

TYCA and the Struggle for a National Voice: 1994-1997

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This essay chronicles the events that led to the ratification of TYCA.

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

Thoreau

When Paul Bodmer took over as chair of the National Two-Year College Council (NTCC) at the Pittsburgh National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Convention in November of 1993, he knew he was in for a challenging year. For the previous two years, Helon Raines had chaired both the NTCC and the Restructure Committee, the group charged with creating a new organization for two-year college English faculty within the structure of NCTE. The NTCC, a committee under the umbrella of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), had functioned as the oversight committee for the two-year college regional organizations since they were formed in 1966. In the intervening decades, however, the number of colleges had grown, their enrollments had grown even more, and two-year colleges had become a major feature on America's postsecondary landscape. Furthermore, by 1990, two-year college English faculty taught roughly half of the nation's undergraduates, yet the majority of those faculty had no connection to any disciplinary or professional organization. In short, twenty-five years after its inception, the NTCC was incapable of meeting the needs of the thousands of disenfranchised two-year college English faculty across the nation. Enter the Restructure Committee and its dream of TYCA. The goal of the Two-Year College English Association, as the new organization was to be called, was to give the nation's two-year college English faculty a professional home. More specifically, TYCA would help two-year college English faculty claim their rightful place in higher education by providing its members with a respected national identity and a voice on NCTE's Executive Committee (EC). However, because of NCTE's slow-moving bureaucracy and the unforeseen difficulties of forming a new organization, the two years that Raines served as chair of the Restructure

Committee had yielded, through no fault of her own, little visible progress.¹ The torch had now been passed to Bodmer.

Unlike Raines, who had little experience with the two-year college regionals or NCTE's bureaucracy prior to her being elected NTCC chair, Bodmer had been active in the NTCC for many years and had a good sense of the fight that lay in store. According to Raines, Bodmer was the perfect person to succeed her as chair of the NTCC and the Restructure Committee: "Paul, because of his close work with the NCTE staff while working on the by-laws and because of his years of leadership in his region and because he was willing, was the obvious choice to become the next NTCC Chair." She continued, "Paul, of course, is, was, the soul of patience and also had a grasp of details about these organizations that I could have never held in my mind." Indeed, drafting and negotiating the intricacies of organizational bylaws is something few were willing or able to do. Prior to the Pittsburgh Convention, Bodmer had already served on the NTCC for four years, had experienced much of the frustration NTCC members were heir to, and had written numerous drafts of the bylaws for what was to become TYCA. More importantly, Bodmer had the patience, skill, and determination to bring TYCA to life.

On January 4, 1994, Bodmer sent out his most recent draft of the approved bylaws to members of NTCC and the Executive Committees of CCCC and NCTE for everyone to read before the upcoming CCCC in Nashville. As Bodmer explained in the cover letter, the primary difference between NTCC's bylaws and TYCA's bylaws lay in the first three pages, those devoted to making the new organization "a stronger and more responsive national structure with a much more visible executive committee without destroying the already strong regional structure." The remaining eight pages dealt primarily with the inner workings of the regional organizations and remained much as they had in the NTCC bylaws. As of January 4, the new bylaws had been ratified by two of the six regions and approved "in spirit" by the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC), which, if all went according to plan, would become the seventh regional organization under TYCA. While only four regions needed to ratify the bylaws to make them operational, Bodmer expected the approval of all six by CCCC in March.

At the Nashville CCCC, Bodmer called the NTCC meeting to order at 7:00 on Tuesday evening, March 15, 1994. Nine members of NTCC were present, along with Miles Myers, NCTE's executive director, and Beverly Ann Chin, NCTE's vice president. According to the minutes, the discussion focused on the financial relationship among NTCC, CCCC, and NCTE, about which there was considerable confusion. NTCC had no treasurer and no system for tracking their income and expenses, nor were they receiving any kind of report from NCTE about their finances. One of the few ways that NTCC generated funds was from their Saturday workshop at CCCC, money that NTCC members believed was theirs to use, but were not sure. Myers thought the workshop money went directly to CCCC. This confusion exacerbated the frustration members of the NTCC already felt over their powerlessness within NCTE: NTCC had no way to raise or track its own money, and everything NTCC wanted to do needed to be approved by others.

This interaction confirmed once again that two-year college English faculty needed a new organization. The discussion then turned, appropriately, to TYCA. Myers indicated that there were still questions regarding membership, finances, and the location of *Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC)*, but he felt this could all work out if NCTE and NTCC continued to dialogue. Members of NTCC felt that this is what they had been trying to do for the last two years.³

Barriers to Ratification

In the spring of 1994, Bodmer asked Myers to clarify precisely what issues needed to be addressed. This request for clarification had been going on for more than a year, when Raines and Annal were asking the same question. The long-awaited response from Miles Myers finally came on August 15, 1994. In a lengthy letter to Paul Bodmer outlining “the problems to be solved in the establishment of a two year community college governance unit within NCTE” (1), Myers addressed three issues that he felt must be resolved before TYCA would be ratified by NCTE. Each issue concerned TYCA’s relationship with other groups: the College Section, the regional organizations, and NCTE. First, although the College Section Steering Committee had two-year college representatives and a rotating chair from a two-year college—both of these were provisions of the College Section Proposal from 1993 (“Proposal”)—there was no one who necessarily represented TYCA’s interests. The two-year representatives did not have to be a member of the TYCA EC. Myers suggested that one solution was to make the chair of TYCA an ad hoc member of the College Section Steering Committee. “The point is,” wrote Myers, “to tie the two units together into a related, connected, reasonably coherent governance unit” (1). Second, TYCA’s connection to its individual membership was weak, and this had to be strengthened if TYCA’s enrollment was to grow, which was NCTE’s primary concern. Previously, NTCC regional chairs and representatives were elected by the regional organizations, in which most of the members did not belong to or care to belong to NCTE. Because the new bylaws called for national elections, TYCA and NCTE were empowering a handful of people (the TYCA EC) to ask thousands of people to elect officers for a group that they knew nothing about. Additionally, NCTE was being asked to pay for this election by sending out thousands of ballots to people who were not members. Myers suggested that NCTE send regional members a membership application along with the ballot: “If they pay, they get to vote” (2). Myers also had concerns about California. Clearly, NCTE wanted California’s two-year college membership, but ECCTYC’s bylaws recognized campuses and districts, not individual teachers, as members. Since NCTE and TYCA depended on individual memberships, this discrepancy had to be addressed. Finally, Myers called for stronger ties between TYCA and NCTE, claiming that it was not clear that present NTCC officers even wanted to be part of NCTE, but that they certainly wanted NCTE’s services. He wrote that the current NTCC officers “want to claim the journal, which is owned by NCTE, and they want approximately \$87,000 in services from NCTE, but they

do not in the by-laws commit to NCTE membership for individual faculty" (3). He then pointed out that according to the current bylaws, the regional EC members must belong to CCCC, from which they receive very little financial support, but not to NCTE, from which they receive considerable support.³ Myers wrote, "If voting, the journal, attendance at TYCA functions, and other benefits are limited to NCTE/TYCA members, then maybe we can build an NCTE/TYCA membership which can support TYCA activities. The simple requirement of NCTE membership to get benefits will help" (4). Myers was quick to point out that all of these issues could be solved if "*everyone* is willing to give a little. Until these problems are solved, there will be little chance of building a larger community college group within NCTE" (4). In retrospect, Myers was correct on each of these issues, but at the time Bodmer was devastated. The issues that Myers raised were so complex that Bodmer felt like it was a deliberate attempt to thwart TYCA. He was almost ready to give up at this point, but telephone calls from Mark Reynolds and others, who told him to see this as just one more temporary setback like so many others, proved to be the encouragement Bodmer needed.

Higher Education's Representation in NCTE

For some time the College Section had lobbied NCTE for an associate executive director for higher education. In response, Myers had a staff member solicit views from groups within the College Section to help him make a decision on this issue. Mark Reynolds talked with members of NTCC and identified two relevant points. First, NTCC members felt that NCTE had long ignored two-year college interests. In fact, they felt betrayed having been told by Myers that, in effect, little had been accomplished after more than two years of work. Second, members of NTCC felt that NCTE was much more interested in its elementary and secondary sections, where most of its members came from; furthermore, if NCTE truly wanted to increase its college membership, it needed to allocate more staff time to meet their needs and strengthen the annual convention to provide more of interest to those in higher education.

Bodmer recalled his own frustration with NCTE headquarters. Because there was no associate executive director of higher education, other NCTE staff were given the added responsibility of liaison to higher education. Every few months a new person would be Bodmer's contact at NCTE. As a result, documents were lost and NCTE was not able to provide much continuity in addressing NTCC business or concerns. This situation was indicative of the treatment they had received for years from NCTE (Phone interview).

In the late summer of 1994, NCTE hired Kathy Parham as interim associate for higher education. She was charged by Myers to "work on resolving the logistical problems with implementing TYCA" (Parham, Letter to Charles Annal). In the fall of 1994, she read through all of the TYCA documents and spoke with people from NCTE, CCCC, the College Section, and NTCC to get up to speed on the two-year college restructuring efforts. She also communicated regularly

with Bodmer about the issues brought up in Myers' letter from August. Bodmer seemed to be reenergized by the hire of Parham. She was excellent at keeping records, tracking documents, and getting people together. Additionally, through her own initiative, she came to fully understand the issues the two-year college group was grappling with. Bodmer finally had a consistent person he could work with inside headquarters.

The Devil Is in the Details

When Parham wrote to the individual members of NTCC in October of 1994, she, as had others before her, proposed an ambitious timeline: "I am writing to inform you about recent proposed revisions to the Two Year College English Association (TYCA) plan and to enlist your help in establishing TYCA in the next few months" (Letter to Charles Annal 1). She then stated what the most recent draft of the bylaws accomplished: "It establishes TYCA as an identifiable entity for two-year college teachers within the College Section and it gives TYCA access to the NCTE Executive Committee through the chair and assistant chair of the College Section." But Parham then identified the particular issues in the bylaws about which there were still questions: membership, governance, and funding. The current bylaws, she explained, made no clear distinction between national TYCA and the regionals, allowing those who join the regional organizations to be automatic members of national TYCA without joining NCTE. Obviously, NCTE had concerns about financing and supporting a national organization if the majority of those members were not members of NCTE. The second concern, as Myers had previously indicated, was one of stronger ties between TYCA and the College Section, without which "TYCA will lack authority and influence with the NCTE Executive Committee, the main decision-making body of the Council" (2). And finally, the bylaws did not explain how TYCA would be funded, or if the funding would be sufficient.

To clarify the differences between the regional and national organizations, Parham made the following recommendations:

- > The regionals, while maintaining their own membership and dues, would be chapters of the national TYCA.
- > *Individual* membership in national TYCA would be open to any member of the NCTE College Section who chooses *TETYC*, which TYCA would oversee by appointing representatives to the editor selection and review committees.
- > Members of a regional organization would not have to join NCTE, but only those members who have also joined TYCA/NCTE could vote in national TYCA elections.
- > Regional members who do not belong to TYCA/NCTE would still be represented on the TYCA Executive Committee by their chairs.
- > The regional organizations would still pay per capita dues but only for those regional members who do not also belong to TYCA/NCTE. (2)

Parham saw in these suggestions a way to maintain the regional structure, provide representation for regional members who were not national members, and increase national membership.

Parham also made suggestions to address the other concerns. As an association within the College Section, TYCA's governance and election costs would be paid through NCTE's general fund. However, Parham recommended reducing the regional representatives from fourteen to seven, as the per diem expense for fourteen would "probably consume nearly all of the funds TYCA could raise" (3). This revision would leave TYCA more money with which to carry out their own initiatives. After detailing other possibilities, Parham concluded her letter by explaining that these proposed revisions would make for a stronger national TYCA by providing it with more bargaining power and the ability to better serve the regional organizations. Parham closed by reminding everyone that these were just suggestions, and that they should contact Bodmer with their responses soon so he could bring a revised plan to the NCTE Convention. "With your help," she wrote, "we can make TYCA a working reality in months instead of years" (4).

For the most part, Bodmer supported these changes, although he and Parham conversed by e-mail over the next few days regarding some "sticky points." In particular, he was concerned about trimming the regional representatives from fourteen to seven and giving up representation on the CCCC EC. He also reiterated his concern about presenting the bylaws to the College Section before they were approved by the NTCC. But Bodmer was clearly aware of the need to not get too bogged down in these details: "I hope we can do it all at Orlando, but I don't want us to get into the same predicament we have been in, that is, nobody knowing for sure what the process is and who has to approve what" (E-mail to Kathy Parham).

Parham responded the next day, addressing each of his concerns and providing a rationale. She also reiterated that ultimately it was NTCC's decision to advance what they wanted, but that they might anticipate some objections based on the points she mentioned. In addition to the cost, she told Bodmer that she recommended cutting the number of representatives to TYCA to avoid "criticism that TYCA represents only the regional members (not all of whom have to be NCTE members) instead of all the two-year college members in NCTE" (E-mail to Paul Bodmer, 25 Oct. 1994). Parham was suggesting that if TYCA's EC was made up of members from the regional organizations—a likely scenario given that nominees from regional organizations would probably capture the votes of their regions, and members not affiliated with a region lacked such a base—a large block of two-year college faculty would not be represented. Members of the NTCC wanted to make sure that of the two distinct groups of two-year college faculty who might be affiliated with TYCA—those belonging to the regional organizations (and who may or may not belong to national TYCA or NCTE) and those who were members of national TYCA but not the regional organizations—those who came from the regional organizations would have a stronger voice. NTCC leadership at the time generally came from the regional organizations, a dynamic

they wanted to preserve. Leaders believed that faculty who belonged to the regional organizations not only gained invaluable leadership experience, but were also committed to the two-year college mission. Those who chose to be involved with national TYCA but not their regional organization were seen as potentially more interested in a post at a four-year college or university than the two-year college. Therefore, if the nominating committee was staffed with regional representatives, leadership would almost always come from within their ranks. Regarding the issue of representation on CCCC, Parham wrote that the two ECs would need to work that out. Once TYCA was located in the College Section, she explained, CCCC might question why TYCA had numerous representatives on the CCCC EC, when CCCC had only one on the TYCA EC. It was a good point: NTCC had greater representation on the CCCC EC when it was a standing committee of CCCC, but if TYCA wanted equality, representation should be reciprocal.

On the next day, October 26, Parham again e-mailed Bodmer about her conversation with Miles Myers and a proposed timeline. "I showed Miles your email comments and he was pleased that we seem to be moving into productive revisions. He did stress, however, that if we wanted to implement TYCA in months, not years, we will need to make good use of Convention." The timeline they worked out involved specific items that needed to occur before, at, and after the convention. Parham acknowledged that the necessary task of changing the constitutions of both NCTE and CCCC to accommodate TYCA would be time consuming because it would have to be done by mail voting. She finished by saying that if all goes well, TYCA could be operational by the 1995 National Convention. This time, she was not far off.

November 1994: NCTE Convention, Orlando

Needless to say, for members of the NTCC, the most important business in Orlando was the TYCA plan. At the November 17, 1994 NTCC meeting, Parham provided the committee with an update of the TYCA proposal, including the tentative timeline for having everything approved—first by NTCC, then, in turn, by CCCC, the College Section, and the NCTE EC—so that TYCA would be operational by next November. Because TYCA would move out from under the umbrella of CCCC to sit beside it in the College Section, much of the discussion centered around TYCA's relationship with CCCC. It was agreed that CCCC would still appoint four-year college representatives to attend the TYCA regional conferences. The group also addressed the question of regional representation to the TYCA EC. Instead of fourteen, they agreed on seven, but unlike before, these seven would not sit on the CCCC EC. Instead, the four elected officers of TYCA would sit on CCCC as ex officio voting members. (The editor of *TETYC* would be an ex officio nonvoting member.) Bodmer, who had met with the College Section and CCCC leadership, reported that the CCCC EC wanted to see some indication of its connection to TYCA written into the bylaws. It was agreed that

even though TYCA would no longer be overseen by CCCC, a TYCA representative would still make informal reports at all of their meetings. When the meeting finally adjourned at 11:00 that night, the group had not yet reached consensus on all issues. It was agreed that Bodmer would present the group's concerns to the CCCC EC, and that members of NTCC would send their comments and suggestions to Parham, who would continue to work on the document. It was evident that the TYCA plan was not quite ready, and that they were not to leave the convention with what they had hoped—an approved document in hand.

On January 25, 1995, more than a year after Bodmer sent out an NTCC-approved version of the bylaws, Kathy Parham sent another letter to the members of the NTCC. Since the meeting in Orlando, she and Bodmer had worked diligently to address the concerns raised by NTCC and leaders of CCCC and the College Section. In this letter she was sending them a “new and, we hope, final revision of the TYCA proposal” (1). She enclosed two documents: “Plan to Establish the Two-Year College English Association” and “By-Laws of the Two-Year College English Association and the Regional Associations.” According to Parham, this new version included “contextual information which affirms TYCA’s strong history with the CCCC and emphasizes that the two groups will continue to work together” (1). Additionally, two CCCC representatives would now sit on the TYCA EC, and an annual financial report from NCTE to the TYCA EC had been added. “If we can make all of these votes,” Parham wrote, “then it is only a matter of ratifying the necessary constitutional changes, possibly by mail ballots, to have TYCA up and running by next fall.”

A week later, on February 1, the NCTE EC voted on Motion 95:39 to accept this most recent update from TYCA that “builds on reforms to the College Section which were presented to and accepted by the Executive Committee last year.” The update summarized the events at the Orlando convention, explaining that representatives of NTCC met with officers of CCCC and the College Section, both of whom had since “promised support for the revised TYCA plan.” The update also summarized the College Section reforms from the previous year and explained how this new proposal differed from the proposal initially put forth by the Ad Hoc Restructuring Committee of the NTCC in 1992:

The original proposal created a good deal of excitement but a number of questions were raised about TYCA’s financial and governance structure. Over the last six months, Paul Bodmer, chair of the NTCC, and Kathy Parham, the interim Associate for Higher Education, have significantly revised the TYCA proposal to address these logistical questions while preserving the goals of the original proposal. The revised TYCA plan establishes TYCA as an identifiable entity for two-year college teachers within NCTE, affirms partnerships with the CCCC, strengthens ties to the College Section, and clarifies the relationship between the regionals and the national organization. (NCTE Motion 95:39)

The motion carried, maintaining the momentum generated by Parham and Bodmer’s work.

Ratification, Finally

The March 21 NTCC meeting at the Washington DC CCCC was relatively well attended. All of the regionals were represented except for the Northwest, with both Lois Powers and John Lovas representing California's ECCTYC. Bodmer called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Once the minutes from the Orlando meeting were approved, Katie Hope, NCTE's business manager, gave a financial report. Earlier that day, CCCC officers had voted to have the \$1,240 generated from NTCC's Saturday workshop at the 1994 CCCC kept in an active account for NTCC to use as discretionary funds. Hope also noted that if NTCC approved the TYCA bylaws at this meeting, they would go to the NCTE EC in April. Earlier that day, CCCC and the College Section had approved the TYCA plan. It must have been a long wait getting through the rest of the meeting's business—regional updates, archivist report, the two-year college breakfast, the planning committee for NCTE in San Diego—because what was foremost on everyone's mind was the vote to approve the bylaws. But the moment finally arrived. The minutes read: "Houston moved, Wiley seconded motion to approve TYCA by-laws and Plan. Motion carried unanimously. Unanimously, everyone said, "Thank God for Kathy Parham" (4). With the bylaws and plan approved by NTCC, CCCC, and the College Section, the road to the NCTE EC had been cleared of all obstacles.⁴

Even though members of the NTCC fully expected to walk away from the conference with the bylaws approved by all groups, that did not lessen their desire to celebrate. That evening, Mark Reynolds, Bodmer, and Bodmer's wife all met for a drink to toast to the fact that they were done. Conversation turned to who might lead TYCA as its first chair. Reynolds said that the obvious choice was Bodmer, but Bodmer declined. By the time the first elected chair would take office, Bodmer would have already served as NTCC chair for three years, and he had worked too hard to run in an election. He felt it was time for someone else, and it would be the work of the nominating committee when they met in November to decide.

April 28, 1995 was a big day for TYCA. Jim Hill, chair of the College Section, brought Motion 95:106 to the NCTE EC to "approve in principle the TYCA proposal and to set in motion a constitutional amendment empowering the Executive Committee to establish other kinds of NCTE groups (e.g., consortia, associations), specifying that those groups would be reviewed every three years to determine continuation; to develop a plan for the Subcommittee on Higher Education to evaluate TYCA in three years." The motion passed. TYCA was almost official. Because the regional organizations needed to approve the bylaws every time a change was proposed, the only remaining step was ratification by two-thirds of the regional organizations. Of course, it was also a symbolic gesture to return to the regionals, to TYCA's roots, for its final ratification. As soon as four regional groups approved the bylaws, TYCA would be official.

When NTCC met at the 1995 NCTE Convention in San Diego, they knew that ratification was simply a matter of waiting for regional approval. According to the approved minutes of the November 17 TYCA meeting, three of the

required four regions had already ratified the bylaws. Because most of the regions held their conferences in October, the Midwest, Northeast, and Southwest regions all had an opportunity to approve the bylaws before the San Diego Convention and reported doing so. California also approved them, but because they were not an official region represented on NTCC, their approval did not count towards the required two-thirds majority. Neither the Western nor Northwestern regions were meeting that year, which meant that TYCA would not be official until the Southeast region ratified the bylaws at their spring conference. NTCC's business at the San Diego convention, therefore, was to begin planning the transition. It was agreed that the nominating committee needed to meet to create a slate of nominees for chair, assistant chair, and secretary.

When the nominating committee met, members knew it was critical to find someone who would be a strong first chair of TYCA. Two names that surfaced were Lynn Troyka and Katherine Staples. Troyka had taught for years at Queensborough Community College, City University of New York, had chaired CCCC and the College Section, and had edited the *Journal of Basic Writing*. She had also written two well-respected handbooks and coauthored two composition textbooks, all of which were used at many two- and four-year institutions. In short, she was well known and respected in the academic community. Staples, chair of Technical Communications at Austin Community College, was another nationally known and respected candidate with considerable experience in the Southwest regional organization. Both candidates had the full support of the NTCC EC. John Lovas of De Anza College in California and Linda Houston of Ohio State Agricultural Technical Institute were named as candidates for associate chair. And Dennis Kriewald of Laredo Community College in Texas and Lois Powers of Fullerton College in California were candidates for secretary.

Election and Installment of TYCA's First Executive Committee

On March 26, Paul Bodmer called the first meeting of TYCA to order at 1:05 p.m. The new organization had become official when the Southeast region, on January 29, became the fourth to ratify the bylaws. Although Bodmer was now serving his third elected term as NTCC chair, he was now officially the interim TYCA chair. After calling the meeting to order, Bodmer introduced guests, including Lynn Troyka and Katherine Staples, the two candidates for chair in what was to be TYCA's first national election. Bodmer then reminded everyone of the composition of the new fourteen-member TYCA Executive Committee: chair, associate chair, immediate past chair, secretary, seven regional representatives, two CCCC representatives, and the *TETYC* editor. As with all NCTE elections, the ballots were to be sent out in April, with the results announced in June. Frank Madden, chair of the College Section, announced the results of TYCA's first national election in *TETYC*:

In anticipation of its new name and alliance, a committee at the 1995 Convention nominated candidates for national offices. Election ballots for Chair, Associate Chair, and Secretary of TYCA were mailed out this spring. Elected

were Lynn Quitman Troyka, Chair (term to expire in 1997); John Lovas, Associate Chair (term to expire in 1997; the associate chair will succeed to the posts of chair and immediate past chair); and Lois Powers, Secretary (term to expire in 1999). (238)

On April 18, 1996, the NCTE EC approved a budget of \$14,800 to fund an organizational meeting for TYCA's new officers to be held in Indianapolis on June 13–16, 1996. Eleven members of the TYCA EC met with Kathy Parham and Patti Stock to plan TYCA's first three years.⁵ Lynn Troyka, who would officially take office in November, was unable to attend the meeting due to a family illness; however, she participated via conference call. The group articulated twelve immediate, intermediate, and long-term goals for TYCA. Among them: to launch an ambitious membership campaign; to survey members in TYCA to learn more about their professional profiles, interests, and needs; to make NCTE the premier publisher of the scholarship of two-year college faculty; and, once TYCA was established as the national voice of two-year college English faculty, to hold a one-time national TYCA Conference ("Report" 1–3). The report was presented to and accepted by the NCTE EC at their September 25, 1996 meeting.

Although TYCA had technically been official since January, and the NTCC met for the first time as TYCA at the CCCC in March, it was the November 1996 NCTE Convention in Chicago, precisely four and one-half years after TYCA was first proposed in Hinds, Mississippi, that marked the true beginning of the new organization. It was here that the first group of elected TYCA officers began their tenure. Paul Bodmer, as the outgoing chair of TYCA, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, November 22, 1996. After the customary announcements and initial reports, Lynn Troyka took the floor. She thanked Patti Stock for "playing such a crucial role in the development of TYCA" ("NTCC Minutes" 2). Both Madden and Troyka then explained the relationship between TYCA and the College Section, "namely, that TYCA is an organization within the College Section" and that the TYCA chair and *TETYC* editor—Mark Reynolds, at the time—both sit on the College Section's Steering Committee. Troyka then announced her plan to organize a celebration honoring the birth of TYCA to be held at the 1997 CCCC in Phoenix. At Bodmer's suggestion, the TYCA EC moved to form a committee to help plan the party. Mike Matthews of Tarrant Community College in Fort Worth, Texas, was named chair. In other business, Georgia Newman, chair of the National Meeting Task Force, the group charged with determining the feasibility and format of the one-time national meeting, reported that "more questions and concerns were raised than answers found" ("NTCC Minutes" 3). The EC requested that Newman continue her work, then moved to conduct a special interest session at the next CCCC to discuss the idea of a national convention. The meeting closed with the inauguration of the new officers: Lynn Troyka, Chair; John Lovas, Associate Chair; Lois Powers, Secretary; and Paul Bodmer, Past Chair.

Three days later, on Monday, November 25, as the hour approached midnight and the convention was drawing to a close, the new officers were officially installed. Troyka wrote of that occasion in "TYCA to You":

The pleasure with which I pen this letter of greetings combines the joy of birth with the pride of anniversary. The Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) of NCTE began its life officially around midnight on Monday, November 25, as the NCTE Annual Convention was ending in Chicago. For the first time, we who teach English at two-year colleges in the United States and Canada—along with everyone who cares deeply about the unique mission of two-year colleges—have our own national professional organization to give voice to our national and international concerns about our present and future roles in higher education. (73)

TYCA's Inaugural Gala: CCCC, Phoenix, March 1997

TYCA was officially recognized at the Phoenix CCCC, and the conference produced some memorable moments. On Tuesday afternoon, March 11, 1997, the official TYCA EC met for the first time. After bidding farewell to Patti Stock, who was returning to her faculty position at Michigan State, Troyka turned to the two social events that would occur during the conference: the Thursday evening Inaugural Gala celebrating the birth of TYCA and the TYCA breakfast on Saturday morning. Troyka first thanked Cynthia Selfe, CCCC program chair, for her support of the TYCA celebration scheduled for Thursday. Then Mike Matthews, chair of the committee that planned the gala, took the floor to summarize plans for the event. Matthews had sent out four thousand invitations to two-year college English faculty and everyone attending the conference. Additionally, the invitations were printed in the regional newsletters. He explained the plan for a receiving line made up of TYCA's officers, all dressed in formal attire. Working with a \$7,000 catering budget donated by Troyka's publisher, Prentice Hall, Matthews commissioned a four-foot ice sculpture with the letters, "TYCA." Each of the regional organizations had also donated gifts for a drawing to be held throughout the evening.

One of the conference's most dramatic moments occurred on Thursday morning at the opening general session on Thursday, March 12. Program chair Cynthia Selfe invited Lynn Troyka to the podium to announce the official birth of TYCA. After her initial remarks about the genesis and development of the new organization, Troyka asked that all who taught at a two-year college, all who had ever taught at a two-year college, and all who had ever attended a two-year college to please stand. In the next moment, more than half of the audience rose to its feet (Stock 169). Underscoring the importance of two-year college faculty in CCCC and NCTE, Nell Ann Pickett of Hinds Community College in Mississippi then took the stage as CCCC chair to deliver her address titled, "The Two-Year College: Democracy in Action."

The real celebration occurred that evening, however, at the TYCA Inaugural Gala. Held in the Grand Ballroom of the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, the Gala went from 8:00 to 10:30. Mike Matthews was a proud host, coordinating an evening of food, conversation, music, and speakers. With more than six hundred people attending, the gala was a huge success. The next day, Paul Bodmer was presented with the Nell Ann Pickett Award for his long, tireless work for the two-year college

organization, and on Saturday morning, the TYCA breakfast sold out with two hundred attendees. And with that, TYCA was not only official, it was officially known. ❏

Notes

1. For an account of the two years when Raines was chair of the NTCC, see the previous article in this series, "TYCA and the Struggle for a National Voice: 1991–1993" (Andelora).

2. When Raines was chair, some members of the NTCC felt that Myers was deliberately thwarting their efforts to create a new organization. The evidence suggests, however, that it was not Myers, but NCTE's bureaucracy that was the culprit; Myers was very busy with other sections at this time, and NCTE had no one designated to help with TYCA.

3. This point could not have been an actual concern. Technically, no one could belong to CCCC without also belonging to NCTE.

4. TYCA's current bylaws can be viewed at this address: <<http://www.ncte.org/groups/tyca/gov>>.

5. Patti Stock was hired by Myers in August of 1995 as associate executive director of higher education. Parham, as interim AED, became Stock's assistant.

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