

Personal Reflections – March 8, 2004

A Book Launch

In Toronto, at St. Michael's College of the University of Toronto, on March 4th, 2004 we celebrated with Canadian friends the publication of the new book *Dialogue Education at Work: Case Studies* (Jossey Bass, 2004). It was a small gala, with good conversation, good wine and food and a lively introduction hosted by Connie Kuipers, Managing Director of Global Learning Partners, Inc.

I “worked the crowd” like the old Italian-Irish “pol” I am. It was a great joy to me to come upon pairs of men and women deeply engaged in conversation about learning. At World Vision Canada that same day we had a “Conversation About Learning” with fifteen of their staff. I said there: “Where else in this great city are people taking time to talk seriously about learning?”

It happened again that evening at the Book Launch. I learned a great deal that day: how earnestly and assiduously men and women are working to move the dialogue education movement forward, how much people respect the Jossey Bass books and how influential they have been, how many people are hungry for this conversation, how deeply respected Peter Noteboom and Connie Kuipers and their colleagues are.

My friends tease me about saying “This is my last trip.” I am willing and eager to work hard with and for anyone from this North Carolina back porch. I welcome the world to this “gaiko got” (place of learning). However, I am no longer available for traveling work. That was another deep learning of this Toronto visit. Thank goodness, I can learn via my research and writing, and via the stimulation of all who come to The Back Porch. Welcome!

by Jane Vella