

Le Réverbère

Numéro Spécial . Mai 2021

**L'AATF-Philadelphie dédie ce numéro de notre newsletter
à la vie de Marilyn Conwell, à la vie qu'elle a vécue**



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Le Réverbère

La Newsletter du Chapitre de Philadelphie



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Bonjour tout le monde,

Welcome to this special edition of our newsletter. It is I, Jeanne, your new Chapter president. May has arrived! What do you think of at the beginning of May? For me it is the start of spring. I know that the calendar says that spring began in March; but for me it always begins *le premier mai*. That's when the sun seems brighter, the trees are starting to get their foliage again and my plants seem to need more watering, as they are blooming and growing taller.



This school year that is coming to a close has probably been one of the most challenging for us in many aspects! Hybrid, virtual, in-person, Zoom, Google Classroom, how to teach and reach our students and continue to give them our best efforts in their continuing language growth and acquisition? But, like the coming of May, with determination and *le bonheur*, we are still smiling and looking forward to more sunshine, warm weather, and ending our school year in a positive way.

As we look back on this school year, we will note the funny things that happened in class, the technology snafus, the grading and, let us not forget, those parent conferences. Through it all, we have continued to smile and look forward to another day.

I know that you will enjoy this special issue which honors Marilyn Conwell. From 1963 until 2013, Dr. Conwell taught French and Linguistics at Rosemont College. In 1988 she received from Rosemont the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award. Dr. Conwell spent her career giving her best to her students, colleagues and to the language that we love. We are sure that Dr. Conwell will inspire you as you continue to inspire your students in the years ahead.



You have done a tremendous job this year and I wish for you all a sunny, warm, healthy and restful summer vacation!

À la prochaine fois, Jeanne

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Marilyn Conwell . Souvenirs
Sœur Mary Helen Kashuba, SSJ, DML

Parmi mes souvenirs, je me rappelle avec plaisir la présence imposante de Marilyn Conwell. Toujours habillée correctement dans sa jupe plissée, son chemisier blanc, et son béret rouge, elle nous souriait en parlant. Et comme elle aimait parler, en français et en anglais ! Nous pourrions ajouter, en espagnol et dans la langue des signes, qu'elle avait introduite à Rosemont, tout en l'apprenant elle-même. Elle représentait la communication, car c'était une grande partie de son identité.



Marilyn se passionnait pour l'étude des langues. Visionnaire dans ses méthodes, elle a introduit un laboratoire de langues à Rosemont, y mettant l'argent de sa famille. Elle encourageait les études à l'étranger. Elle a collaboré avec l'Ambassade de France en faisant passer l'examen de DELF à Rosemont, et nous a invités à y participer comme examinateurs. La collaboration n'était pas toujours facile, mais elle a insisté sur les meilleures conditions pour les candidats. Les samedis matins que nous avons passés à Rosemont nous ont beaucoup appris !

Pendant plusieurs années Marilyn nous a accueillis à Rosemont pour les conférences d'AATF et de MLAPV. C'étaient des réunions joyeuses dans un cadre agréable. C'était là où nous avons noué de nouvelles amitiés et rencontré nos anciens amis. J'y ai aussi participé aux examens oraux pour ses majeurs en français. J'ai beaucoup apprécié cette occasion de connaître les étudiants d'une autre université, qui étaient assez semblables aux miens ! En effet, je me sentais toujours chez moi à Rosemont, pas trop différent de Chestnut Hill.

Marilyn nous laisse un héritage personnel et linguistique. Elle n'hésitait pas à défendre l'enseignement des langues étrangères devant ses collègues et son Administration. Elle a gardé son département intact. Elle a exploré de nouveaux formats d'enseignement. Mais surtout, elle reste dans mon souvenir comme une femme généreuse, profondément spirituelle, et admirable. Mes contacts avec elle m'ont énormément enrichie. Qu'elle reste parmi nous dans ses contributions à l'étude des langues et à une meilleure vie humaine !

Sœur Mary Helen Kashuba est membre du Conseil Exécutif de l'AATF-Philadelphie. Elle enseigne le français et le russe à Chestnut Hill College.

My Friend, Marilyn Conwell

Diana Regan



All things French...that is how I would describe Marilyn, and I'm sure that those who knew her would heartily agree. No matter whether it was in the area of traditional French literature, music and art to the more modern movements, Marilyn was right there, leading the charge into this world of "la Francophonie".

I first saw Marilyn years ago at the Northeast Conference of Foreign Language Teachers in New York City. It was in the late 1980s. She was not easy to miss... her bright red beret, her engaging smile, her contagious laugh and, of course, that over-the-top voice (and I do say this with love). We were both in the ladies' room and I couldn't help but comment on her beret. She let me know that she had many in different colors. As we spoke, she told me that she was Department Chair at Rosemont College and, as I am an alumna of Rosemont College, we immediately became friends. However, given both our schedules, I was able to speak with her only sporadically mostly about Rosemont and how the language program was progressing. She asked if I would be available to teach a couple of courses and of course I agreed. We continued as colleagues, sharing ideas for innovative ways to teach language and how to attract students to the study of French. The conversations continued with other colleagues during AATF meetings when she generously offered classrooms at the college for our monthly chapter meetings.

One of Marilyn's greatest sources of pride and achievement was the gift of a computer lab to Rosemont which she dedicated to her mother. Always on the cutting edge of technology, she was eager first to learn for herself and then to educate students and colleagues on the use of the internet and how to access information that then would lead to more information and so on. The AATF scheduled a special meeting chaired by Marilyn on the benefits of using the computer for research and communication. We were in awe – and in total confusion - as to how she was learning the process. But as time went on, she walked us through the various stages and offered the lab to us for practice and use. That was Marilyn, always ready to give her time to help and to share whenever and however she could.

Because of Marilyn, Rosemont College became the east coast center for the administration of the DELF/DALF test. She was well known by the French organizers of the test and frequently took them to task if something was unclear, unfair or impossible to understand. On one occasion I was in her office discussing the administration of the test. There was something she disagreed with and without any hesitation, she picked up the phone and called France. She "had it out" with a M. le Directeur over this issue. Clearly, this was **not** the first time Marilyn had called him to complain. The end results were that she was able to change whatever she thought was not correct as long as she informed Paris. As most of you probably know, it isn't easy to convince any M.le Directeur or Mme la Directrice that something has to be changed, but Marilyn did it with charm, courage and persuasion, and again I say, over a phone call. In order to administer the test, she assembled a group of experienced professionals to sit on the jury for the candidates and we all did it pro bono. We were enveloped by her enthusiasm and dedication to her belief in the efficacy of these tests. There was no hard sell. We all did it because Marilyn asked.

In January of 2006, Marilyn, along with the other leaders of the DELF/DALF test across the country, was invited to attend a three day workshop in Sevres, France. The agenda consisted of learning how to evaluate the candidates and the upgrades and changes to the tests. She invited me to go with her and so we spent three days in the workshop and two more days just enjoying the city. It was an amazing experience and this was when I really came to know Marilyn. She was always a French theater enthusiast and when visiting Paris, she would often attend perhaps two performances a day in different theaters across the city. To her dismay, some of her favorite theaters were closed because of the holiday, but she did seek out a few that were open to performances and so on those days, I lost her to the theater. When she returned, she was full of excitement and eager to tell me about the play. She especially enjoyed the more modern plays as opposed to the traditional French theater. One of her favorite theaters was “Le Théâtre de la Huchette” where one could witness plays by Ionesco, Beckett and Genet, among others. Being a traditionalist and a true Moliere fan, I asked her to tell me about the current theater. Because of her influence and knowledge, I was able to create a course on the late 20th century theater, complete with CDs of the plays. Marilyn was instrumental in helping me to acquire the videos from a French company. Her generosity with her time and experience knew no bounds. By the way, we did complete the workshops, met and exchanged ideas with other DELF/DALF leaders and came home with a suitcase full of information on the new DELF/DALF testing program.

For many years, Marilyn was a proud and loyal member of the AATF of Philadelphia. She served as president and then spent many years as a respected member of the Board of Directors always ready to research, work and contribute to the organization for the purpose of promoting French language and culture. She made many presentations at the local and national conventions of the AATF and inspired not only veteran educators but also the younger teachers who were fortunate enough to come under her spell.

Marilyn's second home was, without a doubt, the halls of Rosemont College. She was a well known and a highly respected member of the faculty. With unwavering determination, she advanced the language program at Rosemont so that it could and would compete with those of any local or national college or university. She encouraged her students to pursue careers in education and guided them through the tangled process of applications, graduate work and selection of schools. She worked with the student teachers giving them direction and encouragement when needed making sure they were placed in situations where they could learn and grow as future educators. This was her life. She lived it with “panache” and she loved every moment.

Marilyn's legacy will not be just her contributions to our profession. She will always be remembered by her broad smile, her never ending enthusiasm, her contagious laugh and, of course, her red beret.

Marilyn, we all miss you.

Diana Regan est une ancienne membre du Conseil Exécutif de l'AATF-Philadelphie et l'ancienne Représentante Régionale de la Région III de l'AATF.

Our Marilyn

Loreta Perthes

Comme Marilyn a aidé notre AATF!

This poem that Kathy Clark and I wrote sums up Marilyn's dedication to and involvement in AATF Philly. I don't think she ever refused a request to help but most often volunteered to help. Her generosity was gargantuan. She was tech savvy before anyone and shared her knowledge with our members by giving workshops at Rosemont on Saturday mornings.



She was an integral part of the planning committees for regional and national AATF conferences held in Philly. I was lucky to have served on the board with her and then to have her on the board when I was VP and President. She was in charge of the DELF-DALF certification process here in Philly for a time too. May she rest in peace.

Notre chère Marilyn

On this happy occasion of retirement
We wish you only the best.
After all of your years of labor
You can finally enjoy some rest.

Surely, Rosemont will feel your absence.
Who could ever live up to your fame?
Your legacy will live on forever
In the Conwell Center which bears your name.

But for us it is more than your teaching
That leads us to sing your praise.
It's your tireless work on committees
We'll remember for all of our days.

Your technology savvy is legend.
Your jobs, too numerous to list.
Besides running the conferences and workshops,
You were always there to assist.

So this little poem is to thank you
For all that you have done.
To tell you that we'll miss you
And to wish you much rest and much fun!

Congratulations on your retirement!
Gros Bisous,
Kathy and Loreta

Loreta Perthes est une ancienne membre du Conseil Exécutif de l'AATF-Philadelphie. Elle est membre du groupe le Rendez-vous des Retraités de l'AATF-Philadelphie.

Marilyn

Rita Davis

Marilyn was very generous of her time and energy. She reached out to all of us and she was a wonderful mentor to all of us in the French teaching field. She often hosted various offerings of the AATF at Rosemont College. She always welcomed groups to use the Rosemont College facilities.

She really was the first person who introduced me to the web and explained how to navigate the various options.

Marilyn was also instrumental in getting me involved with the DELF/Dall program. She encouraged me to get the training; I was also very impressed with the way she set up the sessions regarding the training involved for becoming an examiner and scorer. Marilyn had the foresight to have a trainer come from France and she scheduled with us the times that we needed to meet.

The days that we offered the Delf exam were always very busy. Up to 30 people would arrive to take the exam. Often there were 10-12 of us examiners and once again Marilyn had everything organized- all the paperwork, all the rooms with a listening device, and many signs indicating where people were supposed to go.

Again, behind what at first might have looked like a slightly disheveled scene, Marilyn's plan always came forward and everything was perfectly executed and all the steps came to fruition without a hitch. This is an example that truly speaks to Marilyn's extraordinary talents.

I decided to go through my server and found this 2013 newsletter article and photo:



This past Saturday, March 9, 2013, some of us had lunch with Dr. Marilyn Conwell- a long time member of the EC and retired professor of French at Rosemont College. Dr. Conwell is the person who enabled Rosemont College to be a center for candidates to take the *DELF* exams. We are indeed fortunate to have had her at the helm of this endeavor. Dr. Conwell was a leading educator in our field who pointed out the myriad of applications that language teachers could use to awaken curiosity and learning inquiry by embracing the Internet.

Rita Davis est membre du Conseil Exécutif de l'AATF-Philadelphie. Elle enseigne le français à Agnes Irwin.

Marilyn
Joanne Silver

I remember her as a kind, energetic person always willing to help me grow and learn all things French, including technology.



Marilyn rented an apartment in Paris several times; she liked to stay in the thick of things there; she went to every play that she could see, as she loved French theater. I believe that, after a few of those trips, she wrote something on French theater. She admired Monet. She was a connoisseur of wines, and taught me how to save the unused portion in the bottle, so that it didn't turn to *vinaigre*! She loved watching and listening to France 2--news in French and encouraged me to re-subscribe to that channel.



We worked together certifying DELF/DALF, which I enjoyed immensely. She was a Chevalier in the American Society of French Academic Palms, as well as an Officer in the Society. Marilyn was also a prominent member of the only International Lyceum Club in the United States, actively participating in events and very helpful in speaking French when members from France and other countries came for several days to experience the Philly region. On one such occasion, she led the bus group to the Barnes exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Marilyn was such a force for foreign language, such a pioneer.

Joanne Silver est l'ancienne Secrétaire du Conseil Exécutif de l'AATF-Philadelphie. Elle est fondatrice de la Maison de Publication Beach Lloyd.

She was my mentor

Dianna Goddard

Marilyn Conwell was my mentor, my friend, my former professor, and words cannot express how unique she was and how she devoted her life to French and Rosemont and the AATF. I was pleased that the obituary mentioned her PhD thesis on the French Louisiana dialect, since it represented research and experiences dear to her heart. As a student, if we were not prepared for class, we always knew we could encourage her to talk about her interviews with countless New Orleans and Louisiana residents. She convinced me to switch careers and pursue my teaching certification some 20 years ago. I took my “methods” course with Marilyn. She excelled at everything she did. She even studied sign language because our librarian at Rosemont was hearing impaired. To say she will be missed, is the understatement of the century.



Dianne Goddard est membre du Conseil Exécutif de l'AATF-Philadelphie. Elle enseigne le français à Villa Maria Academy.

Marilyn Conwell Remembrances

Mary Bollinger



Marilyn Conwell and I were colleagues at Rosemont College in the early 80's. I taught French part-time there for several years early in my career. I admired Marilyn's dedication to French, her students, and Rosemont College. She was always a leader in the use of technology to teach French—language labs, video, CD's, computers, and eventually the Internet.

We met often at language conferences in the Philadelphia area and in France. At the AATF convention in Paris in 2000 we attended the magnificent musical "Notre-Dame de Paris". She loved the French language and culture and devoted her life to it.

Mary Bollinger, actuellement en retraite, a enseigné le français à Marple Newtown High School. Elle est membre du groupe le Rendez-vous des Retraités de l'AATF-Philadelphie.

Merci infiniment, Marilyn



Remerciements

Nous remercions sincèrement les suivants pour leur aide et soutien



Diana Regan

Photo

- ★ Marilyn Conwell, gros plan - page 1
- ★ Diana Regan et Marilyn Conwell en 2004 au Congrès de l'AATF à Atlanta, Georgia - page 5

Rita Davis

Photo

- ★ Déjeuner du 9 mars 2013 pour fêter Marilyn Conwell (Joanne Silver, Susie Ledieu, Rochelle Ostroff-Weinberg, Marilyn Conwell, Rita Davis, Andrée Tafoya, Pat Kendall) - page 8

Joanne Silver

Photos

- ★ Marilyn Conwell avec Joanne Silver à un événement de l'International Lyceum Club - page 9
- ★ Marilyn Conwell, gros plan, trinquant - page 9

Loreta Perthes

Poème

- ★ "Our Marilyn" - page 7

Kathleen Duboff, Directrice Affaires Externes, Rosemont College

Pour son soutien, les photos qu'elle a trouvées aux Archives et pour toutes les recherches qu'elle a faites - page 2

Rosemont College / Archives

Photos

- ★ Marilyn Conwell au téléphone dans son bureau à Rosemont - page 3
- ★ Marilyn Conwell en cours à Rosemont - page 4
- ★ Marilyn Conwell dans le laboratoire de langues à Rosemont - page 7
- ★ Marilyn Conwell souriante, debout - page 10
- ★ Marilyn Conwell tenant le drapeau français - page 11

Legacy

Photo:

- ★ Marilyn Conwell au béret - pages 12-13