

## ALAN Tributes to Anne Webb

**A**fter a long illness, on December 22, 2003, Anne Webb—a former ALAN President, a major force in English education, and a grand lady—passed on. The following tributes clearly illustrate how much Anne meant to us:

When I first joined NCTE and the CEE Commission on the Preparation of Middle School English Teachers, I met Anne. She made me feel very welcome and assured me that I would be able to contribute a lot to NCTE - in particular the middle level. I have tried not to disappoint her! Her contributions to NCTE are many and she will certainly be missed.

—Martha Magner

My memories of ALAN workshops always include a vivid image of Anne Webb: distinguished, energetic, friendly, and poised—despite physical challenges. Like many others, I had the privilege of working with her when she served on my ALAN nominations committee. I learned up close about her vast knowledge of others who loved books and young people as she did.

—Connie S. Zitlow

I met Anne in the early '80s when I went to my first ALAN reception and was more than a little nervous. Anne came up to me and made me feel at home, and over the years this feeling grew as she was always there to smile and make me feel good.

—Lois Buckman

Anne and I go back to almost the beginnings of ALAN, and I shall miss her—her clothes that were brighter (and better) than my neckties; her constant and infectious smile, often in a time of painful physical adversity; and, most of all, her unflagging commitment to ALAN and NCTE. People like Anne come along too seldom, and I am honored to be among those who honor her.

—Ted Hipple

I will never forget a conference in which Anne strolled up with what I can only describe as a devilish grin. She flopped down into a chair and threw her arms back and shook her head.

“Well, aren’t you in a sassy mood.”

“Sassy?”

She shot me a horrified look. Then she giggled and her eyes turned into constellations of twinkling stars. She didn’t fool me. Beneath that gruff no-nonsense exterior was the most adorable and lovable softy I ever knew.

—Jonathan Schmidt

A great lady, a consummate adventurer - in spirit, in travel, and in her unrelenting efforts and quantifiable contributions toward opening and expanding the world to young minds.

—Kathleen Doherty

In teal costumes and incredible Native American jewelry, Anne Webb energized me with stories, adventures and laughter every time I saw her. Being a student in her classroom must have been a very special privilege; knowing her certainly was. I hope I will live my life as fully.

—CJ Bott

Anne’s unceasing energy, her great interest in books and her love for kids will long be remembered by those of us who were fortunate enough to know her. She was funny and bright and warm, a great friend and a fine human being. It is hard to think that she is no longer with us, but her indomitable spirit lingers on.

—Leila Christenbury

Anne’s vivacious enthusiasm for her work with ALAN and for the authors she encouraged over the years brought a corresponding enthusiasm to all who knew her. Authors, teachers, publishers, and great numbers of young adults have been influenced by her and will miss her joy in the world of young adult literature.

—William C. Morris

I, indeed, was saddened to learn of Anne’s passing. She was a devoted ALANophile, but more a very special individual who believed deeply in the purpose and integrity of young adult literature. She was candid in her opinions, forthright in her devotion, and fierce in her passion. She will be forever missed.

—Jeffrey S. Kaplan

Anne Webb was a true original, a woman with a huge zest for life. One look at her marvelous hair, her interesting jewelry, and her flair for clothes, and you knew that behind this striking exterior was somebody special who lit up the room.

—Patty Campbell

Anne Webb’s certainly a person that was a true-blue ALANer and quite a character in her own right. Imagine Anne as a protagonist in a YA novel! Her flair and unique personality are not easy to forget, but she will be sorely missed by us all.

—Joan F. Kaywell

Anne was a dynamo. She cared about students and teachers. She was instrumental in getting classroom teachers and school librarians to become active participants in ALAN. She served NCTE well, just completing (in absentia) her term as chair of the Committee Against Censorship. She was a realist and helped me foster a greater understanding of how to get trade books into the classroom.

—M. Jerry Weiss

I will never forget my first ALAN Workshop and how Anne Webb made me feel at home! Anne was a special lady whose vivacity, enthusiasm, and knowledge enhanced the lives of all who knew her.

—Bill Mollineaux

What I liked best about Anne was her fighting spirit—she never pulled punches and so we always knew where she stood on important issues. And where she stood was at the forefront of battles to promote Young Adult books in schools and libraries.

—Don Gallo

Anne Webb was a truly inviting friend who made attending conferences real fun as well as rewarding in the usual ways, and her laughter and sly sense of the absurd kept me honest when I might have wanted to exaggerate some achievement. At the same time, she was serious in her commitment to ALAN and NCTE, and these organizations are in many ways the successes that they are because of the profound ideas and hard work that she devoted to them. They will not be the same without her, and I will not be as happy an attendee as I was when she was there.

—Robert Small

She was the friendliest person at ALAN every year—when I was a rookie at the ALAN meetings, Anne always made me feel welcome, and when it was announced that I'd been elected president, Anne gave me an autographed copy of Bob Carlsen's book.

—Chris Crowe

How can I possibly write just a couple of sentences about this phenomenal woman? My first encounter with Anne was during a cocktail reception for ALAN many, many years ago. I seem to recall a woman in pigtails holding court in one corner with the likes of Bob Probst and Don Gallo. I do not recall the subject of her declaration at the moment I summoned up the nerve to join this august group. What I still remember is her evident passion. Anne was a passionate advocate for YA literature. I will miss talking to her at NCTE conferences.

—Teri Lesesne

She was always such a caring person who loved making the personal connections between books, authors, and readers. She knew so many authors and publishers personally. Whenever she approached me it was always with a funny story to tell, and a connection to be made, and with laughter along the way. I will miss her.

—John Mason

What really set Anne apart were her unquenchable spirit - and that mischievous twinkle in her eye. Anne, a true middle schooler at heart, was always at the center of any gathering of middle level educators. The last time I saw Anne was at the first ever Middle Level Section Thursday Night Get Together. Instead of her usually elegant ensemble, she was sporting a spiffy Middle Level Section t-shirt - and a HUGE smile. How much she will be missed!

—Katherine D. Ramsey

Anne Webb had such spirit for YA lit and ALAN! Every meeting with her was filled with sharp observations about the field and endless "Have you read . . .?" questions. Few of us could keep up with Anne's voluminous reading and marvelous wondering.

—Gary Salvner