

UFLA

The Utah Foreign Language Association Newsletter

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Blair Bateman
UFLA President

Here we are, six months into the pandemic, with school starting once again and epidemiologists informing us that things won't back to anything resembling "normal" until after the end of the academic year. I hope you had a chance to recover somewhat over the summer, and that you've found ways of preserving your mental as well as your physical health.

One of my coping mechanisms has been to resurrect an old hobby of ghost town hunting. I've found that ghost towns are an ideal place to visit during a pandemic because, unlike national and state parks, there are no crowds. Most of the places I've visited are coal towns from the first half of the 20th century, commonly called "coal camps," in Utah and Wyoming. The most remarkable thing about these towns is that where less than a century ago there were hundreds or even thousands of residents, with schools, stores, churches, and homes with beautifully landscaped yards, today there's not much but empty foundations and sagebrush.

One such town is Winton, Wyoming. Located north of Rock Springs, the coal mines in Winton were opened in 1917 and closed in 1952. Like most coal

camps, Winton was populated by immigrants, with origins including England, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The historical photos below were provided by the Sweetwater County Historical Museum.



Winton, circa 1930



Winton, 2020

Continued on page 2

One immigrant from Italy, Frank Franch, was famous for his award-winning garden, which was a favorite with local children due to its large fish pond. Frank's daughter Jane recalled, "We may not have had the fanciest house, but we had the nicest yard." Frank married one of the local school teachers, Bertha Mae Yager.



The Franch family's fish pond in the 1930s



The house is gone, but the pond is still there

When visiting ghost towns, I always make it a point to search for the site of the school. Nearly all coal camps had a school, a symbol of community pride and of the value that immigrant families placed on education. Although the schools are gone, they were large and important enough buildings that their location can often be identified.



Winton School, circa 1930



Winton School, 2020

Although there are generally few historic photos of school buildings themselves, there are plenty of pictures of the students who attended them and the teachers who taught there. Some of these are annual class portraits, while others show students participating in dramatic performances, learning songs, or playing on the playground. There are also photos of teachers who became lifelong friends, and in some cases ended up marrying each other.



Winton fifth grade class

All of this reminds us that education is much more than a school building; it is an experience that both students and teachers carry with them throughout their lives. In this time of COVID-19, it may be reassuring to remember that less important than whether we're teaching in a physical building or online is the impact that we're making on students' lives.

Speaking of COVID, UFLA is gearing up to continue to provide support to language teachers during this challenging time. Our November workshop, which we've held in Southern Utah for the past several years, will be offered online this year and open to teachers throughout the state (please see the announcement in this edition of the UFLA Newsletter). Our Annual Conference will also be held online, probably on a Saturday in March (exact date TBA) due to the difficulty of finding substitute teachers at the moment. We plan to take advantage of training provided by ACTFL's Leadership Initiative for Language learning to offer many of the same benefits of past conferences, including opportunities to interact with other teachers and explore the products offered by vendors in addition to conference sessions.

On behalf of the UFLA Board, we express our sincere gratitude to you for your commitment to language teaching and learning during this challenging time, and we extend our wishes for a productive and healthy academic year.

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UFLA Fall Virtual Workshop - November 7th, 2020

Constructing Measures to Assess Language Proficiency

Description:

Have you ever taken a test that you felt wasn't fair?

More importantly, have you ever written an unfair test and administered it to your students?

Many language educators have very little training in sound assessment principles, create tests that are poorly designed, and then use the results of those assessments to assign grades to their students. This workshop will discuss how to apply sound assessment principles with the ACTFL proficiency guidelines in order to construct proficiency measures for their students.

9am-12pm: Helping students move from Novice to Intermediate

1pm-4pm: Helping students move from Intermediate to Advanced

Register at *<https://tinyurl.com/uflaworkshop>*



Troy Cox, Ph.D.
Associate Director of Research
and Assessment Center for
Language Studies
Brigham Young University

UFLA Fall 2020 Workshop Presenter: Troy Cox

Troy L. Cox, PhD, has worked at Brigham Young University since 1996 is currently serving as the Associate Director of the Center for Language Studies where he conducts and publishes research in language proficiency, assessment, language acquisition, self-assessment and objective measurement. He regularly consults with ACTFL and has facilitated workshop throughout the United States and in Europe.

Language News

AATSP Annual Conference Returns Next Summer

The AATSP's (American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese) annual conference will return next summer in downtown Atlanta, Georgia! The 103rd annual conference will take place at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis from July 8-11, 2021. During this 3 1/2-day event language educators will have the opportunity to attend discussions, workshops, sessions, exhibits, and much more! The official Call For Proposals will open in late September! The motto for next year's conference is Submit now, Decide later! You pay nothing to submit a proposal and hope that teachers of all levels will opt to share your expertise and experiences.

For the latest conference news visit the conference webpage (www.aatsp.org) or the AATSP's Facebook page at @AATSPglobal!

NEW UFLA WEBSITE

The UFLA Website has now moved to
<http://ufla.net>

It's a new name, but with all the content we have always had on the site. If you only visit once a year to register for the conference, come see what else we have on ufla.net (including copies of the newsletters going back over twenty years.) We will also post handouts from presentations at our upcoming conference on the new UFLA website.

We also hope you will join [UFLA on Facebook](#) and on our new Instagram account (@ufla_utah). Come participate in the conversation!



UFLA Teacher of the Year

The deadline for Teacher of the Year nominations is October 15th. Remember that a Curriculum Vitae and letters of recommendation are needed! If you have any questions, please contact Electra Fielding. (electrafielding@weber.edu)

Instructions for nomination can be found at:

<http://ufla.net/Awards/TOYForm.pdf>

UFLA Mission

The Utah Foreign Language Association exists to promote the learning of world languages and cultures in the state of Utah and beyond. Specifically, the mission of UFLA is to:

- Support world language teaching and acquisition at all academic levels, including traditional instruction and dual language immersion programs
- Disseminate information and provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and resources to support language teaching and learning
- Offer professional development opportunities for language teachers
- Recognize excellence in language teaching and learning
- Collaborate with regional and national language teaching organizations
- Advocate for public policy that promotes language learning and supports the needs of language teachers and students

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Advertising Information

The UFLA Newsletter is published three times each year in September, January and May. All issues are distributed via e-mail to UFLA members as well as posted on the UFLA website.

Advertising rates are available at:
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