

Edges Magazine Carves Out New Niche by Bill Staples

Most publications today pass on a deafening plethora of information to their readers. In a communications hierarchy of data, information, knowledge and wisdom, *Edges* magazine, published by ICA Canada, has tried to impart wisdom about social change to a hungry audience. Every sentence goes through three filters; compassion for the hurting, knowledge for the searching and our own life experience. And, of course, ICA's perennial bias for dialogue and mass participation comes through clearly.

But *Edges* has also had to survive in a highly competitive market for the written word. In April 1992, the board of ICA Canada put a halt to the magazine's production, to cauterize its outflow of cash. At the same time, they canvassed members and hired a consultant to help figure out how to make *Edges* self-sufficient. His conclusion was: "Your magazine, wonderful as it is, is dead in the water unless you focus on a specific target audience that can sustain you financially."

The *Edges* staff went into retreat mode for several months and plumbed their own depths to respond to this challenge. Scanning thousands of books and articles, editor Brian Stanfield identified 34 key spots in the

social process that could support a new magazine. As publisher, I charted the acceleration in the release of thousands of books and journals over a ten year period, to find out in which fields there were gaps in high quality literature.

These studies and considerable soul searching about the purpose of ICA and *Edges* led us to one conclusion: Although there have been enormous leaps in the

issues in collaboration with organizations which had ready-made education audiences but no publication of their own.

The result has been a roller coaster readership. Our first collaboration was with the World Congress on Education and Communication on Environment and Development, the second was with the Canadian Association of Adult Education, and the third

was with The Conference Board of Canada, a prestigious economic thinktank with an education agenda. 8,000 trustees of School Boards across Canada were the target audience.

But our April 1994 issue, *Teachers Facing Change*, is where a real breakthrough had occurred. The Ontario Teachers Federation designed a special project, "Creating a Culture of Change," to break down isolation among teachers in the

classroom. The Federation was delighted by our offer to produce a special issue on the subject and purchased 150,000 copies for every teacher in the province.

Each issue of *Edges* now brings not only a panoply of energizing influences to the reader but provides a focused target audience that has attracted enough advertisers to make the magazine self sufficient. ⊕



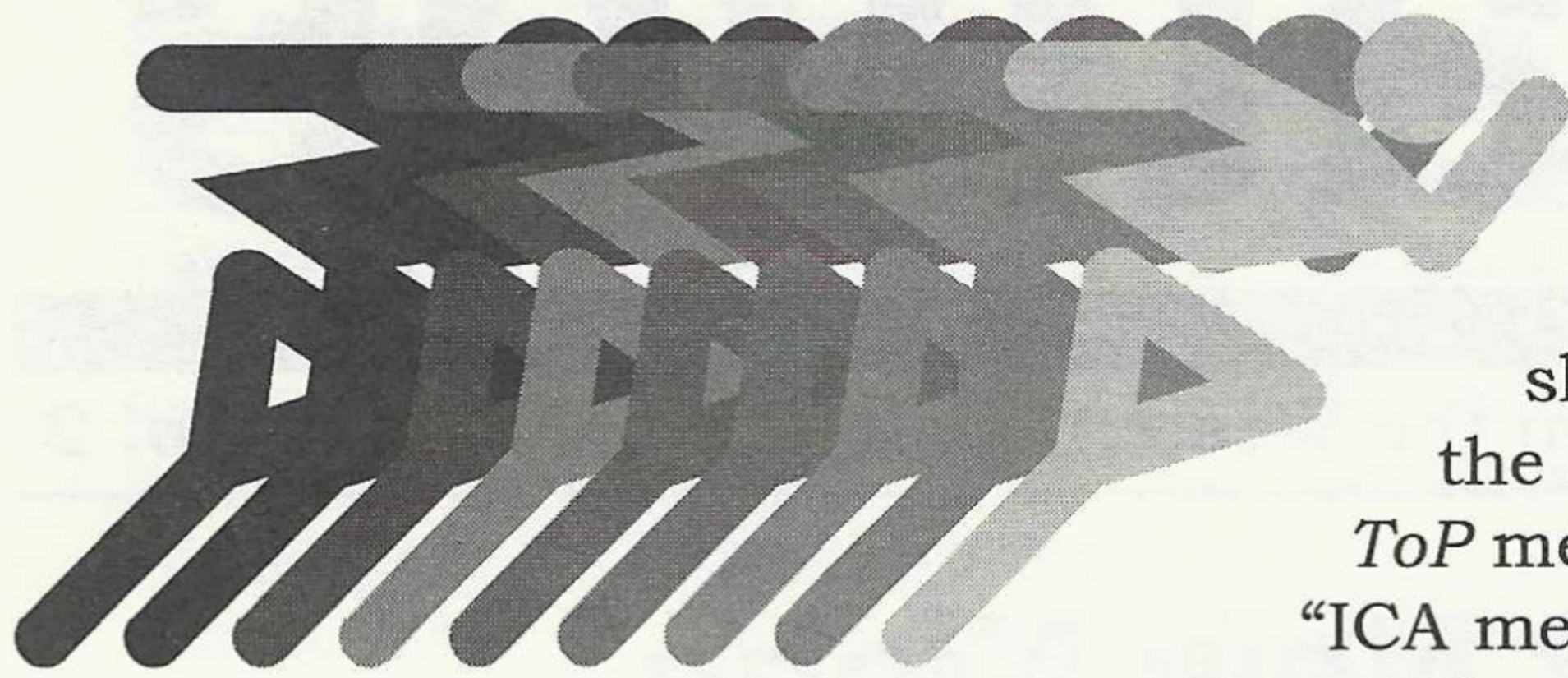
Inta Ridler

Edges Editorial Team, left to right: Brian and Jeanette Stanfield, Ronnie Seagren, Bill and Ilona Staples.

understanding how human beings learn and how they interact with each other, no publications are making that wisdom available to the general public. One very practical reason there is little published in this field is the dearth of consumer education products to pay for advertising.

We immediately launched a three-year editorial theme, *Adventures in Learning*, and decided to custom publish a series of special

Fast-Track Training in ToP Methods



“At first, I didn’t understand what the program was about. I wanted to improve my facilitation skills by working with a master facilitator. Then I discovered it was concerned with teaching facilitation. This is probably a good thing, because one of the best ways to learn something is to teach it.”

These are the comments of Linda Vogelsong, one of the first participants in ICA West’s *Fast-Track Trainer* program. The program aims to enhance the facilitation and training skills of *ToP* grads while assisting to market and develop ICA methods.

ICA Trains National Youth Network

“Most systems treat young people as objects, or at best, recipients of human services,” said ICA board member, Anne Doshier. “Rarely, are they regarded as human resources.” At Anne’s initiative, ICA West was invited to work with the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (NNRYS) to begin to change these attitudes and promote “Community Youth Development.”

Last December, John Oyler of ICA West trained 16 facilitators to lead parts of the 600-person NNRYS conference. This was the start of a two-year process to train NNRYS staff in *ToP* methods so they in turn can train youth workers in participatory processes which value youth as human resources.

Accompanying Linda in the program is Pat Bried. As well as refining her facilitation skills, Pat wants to explore the application of the ICA’s *ToP* methods in small business. “ICA methods are very good for people who can grasp concepts but lack the skills to put them into practice. Many people in small businesses are in this position,” she says.

While each has her own project, Linda and Pat are working together on marketing *ToP* methods. “This is a key time for ICA,” Linda stresses. “You have been working for 30 years to develop these methods and now there is too much demand for them for you to handle. You need to get out of the way and pass them on to others. We’re figuring out how to do that. It’s fun and I’m looking forward to it.”

Northwest Welcomes Hispanic Services

“The Hispanic community in Yakima, WA, has been active for twenty years,” said ICA West Hispanic Services coordinator, Raul Jorquera. “But complaints and strikes have been their way of doing things. At times this works but often it’s not very effective.”

To demonstrate an alternative approach, Raul and Angelica Rodriguez spent a week in Yakima with the *Asociacion de Barrios Hispanos*. Funded by the National Crime Prevention Council, they trained 25 community facilitators in *ToP* methods and worked with this group to lead a Spanish-speaking Town Meeting on drug and crime prevention.

Participants turned up faithfully night after night to be trained. “People were excited by the training,” reported Angelica. “It was the first time they had experienced training with Spanish materials led by Spanish speaking facilitators.”

Graduate Credit for ICA Course

The first ICA Imaginal Education course to be offered by the University of Colorado for graduate credit will take place at the Denver ICA Training and Events Center, July 20-23, 1994. Listed under the university’s Extended Studies program, it will be led by Denver colleagues OliveAnn Slotta and Lyn Taylor.

The course will run Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings and close with a Saturday brunch session. The fee is \$130. Participants must submit a

written report in order to obtain graduate credit. For further information, contact ICA Denver at (303) 333-1984.



A Journey in the 'Hood

by Janet Grossman and Laura Mahr

For the past year, Janet Grossman and Laura Mahr have been engaged as VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) workers sponsored by ICA West to do teen programming in the inner-city Garfield neighborhood of Phoenix. They report on some of the highlights of their time together.

As we write this, we are still reeling from our first "Beyond the Wall" course for youth from the Garfield neighborhood. It's hard to believe that we organized a three-day course for 24 youth aged 12-15 and 22 volunteer companeros or mentors.

In a ranch setting, we indulged in a mixture of work and play, from deep sharing to a ropes course. Participants looked at their lives and were helped to see new possibilities for themselves. Through breaking down together and building each other up, we formed strong teams which worked on the ropes course. When you're teetering on a pole thirty feet up, you need to trust the people anchoring your rope to the ground.

Now the youth and their mentors are matched one-to-one and committed to working together for the next six months. They will participate in self-planned weekly workshops which will focus on leadership, education, community service, as well as cultural and recreational events.

This may sound like success but it took a year of many ups and downs to reach this point. Who'd have believed that having your apartment burglarized could lead to sharing a home with a member of the Garfield Organization Board? Who'd have believed that a meeting a year ago would lead to donated space for training? It takes a lot to get into the hearts and minds of a community —

constant presence, attendance at endless meetings and a certain willingness to accept the slow pace of community development.

Knowing it would be a big job to start a teen program in Garfield, ICA West divided five VISTA volunteers into teams to accomplish different tasks. At an ICA facilitation methods course which was part of our training, we met a volunteer from the Greater Phoenix Youth At Risk (YAR) Foundation. We learned

happened. Bilingual youth enrolled, we visited the family of every enrolled youth and we held a bilingual parent meeting. Knowing we must have more Spanish-speaking youth in the program, we are envisaging a course entirely in Spanish.

Now we have a teen program in Garfield with excited youth participants and adult volunteers, it's time to plan for a course in June with 15-20 year olds. Janet will stay on as a VISTA until the



Garfield VOYCE participants in ropes course during the *Beyond The Wall* program.

that YAR had spent five years doing city-wide youth programs but had yet to implement neighborhood-based programs. They jumped at the chance to have two full-time volunteers to work in Garfield and we welcomed the opportunity to learn from and be supported by them.

We formed a local steering committee which created Garfield VOYCE (Volunteers Organized for Youth and Community Empowerment), a partnership between YAR and the Garfield Organization. At times, it seemed futile to produce a program in English in a neighborhood which is 75% Spanish-speaking. But it

end of June and hopes to have a staff position with YAR thereafter. Laura is off to travel the country at the end of March but may return for the upcoming VOYCE courses. For both of us, it's been a journey filled with interesting people, unforeseen challenges, laughter and tears, not to mention gratitude for each other's support in turning a dream into reality. ☺

VISTA volunteers, teammates and friends Janet Grossman [left] and Laura Mahr, of Phoenix.



A Rich Mix: Blending ToP and TQM by Mimi Brodsky and Darla Wilson

Our company, Paradigm Systems, has worked with educational, social service and mental health organizations for more than ten years. We have blended the philosophy of W. Edwards Deming, ideas of Peter Senge, the ICA's *Technology of Participation* methods and Total Quality Management tools.

We first ran into the ICA five years ago when we were working on a project concerning the needs of people with disabilities in Oregon. We had used surveys and interviews and had access to a variety of information but we wanted more human contact with the disabled themselves, as well as their friends and families.

We hired ICA facilitator, Sandra True, and scheduled forty Town Hall meetings throughout the state. The results astonished us. People worked together for a few hours and left with a commitment to a common purpose. Across the state, they all wanted services that helped them find, get and keep jobs; access to technology that would assist them to work and live with greater self-confidence; and comprehensive services to provide funds until work is found. But what impressed us the most was the way the ICA methods helped break down barriers between strangers and encouraged a sharing of ideas and perceptions. Discussions were genuine and deep and left people wanting more. Many groups continued long after our project was finished. As one person noted:

"This process is great! Everyone is able to have input and all are able to see and visualize what is most important." We saw what happened when people had meaningful conversations and we began to emphasize dialogue wherever we could in our work.

Since then, we moved into Total Quality Management (TQM), or Continuous Quality Improvement, as we prefer to call it. TQM is an approach that focuses on improving quality and satisfying customers. It requires a vision and transforms old ways of doing business into more effective ways. TQM tools and techniques help organizations produce more accurate information, make better decisions and improve processes. Although it has its origins in industry, TQM has found a growing audience in education and human services. One reason for

this is that it brings people back into the picture, by emphasizing satisfaction and teamwork.

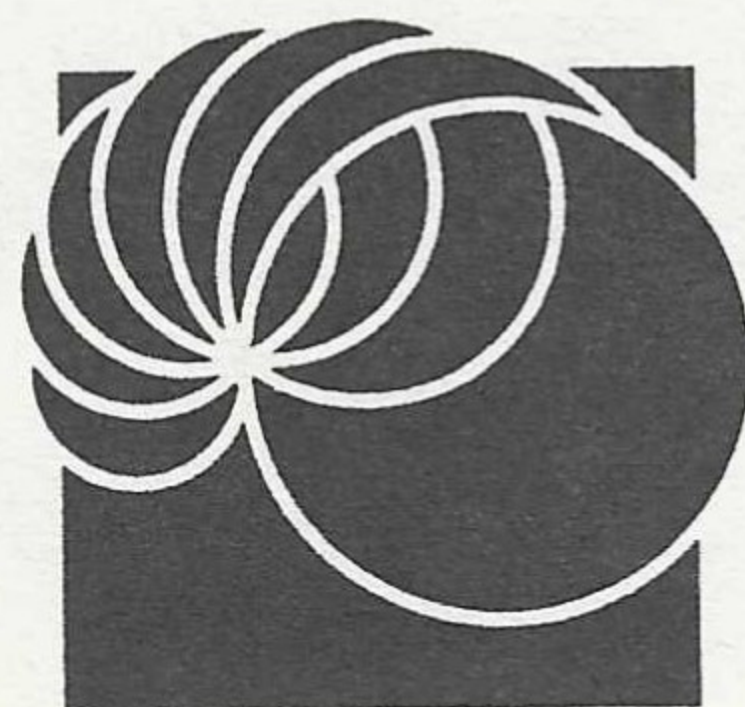
From the work of Deming, Senge and TQM, we developed ten key characteristics of continuous quality improvement. They are:

- *Shared Vision* — the Workshop Method is one way to create a common vision.
- *Unity of Purpose* — we review departmental goals, rewrite job descriptions and create a supportive environment.

- *Customer Defined Quality* — students, people with disabilities and staff are all customers.
- *Multiple Perspectives* — included in planning processes, improvement teams and satisfaction surveys.
 - *Processes and Systems* — better ideas come when the focus is on the process, not the people.
 - *Teamwork* — TQM relies on teamwork; ICA shows how to make it happen.
- *Data-based Decisions* — both TQM and *ToP* blend intuitive responses and objective data to solve root problems.
- *Emphasis on Learning* — organizations that genuinely want quality actively support learning at many levels.
- *Supportive Leadership* — good leaders create a supportive environment and constantly help staff do their jobs well.
- *Continuous Improvement* — the pursuit of quality is an unending journey rather than a goal or objective to achieve.

In addition to working with people with disabilities, we have used the Discussion and Workshop Methods to help teachers, specialists and parents working with gifted students. Our blending of *ToP* and TQM have changed the way we view organizations and the way we do business. ⊕

ICA methods helped break down barriers between strangers and encouraged a real sharing of ideas and perceptions.



CONTINUOUS
QUALITY
IMPROVEMENT



Darla Wilson [left] and Mimi Brodsky of Paradigm Systems, Salem, OR.

TOP Works Its Magic at PACCAR by Gayle Carmichael

It's no secret that large organizations are having a tough go of it. PACCAR, Inc., a Fortune 200 company based in Bellevue, WA, is no exception. This Class 8 truck manufacturer has had its share of changes in technology and downturned markets. To respond to these challenges, one of PACCAR's major strategies has been to maximize its use of computer technology.

At the company's Management Information Systems Division are 260 Information Systems (IS) professionals helping the organization analyze and plan for its systems needs.

Their job is to work with PACCAR executives to analyze, educate, plan and implement information systems.

In the past, this was relatively easy because computers were mainframe, housed in a central location and run by a handful of experts. Now computers are personal, located on employee desks and run by amateurs who expect computers to be "user-friendly." Also, new technology links personal computers so that information can be shared and coordinated. Telecommunications provide employees who use computers with variety and choices only they can make. How do you direct this rapid growth?

About five years ago, several IS professionals at PACCAR attended ICA *ToP* methods courses. Being no strangers to group processes and problem solving, they quickly saw the possibilities of these methods and began to use them throughout the organization.

Two of the data analysts blended the *ToP* methods with another method known as Extended Relational Analysis (ERA). This analytical method helps work groups identify categories of data such as names, addresses and telephone numbers needed to create a database. During each work session, it is essential for the group to come to consensus about the business process they are analyzing.

The ICA Workshop Method, known to MIS staff as "the card method," helps the group reach this consensus. "Before this integration of methods, it had been

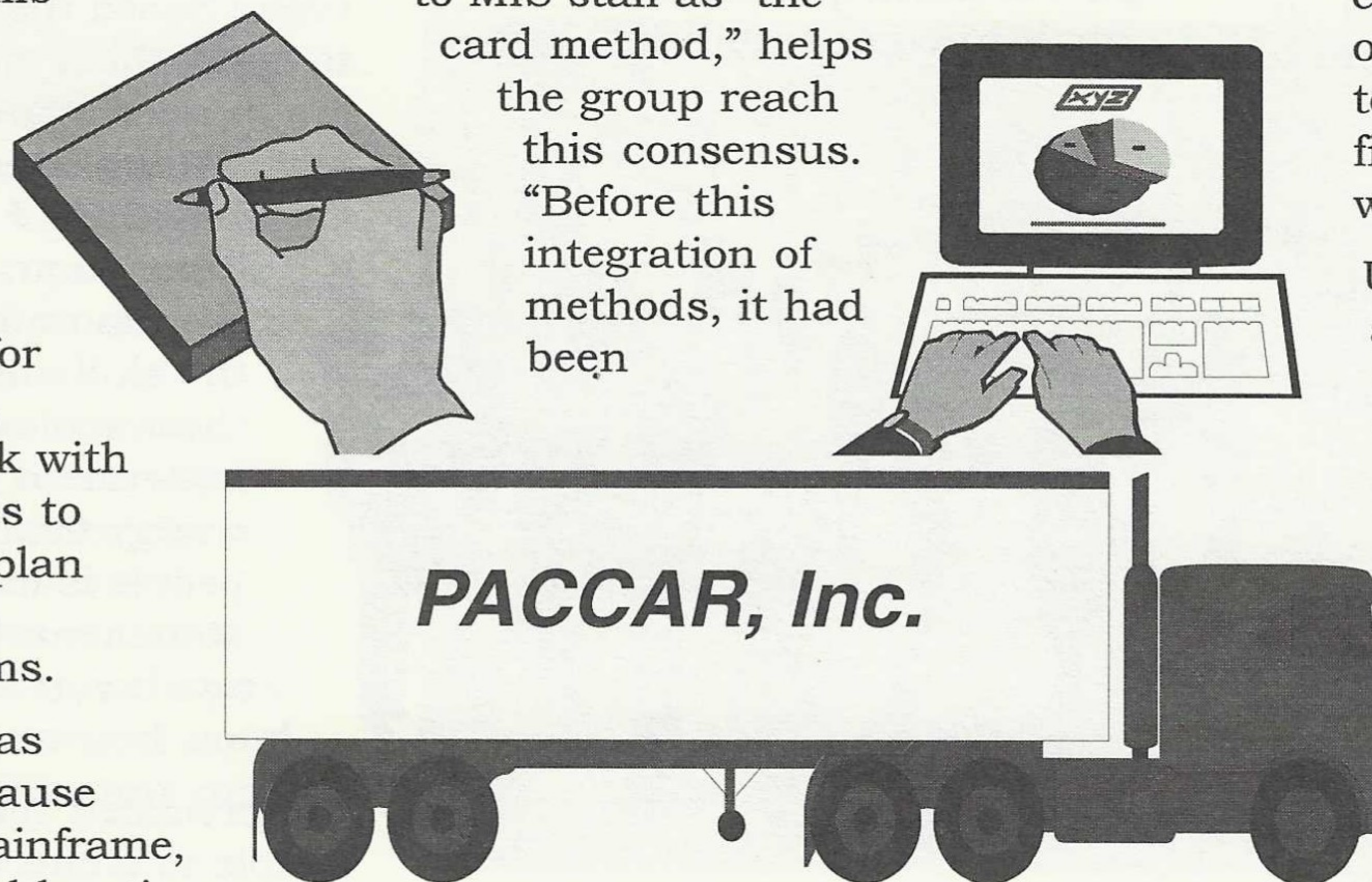
dialogue within the company and with its dealers.

PACCAR also benefited from *ToP* methods in the implementation of its Product Change Management system. Five MIS technical support staff came under fire because the system kept crashing in mysterious ways. Each person, in separate parts of the building, was responsible for an isolated part of the implementation. As every crisis occurred, each technical support person would conduct his or her portion of the testing. Every part tested out OK. After much finger-pointing, the group was brought together.

Using the ICA Workshop and Discussion methods, these five people recognized that working in isolation was the cause of the problem, not the incompetence of any individual. The real problem was their need to communicate with one another. What had started out as accusations

became collaboration. Instead of requesting more equipment and testing software, they ordered pagers.

Because of the many applications and successes, it's not unusual for trained ICA facilitators at MIS to carry post-it notes in their pockets. They want to be ready to lead "the card method" if called upon. After all, it's the magic that works. ☉



impossible to reach consensus," reported one MIS analyst. "The transformation has been magical."

There are two other parts of the company where *ToP* methods have made a difference. One is in the truck distribution system. PACCAR distributes its trucks through individually owned dealerships. In 1993, a team of three IS people created a strategic plan for the dealers. Meetings were held all over the country using the ICA Strategic Planning Method. After several months of meetings, a consensus document was created. Besides providing a guide for systems development in the next five years, the process brought new understanding and

A former Training Manager for PACCAR, Gayle Carmichael is now enjoying a year's sabbatical before embarking on a career change.



ICA Network Meeting Attracts Many New Faces

For the fifth consecutive year, the ICA Network — an international network of facilitators whose common denominator is the use of the ICA's Technology of Participation methods — held an annual gathering, this time in Washington D.C. We asked two newcomers to this group to share their reflections on what the event meant to them.



Sandra Sohcot, of San Francisco, CA, provides planning and control expertise to small businesses.

THE CONFERENCE BEGAN FOR me when I registered on Friday afternoon. As I checked the workshops and found a few people had already signed up for mine, the reality of it all began to dawn on me.

A number of aspects of the weeknd impressed me. One was how *Technology of Participation* principles were incorporated into running of the conference. Discussion groups were organized and presented for sign-up in spontaneous yet well-systemized structures. Opportunities for participation abounded and everyone consistently “walked their talk.”

I was also struck by the quality of information exchanged, both during workshops and at informal gatherings. We all had such different perspectives because of our life experiences, age and work applications, yet we seemed to share a common goal: wanting to find ways to make things work just a little bit better.

Several workshops were most meaningful to me. In her “Art of Commitment and the Science of Change,” Renee Levi outlined the four stages everyone goes through in response to change, whether the change is positive, negative, work related or personal. In “Sharing What’s Working in *ToP* Strategic Planning, Marilyn Oyler and Gary Forbes generated a high level of interchange between long-standing pros and newcomers — another feature of the conference.

Friends and colleagues tell me they can feel my enthusiasm when I talk about the meeting. I discovered that ICA people are very special, they feel their experiences deeply and have strong connections with their work and each other. I learned many practical applications but of even greater significance, I experienced how powerful the spirit of participation is in bringing people together to make things happen. ☉



IN THIS INFORMATION AGE, science and technology have promised us so much. Everyone is an “expert” in something and has “the answer,” yet our world crumbles around us as our small individual worlds collide. How refreshing it was to attend the recent ICA Network Meeting and discover tools that are more than ideologies applied to practical, everyday dilemmas. How remarkable it was to experience individuals acknowledge each other by sharing valuable information with one another!

Coming from a science background I was impressed with the tools that are available to describe something as nebulous as change. They include:

- The transition curve to characterize predictable qualities of change,
- The dynamics of complex systems to explore the multifaceted nature of chaos and change, and
- The social process triangles to explore relationships among those multiple facets.

I was delighted at how simple and broad based the tools are. It’s easy to apply them at the individual, group and organizational levels, regardless of their context —

something I value in these tumultuous times. But I was even more impressed with the skill and care with which these tools are used for the betterment of the planet. The energy field generated by ICA people is captured in the statement: “No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.”

I appreciated the willingness of people to share their experiences, welcome new perspectives and continue refining and expanding the application of successful tools. What a joy it was to celebrate and laugh at it all during the closing ceremony, as we roasted our learning edges, boasted our successes and toasted new possibilities to come ... then to sign as a charter member of the new International Association of Facilitators. I am now better equipped to create a “culture of participation” wherever I go. ☉

NancyAnn Stealey is a clown, and a microbiologist with Kaiser Permanente Medical Group in Berkeley, CA.



Lois Arkin has lived at Bimini and Whitehouse Place in Los Angeles for almost 14 years. Most of that time, she knew only about 15 of the 500 residents. But just over a year ago, that changed as she and others started "retrofitting" their community. Spontaneous street brunches, tree planting and overnight camping trips are a few of the activities that are now part of this rejuvenated corner of LA.

Community empowerment is nothing new to Lois. It began with her search for affordable housing and her interest in cooperatives. "I was a social misfit. I always knew there was an incongruity between what we believe in and how we live our lives," she said. "For me, cooperation versus competitiveness was that incongruity."

She soon learned that it was possible to live an entire cooperative lifestyle — credit unions, child care, schools, food stores, even funeral coops. This led her to establish a resource center for all cooperatives — the *Cooperative Resources and Services Project (CRSP)*.

By the early 1980s, ecological sustainability had become another compelling factor for Lois. These two principles have characterized her life ever since. What's different now is that she's decided to focus her energy in one location. "The future depends on people having a sense of place or permanence," she asserts. "Los Angeles shapes values that are so unsustainable worldwide. Some of us feel responsible to demonstrate alternative values, right here in our own backyard."

Lois' ties with the ICA began ten years ago when she lived within two miles of the then Los Angeles ICA. She arranged a Group Facilitation Methods course for the City of Los Angeles Planning Department, who have since used *ToP* methods in their public input workshops. Her Ecovillage core group uses the *ToP* discussion method in its weekly dialogues. She was reminded of this when one of her colleagues said: "Lois, in the tradition of the ORID discussion method, please do not interpret what I say so much!" ☉



A member-driven organization

Membership in ICA West brings:

- The quarterly newsletter, *Initiatives*, with reports on ICA activities locally and abroad, liftout pages for your files, and more
- Discounts on ICA programs and publications
- Linkages to a vast network of people and organizations around the world, committed to serving the needs of the planet

Members have opportunities to:

- Assist with marketing and facilitating ICA West programs and promoting publications
- Contribute financially and in other ways to the work of the ICA
- Shape the future directions of the organization and help design new programs, such as the Earthwise Learning Series

Member fees provide general support of ICA West activities. Other contributions can be designated for particular programs. Current funding needs include the Native American program, the Earthwise Learning Series, Rites of Passage and development projects in other countries. Donations to the Institute of Cultural Affairs are tax deductible.

Membership Application Form

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ICA West, 4220 North 25th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016

Basic membership Rates

- Individual \$35
- Student \$15
- Couple \$50
- Organization \$75

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Bulletin Board

Technology of Participation: ICA West's Facilitation Methods Courses

I: Group Facilitation Methods

San Diego, CA	April	12 - 13
Albuquerque, NM	April	14 - 15
Denver, CO	April	14 - 15
Yakima, WA	April	14 - 15
Seattle, WA	April	21 - 22
Salem, OR	May	2 - 3
San Francisco, CA	May	3 - 4
Phoenix, AZ	May	10 - 11
Seattle, WA	May	19 - 20
Dallas, TX	May	23 - 24
Los Angeles, CA	May	25 - 26
San Diego, CA	May	31 - June 1
Denver, CO	June	16 - 17
Phoenix, AZ	June	21 - 22

II: Participatory Strategic Planning

Phoenix, AZ	April	6 - 7
Sacramento, CA	April	19 - 20
San Diego, CA	May	3 - 4
Salem, OR	May	4 - 5
Yakima, WA	May	12 - 13
Denver, CO	May	19 - 20
Seattle, WA	June	8 - 9

III: Philosophy of Participation

New Orleans, LA	April	21 - 22
Albuquerque, NM	May	19 - 20
Seattle, WA	June	22 - 23

New Seattle Staff

The Seattle ICA welcomes Gordon Harper, formerly of ICA: Taiwan and Nan Hammett, a local colleague and volunteer in the Cote d'Ivoire. Gordon is opening new doors with his many Pacific Rim connections and Nan is working in the office while completing a Whole Systems Design degree.

The ICA

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) is a private, not-for-profit organization concerned with the human factor in community and organization development. Its global network spans 31 countries, with an international secretariat in Brussels, Belgium. ICA programs build motivated and sustained leadership. Its methods are highly participatory and honor the cultural traditions of those involved. They include strategic planning, problem solving, consensus-based decision making and team building.

Initiatives is a quarterly publication of the ICA serving the western United States. Editor/Publisher: John Burbidge, Seattle. Printed by Northgate Printing & Graphics, Inc. Linotronic output services donated by Art-Foto Typography, Inc.

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