

Remembering Ted Hipple:

Thoughts and Feelings from Those Whose Lives were Touched by a Great Man

Ted Hipple—scholar, family man, lover of life and a good laugh, a true gentleman—was the founding force of ALAN. I'll always be thankful to Ted for welcoming me, as he did so many others, into the ALAN family.

Bill Mollineaux
Retired
ALAN Past-president

My relationship with Ted went back 30 years, though we got close beginning around 1983. I have been so blessed by having him as a mentor. He was the one who showed me the way life could be in a myriad of ways as he was the model professor, friend, colleague, and father figure. I want to point out that his wife Marge was also a role model in so many ways as she supported him in all of his endeavors and shared him with so many of us.

Joan Kaywell

Ted Hipple was like those great young adult novels he recommended—spirited, thoughtful, and masterfully composed. He was sometimes funny, always honest, never boring. Ted was the book you couldn't put down. He's the book we won't forget.

Gary Salvner
Executive Secretary, ALAN

I first got to know Ted when I edited his book about Sue Ellen Bridgers, a project we both took very seriously. But later he teased me about it, and I

realized that knowing Ted was FUN! And who can forget his generosity, his warmth, and his wonderful ties?

Patty Campbell

In the years when nobody knew my name, Ted Hipple found my stories and promoted them. Better than that, he treated me and wrote about me as if I were a serious writer long before I believed in myself. And I never talked with him that I didn't learn something. He was so smart, and so full of grace.

Chris Crutcher

I admired Ted for all he's done to help English teachers and for his strong moral stand on important issues. I liked him for his sense of humor and his wonderful ability to lighten up the lives of all of us he worked with. He was one of a very special kind.

Ken Donelson
Professor Emeritus
Arizona State University

I knew of Ted Hipple long before I ever saw the man. As a high school teacher and graduate student familiar with *English Journal* and *The ALAN Review*, I knew that Ted was one of the movers and shakers in the field. I attended my first ALAN back in 1989, and that's when I saw the great man himself. He was nothing like I suspected he might be—arrogant, pompous, famous-professor type of guy. No, he was witty, pleasant, friendly, and kind, even to a Podunk

newcomer like me. Over the years, Ted was one of the regular highlights of ALAN for me. I looked forward to talking with him every fall, comparing notes on our schools' respective football teams and coaches, arguing about new YA books, and, later, working on various ALAN projects.

Ted was always such a friendly public guy that I rarely had any time to chat with him privately. I recall two occasions, times that made me like and admire him all the more. The first was at the NCTE in San Diego some years ago. Ted and I were walking to a meeting some distance away, across parking lots, parks, and what seemed like endless blocks. As we walked, we talked about our children, our homes, and our families. It was a wonderful personal glimpse shared with this popular and public man.

The second came at NCTE the year he retired as executive director. Under the direction of president Connie Zitlow, I had been involved in getting the Hipple Service Award made, and along with it, a retirement gift from ALAN to Ted. On Friday afternoon, after our board meeting, Ted invited me up to his room to give me some ALAN paperwork. When we got there, he sat down, invited me to sit, and the two of us once again talked about our careers and our families. Ted let me know how pleased he was to have worked with ALAN and all the good people therein. Now that he's gone, I realize that the good people in ALAN are there because of Ted.

I'll miss him.

Be well, my friend.

Chris Crowe

Ted Hipple changed my life. He came into my life when I was beginning to wonder what to do next—I had taught for about eight years in the public schools, and I was itching to tell others my story about the joys and frustrations of teaching. Suddenly, I found someone conducting a teacher's workshop who "was just like me"—except twenty years later.

Here was someone, a professor no less, who was just as enthused about teaching and education and young people (or "kids" as Ted preferred to call "students in school") as I was—except more so. He knew how to say it in words, how to connect with young people through books, and how to bring the world of authors and publishers and famous people to

their doorstep—all with an ease and grace and dignity that said you mattered. You—as a teacher, a colleague, a lover of kids and learning—mattered above everything—because you value young people like I do, and all in life that really counts, as Ted would profess, is the education of young people in a humane and decent fashion.

I was Ted Hipple's graduate student for two years and his pupil for life. He taught me more about teaching, learning, and above all, being a human being than anyone I know. Or will ever know. He was "it."

And the reason? He was more than a teacher, a reader, a writer, a friend, a mentor, a colleague, an inspiration—he was, as we say in "Yiddish," a mensch—a human being's human being.

What made him a great teacher? After all, anyone can tell you how to teach, how to change schools, how to improve education. Not everyone, though, can tell you how and, at the same time, make you laugh.

For above all, Ted was funny. Funny people—deliberately funny people are always in short supply. Education, as Ted knew so well, takes itself too seriously. We treat children like commodities and berate them when they don't live up to our expectations. Nothing funny in that.

Yet, Ted knew that in order for schools to function and kids to learn, laughter must prevail.

I remember going to lunch with Ted one day and after we got into his beat up Rambler (he told me his Rolls was in the shop), he turned on his tape player and out came some heavy classical music. He turned towards me and asked, "What's that?" I immediately thought, "Oh, no, I have been found. I don't know what this music is. Surely, he will think me a dummy." Sensing my desperation, he looked me straight in the eye and said, "Don't know? It's Liberace!"

That was Ted. Warm, sweet, wise, unpretentious, and always, funny. For he believed, with every fiber of his being, that learning should be joyous because without laughter, there is no learning.

Jeffrey S. Kaplan
University of Central Florida

Both as a teacher and author, I am ever grateful for the amazingly far reaching work Ted did on behalf of YA literature.

Marilyn Reynolds

Ted Hipple brought warmth, wisdom and wit to ALAN. He led us with charm and care. We shall miss him.
M. Jerry Weiss

I knew Ted by working in the convention department at NCTE. He was always a pleasant and funny person on the phone and in person at the conventions he attended. The convention in Indianapolis was not the same without him there. He will be greatly missed by both NCTE and ALAN and anyone else whose lives he touched.
Carol Wagner

I felt a special bond with you on Saturday morning, November 20, at the ALAN Breakfast at the NCTE in Indianapolis, when I was the latest recipient of the Ted Hipple Service Award, for service to ALAN. I felt so honored to be included among the winners of this award in your name, especially knowing that you yourself were the first winner. I have always felt that the ALAN folks were a special group of friends, and you, with your jovial greeting and big-hearted welcome and zest for life, were certainly a big part of that for me. Ted, dear friend, I loved you. You were a special guy, there is no other like you. I will miss you and cherish your memory forever.

John Mason
Scholastic Inc.

One of the things I valued most about Ted was his honest and supportive response to almost everything I published. He'd be the first, and sometimes the only one, to drop me a note to say "congratulations" on my latest book, to say how much he appreciated some point I'd made in an article, to tell me he intended to pass on some of those ideas to his students. I know he sent the same kinds of supportive notes to others he knew, especially his former students—nice work, good job, congratulations! We should all take a lesson from his generosity.

Don Gallo

As we mourn the loss of Ted Hipple, I think of him as a temple pillar that's not there anymore.

Leaving others to hold up the temple, of course. Tinny and tacky as that metaphor is, it's what has come to me. I felt safe with Ted looking into and after kids' reading: He cared so deeply about kids' needs, their tastes, their quirks, the way they roll their eyes about adults and cause adults to do the same about them. Ted set us such a sturdy example, showing over and over again that we can't afford in any way to ignore kids' real book needs.

His teaching, his intelligent caring, his marvelous friendliness and his smile. And, of course, his neckties. As the kids' lit community celebrates these, I join in sending my sympathy to his family. We all acknowledge that his like is not likely to pass our way again.

Virginia Euwer Wolff
(a kids' author)

Ted was a tireless learner and a wise supporter of young professionals. He was a vibrant and enduring presence in ALAN and many other significant assemblies and sections of NCTE. His energy, intelligence, and kindness were a combination that was unique to my experience in my thirty years at NCTE. We will miss him dearly.

Joe Milner
Wake Forest University

Until he retired as Executive Secretary, Ted Hipple was the heart and soul of ALAN. He welcomed new people to the ALAN Workshop and extended unconditional friendship. When I encountered Ted at the ALAN Workshop every year, I knew "all's right with the world." I won't forget this fellow Midwesterner.

Sarah K. Herz
ALAN member

Ted etched a memory of positive vibes in the young adult world of literature and teaching. We will honor him best by continuing to spread his passion with young adults and literature.

Stan Steiner
Boise State University

Like his famously snazzy suspenders and neckties, Ted was *sui generis*, one-of-a-kind, incomparable,

the very model of service and civility. He will be sorely missed by all of his friends and by the larger world of literature he served with such distinction.

Michael Cart

Ted was the type of man who made friends easily. I knew who he was, of course, when he was invited to be a keynote speaker at the Texas state English conference more than 20 years ago. Lois Buckman and I ran into Ted on an elevator in the conference hotel. Lois and I like to tell folks that we “picked him up” in that elevator and squired him around the conference. It cemented a friendship that endures today. How we will both miss Ted, the ties, the bright orange bag, the ever-present smile, the bear hug, and the “be well” at the end of our time together.

Teri S. Lesesne, Professor
Sam Houston State University

What a wonderful man, his exuberance and good humor revealed by his choice of some truly astonishing ties. Ted, I’m glad I knew you.

Alden R. Carter

I loved Ted for his cheerfulness. He always made me smile even when he was talking about unfunny subjects, such as his ALAN plaque falling off the shelf in his office and hitting him on the head or the time his wife was meeting him in Phoenix for the Spring Conference. My teenaged son and daughter drove Ted to the airport to pick up Marge, and it turned out that they had to wait more than an hour for her luggage to get off the plane. Ted kept everybody happy during that long hour, plus he entertained the rest of us with the story when he got back to the dinner—which he had missed except for the dessert.

Alleen Nilsen
Arizona State University

Ted Hipple was a kind and gentle man with his head in the lofty clouds of the human imagination and his feet firmly planted on planet earth. He will be so missed, but he accomplished so much.

Rodman Philbrick

A funny orange book bag, lots of colorful ties, generous warm hugs, a contagious love of YA literature, and always the “Be Well” at the end of his messages. I cherish so many memories and images of Ted, including his incredible support during my term as the 2000 ALAN president; at its conclusion we “roasted” him as he retired from his long years as ALAN Executive Secretary. His delightful personality and sense of humor were always apparent even in the book reviews and scholarly articles he wrote. His legacy lives on in the books he loved and the multitude of lives he touched.

Connie S. Zitlow
Ohio Wesleyan University

How I will miss Ted . . . he was the first, after Terry Ley, to welcome me to the world of YA literature, and he has been a very real presence for me every step of the way. He has been mentor and coach, encourager and honest evaluator. Few people take time to provide the kind of human support that Ted has offered those of us who have followed in the “next generation” of academics behind him, but all of us in that generation know how he has helped us, shaped us, given to us, and we gladly share the Hipple bond.

Ted: With the orange bag over a shoulder, and a wild wide tie tucked into his vest, he’d enter a room and have responsibilities to carry out. But always, he made time to stop. Talk. Ask about friends. Share a book. Laugh. He had a world-class laugh.

Sissi Carroll
Florida State University

As ALAN Executive Secretary, Ted had a knack for directing without micromanaging—a rare and valuable quality. As a colleague, he knew how to make people feel good about themselves and their work, always being one of the first to send a note of congratulations or comment favorably on a job well done. He was a good, kind man, and we shall miss him terribly.

Virginia R. Monseau
Youngstown State University

Ted Hipple was a great man and an even better human being.

David Gill
UNC Wilmington