

2008 *children's*  
**literature**  
*conference*

**Western Washington University  
Bond Children's Literature Conference**

Saturday, March 1, 2008  
Performing Arts Center  
Concert Hall  
9:00 am -- 3:30 pm



**Christopher Paul Curtis**



**John Rocco**



**Chris Crutcher**



**Eric Rohmann**

Dear Participant,

Today we celebrate our 5th annual Children's Literature Conference at Western Washington University ~ an event that's grown in attendance and enthusiasm because of you! Whether this marks your first—or even your fifth—conference with us, we're glad you're here. Every aspect of this day has been planned for your pleasure and continued education as a devotee of children's and young adult literature. Enjoy this opportunity to mingle with over 400 teachers and librarians, readers and writers who are here to learn more about the process and pleasures of children's literature.

When we planned our first conference we vowed to offer a day filled with inspiration. This year is no exception. We trust that our featured speakers will affirm your beliefs about quality writing and illustrating not only for children, but also for you. Their experience, talent, and advocacy for opportunities to read and children's and teenagers' right to their own reading tastes, is unparalleled. It's a privilege to welcome these talented authors and illustrators to Western's campus.

So, today's a day for inspiration. No doubt one of our featured speakers will say something that affirms or maybe even "pinches" what you believe about the role of children's/young adult literature in our lives. Hopefully you'll engage in some conversations that motivate your teaching or ignite your writing or illustrating. Perhaps you'll take home a new book (or an armful of books) that extends an idea shared by an author, illustrator, or even the person sitting next to you. Whatever you experience during the day, we're confident you'll leave refreshed and newly inspired to read, write, teach, and learn with deeper appreciation and joy.

Remember to mark your calendar for the first Saturday of March every year as a reminder to return to Western's campus for our annual celebration of literature written for children and young adults. Now, sit back and enjoy today's tribute to literature, presented by our first "all boys" cast of authors and illustrators: Chris Crutcher, Christopher Paul Curtis, John Rocco, and Eric Rohmann. Because of them we're in for a treat . . . and because of you, we're celebrating our fifth conference.

Welcome and enjoy the day!

*Nancy J. Johnson*

*Professor, WWU English Department and Conference Coordinator*  
March 2008

**WWU Bond Children's Literature Conference**  
**Saturday, March 1, 2008**  
**Performing Arts Center ~ Concert Hall**

8:00-8:55 a.m. ....Registration, coffee/muffins, book sales &  
autographing  
*PAC lobby areas*

9:00 a.m.....Welcome: Nancy J. Johnson  
*Concert Hall*

9:10-10:10 .....Author Presentation  
~ **Christopher Paul Curtis**  
(Introduced by Tracy Coskie)

10:15-11:15 .....Author/Illustrator Presentation  
~ **John Rocco**  
(Introduced by Alexandria Skagen)

11:15-12:55 .....Lunch (box lunches)  
*Viking Union, MultiPurpose Room*

11:50-12:55 .....Book Sales & Autographing  
*PAC lobby areas*

1:00-2:00 p.m. ....Author Presentation  
~ **Eric Rohmann**  
(Introduced by Jeff Ballew)

2:05-3:05 p.m. ....Author/Illustrator Presentation  
~ **Chris Crutcher**  
(Introduced by Ruthie Tag)

3:10-3:30 p.m. ....Panel of Authors ~ Question/Answer

Closing Remarks followed by book sales and autographing  
in PAC lobby areas.

# Christopher Paul Curtis



## A Little Bit About...

After high school, Christopher Paul Curtis began his working life hanging 50- to 80-pound doors on Buicks at the Fisher Body Plant in Flint, Michigan. His only escape during that monotonous 10-hour a day job was writing during his breaks. After 13 years, he took a year off to begin writing *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*. That was in 1985, six novels ago! Curtis's second novel *Bud, Not Buddy* is the first (and only) book to receive both the Coretta Scott King Author Award and the Newbery Medal.

One of his favorite things about writing is to bring fictitious characters and settings to life while weaving in historical facts. Curtis often uses personal experiences in his stories and even bases some of his characters on his family members, such as his grandfathers Earl “Lefty” Lewis and Herman E. Curtis, Sr. who led a jazz band in the 1930s called Herman F. Curtis and the Dusky Devastators of the Depression!!!!!!

## Honors, Awards and Recognitions...

2008 Newbery Honor; 2008 Coretta Scott King Award for *Elijah of Buxton*

2000 Newbery Medal; 2000 Coretta Scott King Award; ALA Notable Children's Book; ALA Best Books for Young Adults for *Bud, Not Buddy*

1996 Newbery Honor, 1996 Coretta Scott King Honor for *The Watsons Go To Birmingham—1963*

## A Selection of Mr. Curtis's Work...

*Elijah of Buxton*, Scholastic 2007

*Mr. Chickee's Messy Mission*, Wendy Lamb/Random House 2007

*Mr. Chickee's Funny Money*, Wendy Lamb/Random House 2005

*Bucking the Sarge*, Wendy Lamb/Random House 2004

*Bud, Not Buddy*, Delacorte 1999

*The Watsons Go To Birmingham – 1963*, Delacorte 1995

## **In His Own Words...**

### *What characteristics distinguished you as a child?*

Probably inquisitiveness. I wanted to know everything about everything, I asked a million questions and would check sources for verification of the answers. I guess you could say I was a pain.

### *What was one of your favorite books (or favorite authors or illustrators) as a child and what was the appeal?*

The first book I really loved was *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. I have no idea why, I just found the line drawings to be fascinating. I'd completely forgotten about the book until one day I was in a library waiting to speak and happened to pick it up. When I did, I was hit with this very intense rush of memories.

### *Do you have a favorite or most memorable teacher? What made him/her memorable?*

Two teachers really stand out for me, one is Miss Henry my third grade teacher who showed real interest in me, and secondly, Mr. Alums my sixth grade teacher who took painstaking efforts to teach me cursive then finally said, "Mr. Curtis, some people simply are not cut out to write cursive, you are one of them. You have my permission to print from now on."

### *What advice or words of wisdom do you have for young writers?*

1) Write every day, writing is like anything else you do, the more you do it the better you get at it. 2) Have fun with your writing, writers are very powerful people, we can destroy or create worlds, enjoy that power. 3) Be patient with yourself. Writing takes time to develop, don't be too hard on yourself if the writing doesn't always go the way you want it to, relax and come back to it later. 4) Finally and most important, Ignore All Rules! Once you learn the proper way to develop and complete a story then develop your own style, that's what makes writing interesting.



# John Rocco



## A Little Bit About...

John Rocco wasn't always a children's book author and illustrator. Early in his career (about age 11) he worked on a commercial shell fishing boat. After that he was a caddy, cook, soccer coach, carpenter, and house painter. Then he studied illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design and the School of Visual Arts in New York City. And that led him to California where he worked as an art director on film, TV, theme parks and museums, including stints at Digital Domain, Disney, PDI and Dreamworks/SKG. You may recognize

his work from the popular Dreamworks film, "Shrek" where he served as a pre-production art director. Rocco now devotes his writing and illustration to the world of children's books. His newest book, *Moonpowder*, set for release this spring, reveals the fantastical adventures of young Eli Treebuckle as he journeys to the Moonpowder Factory where sweet dreams are a thing of the past. Rocco currently lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Aileen Leijten who is also a children's author and illustrator, and their daughter and dog.

## Honors, Awards, and Recognition...

2007 Borders Original Voices Award for Picture Book, 2007 NAPPA

Gold Winner, Book Sense Spring 2007 Children's List Pick, Society of Illustrators Los Angeles Silver Medal, 2008 Storytelling World Resource Award for *Wolf! Wolf!*

## A Selection of Mr. Rocco's Work...

*Moonpowder*, Hyperion Books for Children 2008

*Wolf! Wolf!*, Hyperion Books for Children 2007

*Alice*, by Whoppi Goldberg; Ill. by John Rocco, Bantam Doubleday Dell 1992

Book jacket art for *The Percy Jackson Series* by Rick Riordan, Miramax/Hyperion

## **In His Own Words...**

### *What characteristics distinguished you as a child?*

Growing up near the inlets and coves of Rhode Island, my childhood was filled with the joy of discoveries made during low tide. I was a daydreamer by choice, and I shared my time with crabs, minnows and clams. I also had a huge Afro which was quite unusual for a white kid. I could hide up to three pencils in it! I never went to a barber and my mother would brush it out, removing all the sticks and leaves that would collect in there.

### *What was one of your favorite books as a child and what was the appeal?*

One of my favorites was Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach*. It was my first "big book" and I was very proud to have read it. What I remember most were the marvelous illustrations by Nancy Ekholm Burkett. They were like prizes waiting for me at the end of each chapter and they have been forever burned into my memory.

### *What advice or words of wisdom do you have for young writers or illustrators?*

When I was struggling to get started illustrating my first book, *Alice*, I called another illustrator, who I barely knew, for advice. I told him my fears and anxieties and this was his advice, "Don't draw what you think the author will like. Don't draw what you think the publisher will like, or what you think the kids will like. Draw what you love to draw. And if you love it, others will love it too." I hung up the phone and drew for six months straight. That illustrator was Maurice Sendak.



# Eric Rohmann



## **A Little Bit About...**

Eric Rohmann's work has captured the hearts of child audiences, teachers, parents, professionals, and fellow colleagues in the world of children's literature. Along with painting, drawing and book making, Rohmann has taught classes in the art of printmaking. When he's working on a current project or painting, he often visits museums and galleries for inspiration. Rohmann's work has been purchased and hung in various permanent collections around the country. What you might not know is that Rohmann stunned author

Phillip Pullman with the original illustrated book jacket he created for Pullman's book, *The Golden Compass*, which is now a major motion picture. With much experience and many books on the shelf to call his own, Rohmann never forgets his readers and finds that the curiosity and enthusiasm of children make the best audience.

## **Honors, Awards and Recognition...**

2003 Caldecott Medal for *My Friend Rabbit*

1995 Caldecott Honor, New York Times Notable Book of the Year, New York Times Book Review Best Children's Book, ALA Notable Book, Colorado Children's Book Award Nominee for *Time Flies*

## **A Selection of Mr. Rohmann's Work...**

*A Kitten Tale*, Alfred A. Knopf 2008

*Clara and Asha*, Roaring Book Press 2005

*Pumpkinhead*, Alfred A. Knopf 2003

*My Friend Rabbit*, Roaring Book Press 2002

*The Cinder-Eyed Cats*, Crown 1997

*Times Flies*, Crown 1994



## **In His Own Words...**

### *What characteristics distinguished you as a child?*

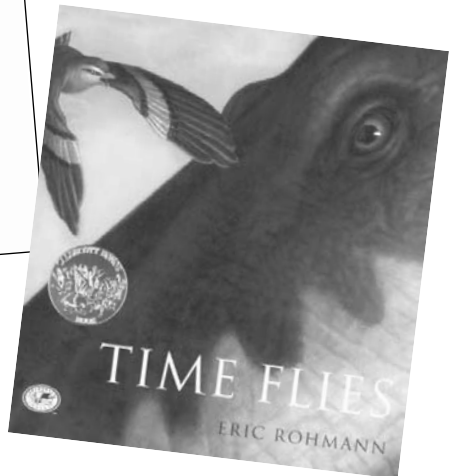
I was a shy, considered, independent, often wary, curious, at times clever, but mostly happy kid.

### *Do you have a favorite or most memorable teacher? What made him/her memorable?*

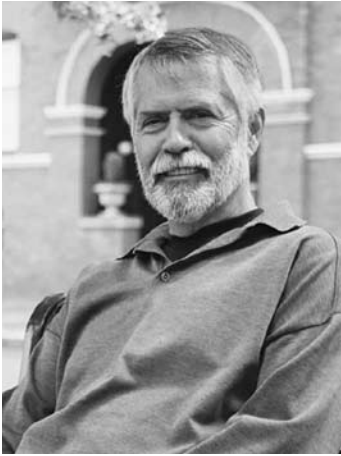
One important influence was my college art professor, Harold Boyd from Illinois State University, who taught me about letting my artwork tell the story. He's a master draftsman, but his work has little to do with showing his skill and everything to do with the people he draws. He showed me that a life in art is a life well lived.

### *What's the most unique, hilarious, or off-the-wall response you received from a reader?*

Most responses have been kind and supportive; however, *Pumpkinhead* was once referred to as the "Most corrupt children's book ever written!" Kids' responses are great fun to read. What I love about their responses is that children take books and characters as they are, and then add their own thoughts and creativity, extending the story into their own world.



# Chris Crutcher



## **A Little Bit About...**

Chris Crutcher developed a strong love for sports because “there wasn’t much else to do growing up in Cascade, Idaho.” Not only do sports play a role in his novels, so do themes that honor teenagers’ issues, raise their voices, and advocate acceptance. In addition to writing, Crutcher is a licensed therapist and a strong advocate for the protection of children. Because of this, readers can count on him to speak the truth in his writing. He describes reality in his stories because he feels authors should never lie to their readers. It’s not surprising this

has led to controversy, book challenges, and the “honor” of seeing his books cited on numerous banned book lists. In 1968 Crutcher earned a B.A. in Sociology and Psychology from Eastern Washington State College and later earned a teaching certificate. He then taught primary and secondary school in Washington and California before returning to the Pacific Northwest to write his first book. The author of over ten books, in 2000 Crutcher received the American Library Association’s prestigious Margaret A. Edwards award for lifetime contribution to young adult literature.

## **Honors, Awards and Recognitions...**

2006 Pen/NEWMAN’S OWN First Amendment Award Nominee

2005 Catholic Library Association St. Katharine Drexel Award

2004 ALA Best Books for Young Adults, *King of the Mild Frontier*

2004 recipient of a Writers Who Make a Difference Award from Writer Magazine

2002 Washington State Book Award, *Whale Talk*

2000 Margaret A. Edwards Award for lifetime contribution to Young Adult Literature

1993 The ALAN Award for Contributions to Young Adult Literature

## **A Selection of Mr. Crutcher's Work...**

(all published by Greenwillow Books)

*Deadline*, 2007

*The Sledding Hill*, 2005

*King of the Mild Frontier*, 2003

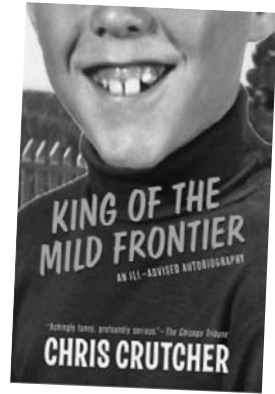
*Whale Talk*, 2001

*Ironman*, 1995

*Athletic Shorts*, 1991

*Stotan!*, 1986

*Running Loose*, 1983



## **In His Own Words...**

*What characteristics distinguished you as a child?*

Temper, sense of humor, and unbridled curiosity.

*What was one of your favorite books (or favorite authors or illustrators) as a child and what was the appeal?*

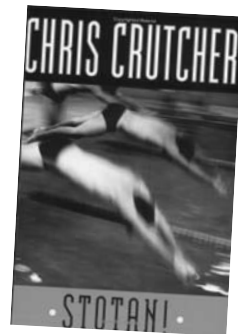
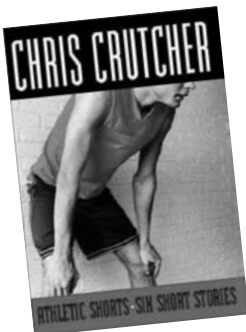
*Horton Hatches the Egg, Scrambled Eggs Super, If I Ran The Zoo.* Dr. Seuss, Dr. Seuss, Dr. Seuss. His books were wildly funny and totally captured my imagination.

*Do you have a favorite or most memorable teacher? What made him/her memorable?*

LeRoy Payne and Danny Cantrell in high school and Mrs. Meisner in grade school (2nd grade) All were memorable for their sense of humor.

*What advice or words of wisdom do you have for young writers or illustrators?*

Write and/or illustrate every day... Read a LOT of the kind of work you do. Read like there's no tomorrow and NEVER let ANYONE tell you can't do it.



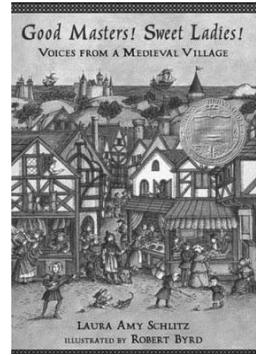
# 2008 Newbery and Caldecott Medal Winners

## *Newbery Medal Winner*

*Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village* by Laura Amy Schlitz  
(Candlewick)

## *Newbery Honor Books*

- *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis (Scholastic)
- *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt (Clarion)
- *Feathers* by Jacqueline Woodson (Putnam)



## *Caldecott Medal Winner*

*The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick  
(Scholastic)

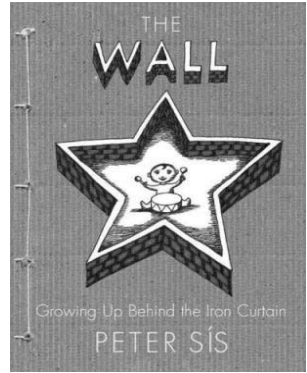
## *Caldecott Honor Books*

- *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad* illustrated by Kadir Nelson, written by Ellen Levine (Scholastic)
- *First the Egg* by Laura Vaccaro Seeger (Roaring Brook/Neal Porter)
- *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* by Peter Sís (Farrar/Frances Foster)
- *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity* by Mo Willems (Hyperion)



# 2008 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award

*The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron  
Curtain* by Peter Sís (Farrar/Frances Foster)



## *Sibert Honor Books*

- *Lightship* written and illustrated by Brian Floca (Simon & Schuster/Richard Jackson)
- *Nic Bishop Spiders* written and illustrated by Nic Bishop (Scholastic)

# 2008 Coretta Scott King Awards

## *Author Award Winner*

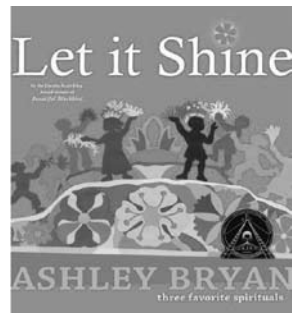
*Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis (Scholastic)

## *Author Honor Books*

- *November Blues* by Sharon M. Draper (Atheneum)
- *Twelve Rounds to Glory: The Story of Muhammad Ali* by Charles R. Smith Jr., illustrated by Bryan Collier (Candlewick Press)

## *Illustrator Award Winner*

*Let it Shine* by Ashley Bryan (Atheneum)



## *Illustrator Honor Books*

- *The Secret Olivia Told Me* illustrated by Nancy Devard, written by N. Joy (Just Us Books)
- *Jazz On A Saturday Night* by Leo and Diane Dillon (Scholastic/Blue Sky Press)

## *John Steptoe New Talent Award – Author*

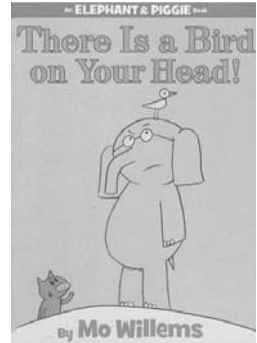
*Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything in It* by Sundee T. Frazier (Delacorte)

# 2008 Theodor Seuss Geisel Award

*There Is a Bird on Your Head!* by Mo Willems (Hyperion)

## *Geisel Honor Books*

- *First the Egg* by Laura Vaccaro Seeger (Roaring Brook/Neal Porter)
- *Hello, Bumblebee Bat* written by Darrin Lunde, illustrated by Patricia J. Wynne (Charlesbridge)
- *Jazz Baby* written by Lisa Wheeler, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie (Harcourt)
- *Vulture View* written by April Pulley Sayre, illustrated by Steve Jenkins (Holt)

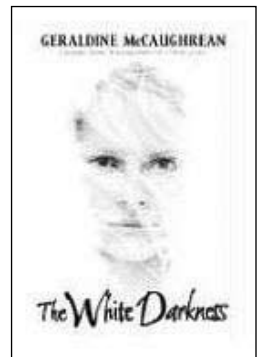


# 2008 Michael L. Printz Award for Excellence in Literature for Young Adults

*The White Darkness* by Geraldine McCaughrean (HarperTempest)

## *Printz Honor Books*

- *Dreamquake: Book Two of the Dreamhunter Duet* by Elizabeth Knox (Frances Foster Books)
- *One Whole and Perfect Day* by Judith Clark (Front Street)
- *Repossessed* by A.M. Jenkins (HarperTeen)
- *Your Own, Sylvia: A Verse Portrait of Sylvia Plath* by Stephanie Hemphill (Alfred A. Knopf)



# 2008 Pura Belpré Awards

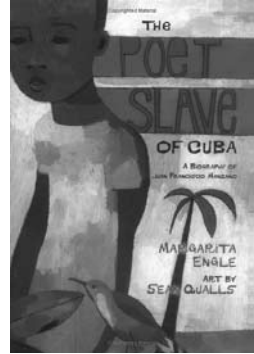
(awarded every two years)

## *Belpré Author Medal*

- *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano* written by Margarita Engle, illustrated by Sean Qualls (Holt)

## ***Belpré Author Honor Books***

- ***Frida; ¡Viva la vida! Long Live Life!*** by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand (Marshall Cavendish)
- ***Martina the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale*** retold by Carmen Agra Deedy, illustrated by Michael Austin (Peachtree)
- ***Los Gatos Black on Halloween*** written by Marisa Montes, illustrated by Yuyi Morales (Holt)



## ***Belpré Illustrator Medal***

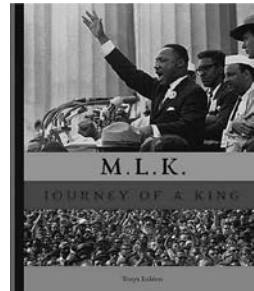
***Los Gatos Black on Halloween*** illustrated by Yuyi Morales, written by Marisa Montes (Holt)

## ***Belpré Illustrator Honor Books***

- ***My Name is Gabito: The Life of Gabriel García Márquez/Me llamo Gabito: la vida de Gabriel García Márquez*** illustrated by Raúl Colón, written by Monica Brown (Luna Rising)
- ***My Colors, My World/Mis colores, mi mundo*** written and illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez (Children's Book Press)

## **2008 Orbis Pictus Award**

***M.L.K.: Journey of a King*** by Tonya Bolden (Abrams Books)



## ***Honor Books***

- ***Black and White Airmen: Their True History*** by John Fleischman (Houghton Mifflin)
- ***Spiders*** by Nic Bishop (Scholastic)
- ***Helen Keller: Her Life in Pictures*** by George Sullivan (Scholastic)
- ***Muckrakers*** by Ann Bausum (National Geographic)
- ***Venom*** by Marilyn Singer (Darby Creek Publishing)









# A Note of Thanks

A literary celebration of this kind happens because of the dedication, talent, energy, and enthusiasm of many people. A hearty thank you goes to WWU English education students, Woodring students, and Whatcom Community College students who volunteered on numerous tasks today and over the past few months. We're also grateful to the English Department, Western Libraries, Conference Services, the PAC facilities team, and to the following individuals whose commitment of time, expertise, and inspiration helped make today a success:

Julie Addis Smith

Diana Bakkom

Jeff Ballew

Maggie Barklind

Ariel Cleasby-Heaven

Tracy Coskie

Béla Foltin

Ashley Hankins

Connie Mallison

Rick Osen

Kim Schwartzman

Sher Smith Ross

Alexandria Skagen

Ruthie Tag

Sylvia Tag

Keith Turley

Shannon Veenbaas

Michelle Widman

and the wonderful folks at Village Books  
and Launching Success Learning Store.

## Evaluation

Please take a few minutes today to provide us with feedback so that we can plan for next year's conference. An evaluation form is located at the back of your packet -- boxes to collect these forms will be available in the PAC lobby at day's end.

Thank you!

**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE  
2009 BOND CHILDREN'S  
LITERATURE CONFERENCE**

Tentatively Scheduled For  
March 7, 2009

Featured Speakers for next year include  
Brian Selznick and Kadir Nelson

For details, please check our web site at  
<http://www.wwuclc.com>  
or contact Nancy Johnson at  
[Nancy.Johnson@wwu.edu](mailto:Nancy.Johnson@wwu.edu).

