

Title of Session: Leni Donlan Retrospective and Tribute

Moderator: Michael Hutchison

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Room: Westward Ho! Group

KristinCh: hi everyone...this is Joy's and my first time in a discussion

GailP: Welcome to you both

JoyC: Thank you

MichaelH: glad you can join us

KristinCh: we are having to do this for our educational technology class in Phoenix, AZ

BjB: Joy and Kristin, you might want to go to the Actions menu in the top right of the chat and click on larger text

MichaelH: BJ, if you'll give me a thumbs up when we're ready to start...

BjB gives Michael the thumbs up sign

MichaelH: Hello, everyone

MichaelH: Many times we come to TI to learn and to share, and to laugh...

MichaelH: tonight's session is a bit different

DavidW joined the room.

DavidW waves to Michael

GailP: Welcome David

DavidW: Hi, Gail.

MichaelH: A few weeks ago, we lost a dear friend, and we are here this evening to remember Leni Donlan and recall her impact on us and on the educational community

MichaelH: Many of us have fond memories of Leni, and stories about her that they'd like to share

GailP: It is so nice that you are doing this!

BJB : recall and celebrate the many wonderful things Leni did

MichaelH: But, before we start, could everyone identify themselves, who they are, where they teach, etc.?

MichaelH . o O (I'll be sending a transcript to Leni's daughter after the session)

JeffC joined the room.

BJB : welcome, Jeff...just in time for introductions

JoyC: I am a college student

KristinCh: I am a college student as well

MichaelH is a social studies teacher in southwestern Indiana... I used to help Leni with her Learning Page Chats

GailP: I retired 6 years ago from a school in NY state to come and work with Leni at the Library of Congress

JeffC: Hi all, I'm Jeff Cooper, on Tapped In Helpdesk. I've known Leni for years through Tapped In, and will miss her.

BJB : I teach in Pennsylvania and met Leni through Tapped In

MichaelH looks to David...

BJB . o O (and was fortunate enough to meet her f2f)

GailP: That is special, BJ!

BJB nods to Gail :-)

EmilyW: I live in the DC area, I knew Leni from Tapped In and met her in person 2 years ago when I came to visit DC and had an informational meeting with her

MichaelH: For you who may not know, Leni passed away on October 31. As I said, tonight's session is dedicated to her, and we'll spend our hour with our favorite stories and recollections about Leni

GailP: This is hard - there are so many things I miss

MichaelH: I never met Leni f2f, but I did talk to her on the phone on occasion. The first time I ever interacted with her in TI was during a ASO session Terrie Gray was doing

featuring Leni

GailP: Life in the LOC is just not the same

KristinCh: Since Joy and I are new to this and did not know her, would this hour be beneficial to us?

BjB : yes, Kristin...on several levels...

GailP: You might learn about some wonderful projects she was involved in

KristinCh: ok sounds good

KristinCh: thanks

DavidW . o O (sorry, Michael)

BjB : you will learn about someone who was truly dedicated to helping others learn new things...

MichaelH: absolutely, BJ...

DavidW: I'm David Weksler. I'm in New Jersey and I'm on HelpDesk

BjB : and, as Gail mentioned, you'll learn about some of the projects that were important to her.

GailP: Leni was hugely into collaboration

GailP: Getting teachers and kids involved

MichaelH: it is amazing how many people have e-mailed me and told me that "Leni did this to help me...", or "Leni worked with me to do this..." I have to admit, I was even surprised by the level of her outreach

GailP: Learning

JoyC: What grade levels did she teach and for how many years?

GailP: One of the first projects that I participated in when I was still a librarian was Postcard Geography

MichaelH: I certainly learned a lot from Leni about how to do TI sessions... she was so organized

EmilyW: The sessions she held for LOC were very interesting

BjB : for several years Leni led the Postcard Geography and Westward Ho groups...and the Library of Congress Learning Page discussions

BjB : The transcripts from the LOC chats from 2003-2006 are in this room under featured items/discussions

MichaelH: You could tell the hard work she put into every chat... all the resources she had to share

BjB : Gail, can you tell us a bit about Postcard Geography?

GailP: Here is a link to the Postcard Geography site <http://pcg.cyberbee.com/>

MichaelH notes that Gail has shared a "live" web link. If you click it, you'll go to another page... but don't stray too far so you can come back to the discussion

GailP: Students from all over (classes really) sign up to participate and then create and send postcards to each other.

GailP: Here is the description: This is a simple project, offered to classes all over the world via the Internet. Your class commits to exchanging picture postcards (purchased, computer or handmade) with all other participants. This "Class to Class" exchange is appropriate for all ages, for public and private schools, for youth groups and for homeschools. We encourage participation from higher education, too!

KristinCh: that is neat...we are about to click on the link...

GailP: The postcards are still coming to Leni's house - her daughter will be collecting them.

JoyC: What a wonderful project!

BjB : Gail, would you be interested in becoming a moderator of the Postcard Geography group?

GailP: But the great thing is that you can map so many places and get a sense of geography.

GailP: Oh BJ - aren't you sweet

GailP: I'm hoping that someone will and I can surely consider it.

GailP: The site lives on Cyberbee now.

GailP: Leni always wanted to make sure no one had to pay for this project.

BjB : great, Gail. Otherwise the group will end up being archived and that would be a shame.

GailP: I agree - It is something that I can talk to Linda Joseph about.

BjB : The cyberbee site needs to be updated also.

BjB : excellent, Gail...please keep us posted

BjB . o O (no pun intended ;-)

GailP: Will do, via e-mail postcards :-)

BjB : Emily, did you have something to share?

GailP: BJ - are you going to share about the Westward Ho project?

GailP: Leni did so love being Yore Faithful Wagonmistress!

BjB : I wasn't involved in that project either, Gail....except to direct all the people who logged in to the group room

EmilyW: not really, I mentioned about the LOC discussions

BjB smiles about the wagonmistress!

GailP: Ah - well, here is the url <http://www.cyberbee.com/wwho/index.html>

GailP: And the description: Dear Pioneers and Scouts,

GailP: Load those wagons.....kiss the kin goodbye.....get ready for adventure, drama, comedy, tragedy, and fantastic learning as we hit the Oregon Trail and head out west! Back for its fifteenth year, this simulated journey allows classes to travel the trail as part of the Westward HO! Wagon Train. In classrooms across the country, collaborative families, based on real families from America's past, make daily decisions (travel and fate scenarios are provided by the project moderators) that will influence their safe arrival in Oregon.

GailP: To all the brave souls that join us... Godspeed and safe traveling.

GailP: Yore Faithful Wagonmistress,

GailP: Leni

EmilyW: I remember when I met with her that I talked to her all about that because I was

very impressed with how it was organized

GailP: She was an amazing organizer!

BjB: thanks, Emily.

GailP: And she did these things outside of her "real job"

BjB nods to Gail...that was why I thought this room was an appropriate place to hold this celebration

GailP: How perfect

EmilyW: I am sure I still have my questions and answers somewhere that I asked her

GailP: Her first LOC work was the lesson she developed with her California colleague

BjB: Leni always seemed to be on hyperspeed...maybe a jet propelled wagon?

GailP: It was called America Dreams

GailP: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/97/dream/index.html>

KarenNee joined the room.

MichaelH waves to Karen

BjB: Hi, Karen! Glad you could join us!

KarenNee: Yes, I'm glad to be here.

GailP: And it is every bit as applicable today as it was 10 years ago!

BjB: Gail just shared <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/97/dream/index.html>

GailP: Hi Karen

KarenNee: Hi Gail,

BjB: one of Leni's early projects

KarenNee: Leni's projects were what made the LOC what it is today.

GailP: Absolutely, Karen

KarenNee: Gail, I want to personally thank you so much for being with Leni in the end.

GailP: Her newest favorites were Community Centers

GailP: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/community/index.html>

BjB: all Leni's projects were for the "people"

GailP: Leni was a dear friend to me - I do so miss her wit and wisdom

KarenNee: Yes, she was always there to help with a technical question, or some great advice on web design

GailP: Primary source sets were her newest teacher venture

GailP: Here is a sample http://memory.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_hispanic_kit.php

KarenNee: Yes, this is something that teachers really appreciated.

KarenNee: With their busy schedules, it was wonderful to have a group of resources ready to go.

GailP: Her heart and soul was in everything she did - this Immigration project is a wonderful example

GailP: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/introduction.html>

KarenNee: I remember the great times that we had with the summer teacher institutes.

GailP: Yes, they were fun - and still are! They just won't be the same without Leni.

KarenNee: Totally agree!!!

GailP: Leni did all of the e-mail updates for the LOC

GailP: Good news you could use

GailP: And so much more

KristinCh: I have glanced at all of the links Gail has provided and Joy and I are both thinking 'wow!'

KarenNee: She knew what teachers needed and did her best to provide great ways to fulfill those needs.

JoyC: Her resources were amazing!

GailP: Interviews with today's immigrants was one of Leni's loves

GailP: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/interv/toc.php>

DavidW . o O (It's a good thing to be behind the desk at the Library of Congress)

GailP :-)

GailP: Think cubicle

GailP: And how about this Potluck recipe book

GailP: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/ckbk/index.html>

BjB . o O (piled high with posters and books and lots of resources and the ever present coffee pot)

DavidW smiles

GailP: the smell of good coffee always greeted us

KristinCh: wow the recipe book looks amazing! I just might use this in the near future

GailP: Can you see Leni's sense of humor in this?

GailP: <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/inaug/theatre.html>

JoyC: Very impressive!

GailP: Yes, her ideas were far reaching and collaboration was her goal.

MichaelH: Oh, yes, I remember this from an LP Chat

BjB chuckles

GailP: Being "engaging" was important to Leni

GailP: Elections are coming up <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/election/home.html>

BjB : I do remember that Leni liked to project urls during the TI discussions...I always felt a little motion sickness at the end!

KristinCh: these links are worth looking more at once I get my transcript and have them to reference back

JoyC: Me too!

GailP: That's great, Kristin and Joy - Leni would have been happy.

MichaelH: oh, gosh, how many times did I kid her about the "flames" coming out of her fingertips...

GailP: Here is one funny link <http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/election/candid4.html>

GailP: You can guess who actually made these!

BjB nods to Michael :-)

MichaelH: Then there was the night that my fingers kept slipping across the keys in a session, and I kept calling her "Lenin" instead of Leni....

KristinCh: that is a funny memory

GailP: And that makes me laugh so much - she had her Lenin ways at times :-)

GailP: But always with learning at the heart

KarenNee: Underrated and underappreciated!!

GailP: Yep!

BjB: not by her loyal fans!

BjB: Leni will live on in our hearts...and we're passing her legacy on to Kristin and Joy

GailP: Here is a link to a lovely blog entry:
<http://maryjjohnson.com/primarysourcelibrarian/?p=90>

JoyC: Thank you

KristinCh: yes you are and thank you

GailP: And a link to her online guest book:
<http://www.legacy.com/WashingtonPost/GB/GuestbookView.aspx?PersonId=97401044&PageNo=2>

KristinCh: we were unsure at first if we should stay, and now we are both glad we did

JoyC: Yes, very!

GailP: I expect that this will continue to grow as her friends and connections from across the world find out the sad news.

MichaelH: you both would have really liked Leni(n)...

GailP: Yes, Joy and Kristin - you can spread the word.

KarenNee: Hopefully, the LOC will realize the wealth on the Learning Page done by Leni and will not attempt to change the format to conform with the current LOC template.

KristinCh: it seems as if we would have

GailP: Time will tell, Karen.

GailP: I believe that the wealth will stay

MichaelH: I noted the other day there are already revamped pages on the Learning Page site (or at least previews)

GailP: Yes, that has been a "work in progress"

MichaelH: Karen, I mentioned Leni in my handouts from my NCSS session

GailP: Not perhaps a discussion for this spiritual venue of happiness

GailP: Michael, that is so nice

KarenNee: Good job.

GailP: I suspect she will be mentioned in many places

KristinCh: what is an NCSS session, Michael?

MichaelH: Gail, I did a session on Visual Primary sources, and I used the Learning Page as a resource, and mentioned the chats we did, and Leni in particular

MichaelH: Kristin, NCSS=National Council for the Social Studies

MichaelH: their conference was last week in San Diego

KarenNee: Next year the conference is in Houston, Tx

KristinCh: okay thank you

GailP: You know, Michael - that "leni donlan" retrospective may be a future idea for a session

MichaelH: TI got a few mentions last week, too, BJ :)

MidgeF joined the room.

GailP: Hey Midge

MichaelH: yes, that might be a good idea, Gail

BjB: Hi, Midge!

EmilyW agrees

MichaelH waves to Midge

GailP: I'd love to work on that with you

MidgeF: Hi, I at least made it for Leni

MichaelH: maybe we can set up a date after the start of the new year?

GailP: Yes, you did, bless you

GailP: Yes, lets, Michael. I go to Florida for the winter - work on the lanai

MidgeF: I never met Leni F2F but we were early AOL members together

MichaelH: that sounds great, Gail... I have a couple of conferences going on in January and February, but we can work something out

GailP: Let's make sure to do that. gpet@loc.gov

MichaelH: Cool... mhutch@charter.net

GailP: I'd love to hear from any of you :-)

GailP: I know that Leigh will be so appreciative to receive this transcript

GailP: She is in DC now - is a ballet dancer

GailP: and missing her mom a LOT

MichaelH: Kristin and Joy... now that you know a bit more about Leni... do you see some things we shared tonight you can use with your students (if you're teaching now), or what you can use when you start teaching?

KarenNee: Prayers go to Leigh and the rest of Leni's family.

BjB . o O (Leigh is Leni's daughter, Kristin and Joy)

JeffC: A reminder that there is a guest book in Leni's memory at:<http://www.legacy.com/WashingtonPost/GB/GuestbookView.aspx?PersonId=97401044> if you haven't signed yet and wish to.

GailP: Yes, she is

MichaelH: I'll be sending a transcript to Leigh after the session...

GailP: And yes, please do sign

GailP: It will be kept in "perpetuity"

MidgeF: I was glad to see this in the calendar or I might not have known about Leni's passing.

KristinCh: I am not teaching yet, but once I get this transcript I plan on looking more at the links provided from tonight and see if there are things I could use with kindergartners

GailP: Oh Midge - I'm glad you did see it

MichaelH: Gail... is there any sort of plans for a memorial to Leni... some sort of award to an exemplary teacher, or for a great project using the LP materials?

GailP: You know, at this point, nothing specific.

GailP: I'd love to be able to see her personal projects go on.

DavidW agrees

MichaelH: I think that would be a great way to keep her well known and for her interests to be maintained...

DavidW: That might be one of the best testimonials

MichaelH: that's what I was thinking, David... testimonial...

GailP: I agree, David. And I will follow that up with Linda Joseph.

GailP: Anyone want to join in the effort?

MidgeF: It's nice to see Gail here...

GailP :-)

MichaelH: count me in Gail...

GailP: I've been sad a lot

GailP: Great Michael

EmilyW: I might be interested

GailP: We'll figure out a way to keep it going.

GailP: Great Emily

GailP: e-mail?

KarenNee: We must keep Leni's material alive:)

GailP: yes, yes

MichaelH: Certainly you'd have the Social Studies forum to use to promote Leni's projects and share ideas...

GailP: Did you all know about the books she wrote?

EmilyW: no

JeffC: Michael... I haven't checked, but we could have SSF collaborate with Leni's groups here.

BjB: you all are welcome to use this Westward Ho room also for presentations or discussions

MichaelH: sure

GailP: sounds like lots of good thoughts

MichaelH: we have a fairly substantial group membership...

GailP: I'm still reeling from losing my friend -and my mentor

MichaelH: and when I teach Social Studies Online for Connected University, I get a lot of elementary teachers who are really wanting some good project and resource sites

GailP: But I promise I will keep going

BjB hugs Gail warmly

MichaelH: I would love to share Leni's stuff with them

MidgeF: We wish you well Gail. It is just as hard to lose a friend

GailP: Yes, it is

GailP: But I know she is in a better place

GailP: And IN CHARGE

KarenNee: Yes!!!!

BjB smiles...yeeehawww!

MidgeF: I lost a friend at 14 and I think of her every time I make a new one. You never get past it.

GailP: Amen

MidgeF: Good night everyone

EmilyW: goodnight all

GailP: Thank you all for coming to share your love and appreciation of a very special person

BjB : Thank you all for participating in this discussion....I think it was a fitting beginning to carrying on a wonderful legacy

MichaelH: yes it was, BJ.

GailP: Agreed

BjB : started by a special person

GailP: Gail sheds a tear

KarenNee: Totally. Leni was here in spirit

MichaelH waves to everyone

GailP: Yes she was

KristinCh: thank you for the chance to learn about someone who has left what seems to be a wonderful legacy...

GailP: Bye

DavidW waves bye to Gail

BjB waves bye.

KarenNee: Bye Gail

KristinCh: bye Gail