listening can be: 85 percent of our

learning is derived from listening.

- Listeners are distracted, forgetful and preoccupied 75 percent of the time.
- Most listeners only recall 50 percent of what they have heard immediately after hearing someone say it.
- People spend 45 percent of their waking time listening.
- Most people only remember about 20 percent of what they hear over time.
- People listen at about 125 to 250 words per minute but think at about 1,000 to 3,000 words per minute.
- There have been at least 35 business studies indicating listening as a top skill needed for success.

In addition, there are a number of behaviors to avoid if you want to be a really good listener: interrupting, avoiding eye contact, rushing the speaker and letting your attention wander. Don't rush ahead and finish the speaker's thoughts, because you might take them in the wrong direction. Arguing, as with a "yes, but" response, indicates that you were more interested in getting your own point across than listening to theirs. Trying to top the speaker's story doesn't win you any points either.

Listening can be hard work, and some people are more challenging to listen to than others, but when you find yourself tuning out what someone is saying you should ask yourself why.

If you want people to listen to what you're saying, make sure they feel like you have listened to them. When we feel we are being listened to, it makes us feel like we are being taken seriously and what we say really matters.

In his book, "The 8th Habit," management guru Stephen Covey tells a true story about the importance of asking other people their opinions.

Covey says W. "Bill" Marriott, chairman and CEO of Marriott International, the world's largest hotel chain, described to him "the biggest lesson I have learned through the years."

"It is," said Marriott, "to listen to your people. I find that if you have senior managers who really gather their people around them, get their ideas and listen to their input, you make a lot better decisions."

Marriott said he learned this lesson from an encounter with President Dwight Eisenhower when Marriott was a young Ensign in the Navy.

"I had been in the navy for six months and had come home from the Supply Corps School for Christmas. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson came down to our farm with President Eisenhower."

Marriott said it was extremely cold outside but that his father had put up targets outside for shooting. He asked the President if he wanted to go outside and shoot or stay by the fire.

"He just turned to me," said Marriott, "and said, 'What do you think, Ensign?'"

Marriott said he told the President it was too cold outside for shooting and to stay inside by the fire, which he did.

Marriott said that lesson, asking and listening to someone else's opinion, has stayed with him and has been a big asset in his business.

Mackay's Moral: It's amazing what you'll hear if you just listen.

Listening Education Wants YOU!

By Erica Lamm

Do you have a great teaching or training idea? Have you read a good book about listening lately? The online journal *Listening Education* is accepting teaching/training ideas and book reviews for its next issue. Information about submissions is available on the website, and we accept manuscripts all year; issues are published as pieces are available. Please consider submitting to this important and useful journal! Email LEeditor@listen.org for more information, or see the website.

The European Listening and Healthcare Conference: A New Beginning

By Jennie Grau and Corine Jansen

As co-organizers and moderators of the European Listening and Healthcare Conference (ELAHC), we set out to create an event and space for people from across the world to share two days of deep listening and learning about healthcare. We hoped that their experience would generate ripples, transforming healthcare through the power of listening.

In keeping with the International Listening Association's philosophy of embracing all aspects of listening, we invited speakers and participants from many walks of life, each expert in their own way. Some were patients, others were caregivers. Some were physicians and health professionals, others were social scientists. Some were actors and others were musicians. All had unique knowledge and perspectives to share and gain. Although the experience of this event is hard to put into words, feedback from participants and presenters best captures what took place.

"Absolutely transformative! This was by far one of the most effective conferences that I have attended in the past 10 years. I met numerous amazing healthcare professionals, nurses, doctors, patients, musicians and academics at this conference. The format successfully combined presentations in a manner that ensured a cohesive experience.

Teri Varner PhD, Associate Professor and Chair of Communication Department, University of Texas, St. Edward's USA

"Being at ELAHC was a wonderful experience. It was the first conference I attended as a patient-speaker. It was heart-warming to see that there are lots of people who care about listening to patients. I have a strong belief that storytelling is very important in healthcare. But storytelling is only useful when the stories are listened to. In Nijmegen I felt that there were lots of caretakers and policy makers that intend to listen to the stories and want to learn the tools that make them able to. And thereby, I saw other patients and caretakers that employed initiatives involving listening to patients,"

Marije Klein, journalist, writer, patient, The Netherlands

"This was an extremely important conference, and I believe the beginning of a new paradigm. Medicine has become mechanized and technical, relying on sophisticated technology. Doctors are increasingly

disconnected from their patients and from one another. The body and therefore its treatment have become fragmented. This conference provided a road map to re-connection, by valuing the basic human capacity to listen, and honoring listening as the number one clinical skill. As a doctor I was empowered by the conference, and I am very grateful for that.”

**Paul Browde, M.D., Founder, Narativ Inc.,
Teaching faculty Narrative Medicine, Columbia University, USA**

“The European Listening and Healthcare Conference in the Netherlands was a major success – one participant said that it would be a highlight of her life! There were many moving testimonies about the impact of ‘not being listened to’ and ‘being listened to’ with several being presented in such creative and innovative ways. Jennie Grau and Corine Jansen did an outstanding job developing the idea and making it happen in such a groundbreaking and original way. It was a landmark in making the International Listening Association truly international. It is a testimony to the importance of Listening in Healthcare that the conference organizers were able to attract world-class speakers and presenters. Some of the topics covered were the Healing Power of Music (including wonderful clarinet and piano playing) and when Doctors don’t listen.”

Helen Ralston, Director, Personal Dynamics Ltd., UK

“In order for consciousness to evolve, we have first to imagine what is possible. This conference created a vision of listening and story centered health-care and provided a practical way forward.”

Murray Nossel PhD, USA

“This was the first European Listening and Healthcare Conference, but hopefully not the last, both when it comes to Healthcare issues and as a good example of a regional Conference in Europe. Different conferences meet different needs on different levels and in different countries or regions. So I would like to urge our international members in ILA to create similar regional Conferences and ‘Let a thousand flowers bloom’ within ILA. I would also like to request the board of ILA to look upon this kind of regional conference as a part of the process of revitalizing the association, keep the energy within the organization, keep the young members and listen to the members needs.”

Kent Adelman PhD, Associate Professor, Malmo University, Sweden, Owner, Adelman Listening Consultant

“It was fascinating to listen to the different perspectives of healthcare from different cultures and be able to identify our similarities and differences in our struggles. The TED-like format was incredibly inspirational, and I’d love to see more sessions like that at other national and international conferences! Corine and Jennie should be commended for bringing together such a great group of individuals who are really focused on improving listening and communication in healthcare.”

Laura Janusik PhD, Associate Professor and McGee Chair of Communication, Rockhurst University, USA

“What struck me the most during the ELAHC was the intimate atmosphere and space where so many diverse people connected from

the heart on the topic of listening. A lot of diversity combined with the intention to truly listen to each other’s stories was the perfect mix for the creation of new insights - to really learn, share and inspire! As a frequent participant in different events and conferences, this event will stay with me for a long time. The main reasons for joining an event is to connect with like-minded people, are surprised and inspired by new perspectives and connect with new people. It doesn’t happen very often that all three ingredients are present in one conference. The ELAHC stood out for me in its authenticity and embodied the organizers’ vision; to transform healthcare through the power of listening with listening to understand as the cornerstone for connecting stories and leading the change we wish to see.”

**Irene Gottgens, Trainer and Innovation Consultant
Radboud University Medical Center, The Netherlands**

“The conference was amazing. It exceeded my expectations by far. All speakers were captivating and relevant. I have fed back to my team here in England and they can’t wait for a similar event here in Europe. I am following up the idea that listening is strategy!”

**Deanson Senda, Psychologist and Listening Consultant
KeyTeam, UK**

“On average I attend 4 conferences per year. For the most part, I come home unimpressed and questioning the utility of the conference for anything other than networking and spending time with graduate school friends. I have come to label my experience the deficit hypothesis as I often return not really knowing more than I did when I left home. My experience is not unique. Since my return from the “Transforming Healthcare” conference I have changed my tune a bit. It convinced me that conferences could provide a valuable learning experience. I have told anyone who would listen about the innovative organization of the conference, allowing academics, practitioners, patients, and patient advocates a similar space to share their stories. I learned. I laughed. I listened intently and wanted more. The conference took seriously an integrated approach to how we might better a system that is fraught with complex challenges. It provided spaces for people to share ideas and consider ways to implement these ideas in practice. Although my positive impression was likely assisted by the fact that the conference truly had a unifying purpose, I think it was more than that. The attendees represented several unique healthcare systems, and we were able to discover together that the various approaches to solving difficult problems were different yet similar enough to compare, contrast, and juxtapose. Much can be learned from the model of the “Transforming Healthcare” conference. I encourage anyone who has experienced the deficit hypothesis to consider how better to structure conferences so more is gained than lost, so that people can truly listen to one another and learn.”

**Graham Bodie, PhD, Associate Professor of Communication Studies
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College,
USA**



Paul Browde and Elizabeth Skavish and others

Nagesh Rao,
Kent Adelman and
Johan De Keyser



Jennie Grau and Corine Jansen

**PRESENTATION AT 2015 CONVENTION WILL
SHOWCASE ILA'S NEW PARTNERSHIP
WITH ILLINOIS SKILLS USA IN HOPES OF
EXPANDING TO OTHER STATES**



Virginia Beach picture taken from www.usalifestyle realestate.com.

At the annual convention in Virginia Beach, we will be showcasing a new listening contest for SkillsUSA members. A few student participants will be observed as they compete. We are doing so to allow ILA members an opportunity to provide feedback before the ILA Board decides whether to have the ILA sponsor this contest throughout the U.S. And once approved, we want our ILA members to get this Effective Listening contest to their states' SkillsUSA chapters.

The Ad-Hoc Committee that has been exploring the feasibility of a new SkillsUSA contest in effective listening will be presenting all information needed to understand this contest.

SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical, and skilled service occupations, including early childhood and health occupations. Some of you might know this organization by its former name: VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America). A visit to www.skillsusa.org will allow you to learn more about SkillsUSA.

April 4, 2014, at the 50th annual SkillsUSA convention held in Springfield, Illinois, ILA sponsored the first listening contest at the Illinois State Leadership Conference and Championships. Illinois SkillsUSA State Executive Director Don Bauc and the Illinois SkillsUSA Executive Board were very excited about the new contest that deals with listening.



The first Effective Listening contest was held in conjunction with SkillsUSA's and Illinois SkillsUSA's 50th anniversary.

One of the two judges for the Effective Listening Contest who volunteered to join Susan Timm provided the following. Timothy Parsons-Heather, MA, MPA, CPM, PHM, COS, FSSMC, (personal communications, April 13, 2014):

First, let me express my gratitude for allowing me to participate as a judge for the event. . . . I have internalized the materials you gave me that day, and I am overwhelmed by the artful and comprehensive means by which you have conceptualized the advancement of better listening skills. As you know, I have been a student of interpersonal communication patterns for 40 years Linking effective listening techniques to the mission of SkillsUSA is a wholly appropriate way to teach America's young people that the basic idea of pedagogy . . . is centered around "input," on availing oneself to the spontaneous transfer of knowledge from our environment—from other individuals and all kinds of linkable resources and responsive social media systems. Obviously, whether we become better auditory or kinesthetic

learners depends on how well we listen. I believe our wholesale sense of "self" revolves around our receptivity to environmental impulses with which we annotate, classify, and present our world views, experiences, orientations, and motivations.



. . . The Effective Listening Contest reflects the goals of the SkillsUSA mission, specifically in that it, ". . . builds and reinforces self-confidence, work attitudes, and communication skills. It emphasizes total quality at work; high ethical standards, superior work skills, life-long education and pride in the dignity of work." . . . Your published . . . "Standards and Competencies" that were substantially sufficed . . . by the . . . contestants as sheer evidence that your objectives are being satisfied. Specifically, I noted a concerted effort by the contestants to self-assess their own competencies in the given listening skills areas and formulate actionable conclusions from those data. I was impressed by their ability to comply with complex instructions, respond to spontaneous interrogatories, and speak extemporaneously about their personalities, commonalities, diversities, communication styles, and listening preferences.

The objective ". . . Written Test" administered prior to each contestant's appearance was a stroke of genius on your part. Eliciting an understanding of listening against the backdrop of meaning assignment, brain processes, concentration, nonverbal and involuntary expression, tolerance, . . . psychology, and patience establishes a foundation upon which students will eventually build functional paradigms of diverse, cross-cultural, multi-cultural, and international expertise. They will desire to listen to the audible impulses of the world because it will become natural to them. And for this, I am proud of you for fashioning such an innovative knowledge evaluation tool.



Students gather after the Illinois SkillsUSA State Competition. Photo provided by S. Timm.

In addition to the positive feedback from the judges, because of the overwhelmingly positive feedback from the students and their advisors, the Illinois SkillsUSA Director decided that we'd better run the event twice, once in the morning and once again in the late afternoon to accommodate the number of students who might sign up for this event. We won't know anything for sure until registration ends sometime in March. We should have a good idea by the time we meet in Minnesota for the ILA's 35th Annual Convention.

Those on the Ad-Hoc Committee are excited to share what they have done to date and to get your feedback when we meet at the next listening convention. The Illinois SkillsUSA Executive Director and the entire Illinois SkillsUSA Executive Board are thrilled to be entering into this thrilling partnership with the ILA. We too should be thrilled. With this endeavor, we are taking a giant step towards fulfilling our vision to be the international leader of listening practices, teaching, and research as we get the opportunity to tell many more people about both the ILA and the importance of effective listening.

Virginia Beach picture taken from www.boucherbrothers.com.

See you in Virginia Beach!

ILA Education Committee

By Melissa L. Beall, Chair

Members of the Executive Board will present a two-and-one-half hour listening workshop at Star of the Sea Pre-K-8 school in Virginia Beach on Wednesday, March 25, just prior to the ILA convention. We are interested in continuing this kind of outreach at other schools and for other groups throughout the U.S. (indeed, the world, if we have the opportunity).

If you have contacts in the Pre-K-12 school systems that would like to have listening workshops for teachers, would you please contact me? We'd especially like to set something up for the 2016 ILA convention in Tucson, AZ, so if you know someone there, please drop me an email at Melissa.beall@uni.edu. I will contact them and see if we can arrange something prior to the Tucson convention.

Look forward to seeing many of you in Virginia Beach in a month.

Current Board Members

President- 2012-2016	Pamela Cooper (3rd of 4th year term)
1st Vice President	Philip Tirpak (2nd of 4th year term)
1st Vice President	Kent Zimmerman (1st of 4th year term)
Secretary	Kae Van Engen (2nd of 2 year term)
MAL, PR	Michael Murphy (2nd of 2 year term)
MAL, Global	Michelle Pence (2nd of 2 year term)
2nd Vice President	Trevor Hannum (1st of 2 year term)
MAL Special Projects	Melissa Beall (1st of 2 year term)
Student Member	Victoria Hill (1st of 2 year term)
Immediate Past President	Debra Worthington (4th of 4 year term)
IJL Editor	Margarete Imhof (3rd of 4 year term)
Listening Post Editor	Gayle Pohl (3rd of 4 year term)
Web Editor	Beth Montgomery (3rd of 4 year term)
Listening education Editor	Erica Lamm (3rd of 4 year term)
Executive Director	Nanette Johnson-Curiskis (no term)

ILA Members: Listeners for Life