

Available Through Your PRH Educator!

Copies available from our office for \$30. Please call (248) 766-3047 or send an email to prhcenter@prh-usa.org for more information. Or send a note with a check made out to PRH Institute-USA Center/8382 Ranch Estate Roads/Clarkston, MI 48348

Did you know?

Did you know that you can make a tax-deductible contribution to PRH Institute East and Center? Your gift will be used either for a purpose you specify, or it goes to a general fund for participant scholarships, promotion, research, and other uses as seems appropriate.

Your gift can open a timely door for someone facing job loss or other set-backs to their income. A PRH workshop or Helping Relationship during times of hardship has helped many persons make a stable transition to new breakthroughs.

Our thanks go to all who have made such gifts in the past. Make checks payable to PRH Institute, and mail to: 8382 Ranch Estates Road, Clarkston, MI 48348.

PRH Institute  
8382 Ranch Estates Road  
Clarkston, MI 48348-4033



PRH -USA  
Personality and Human Relations  
An International School  
of Adult Development since 1970

Spring 2008

Volume 9 Number 1

Rock, Paper, Scissors:  
In-Depth Conscience, the  
Cutting Edge of Growth

Part 3 of 3  
by Ron Spann

Conscience is a word loaded with meaning. I am sure that for many of us it triggers thoughts of life lessons and morals, perhaps of religious training, perhaps painful memories of when we have felt burdened by what we call a "guilty" conscience..

It may surprise some to know that conscience also has a wider meaning of awareness, as in awareness-raising. This is important to the use of the term in our PRH frame of reference, where in-depth conscience refers to the human capacity for self-awareness, not only of moral concerns but of a wide range of things that go on in us and affect our ability to remain authentic and true to our real selves.

Something has to give voice to what is deepest in us, and that is the role of the deep conscience. Furthermore, as a faculty of awareness, the in-depth conscience can be aware not only of our depths of being, but also of our reasoning, our emotions, our bodily condition. If you are on the verge of a major life or relationship question, how do you choose? By mostly thinking through the pro's and con's? How can the whole person, which after all will have to live with the decision, contribute to its making?

Susan Ahrendt's article in this issue is a wonderful, probing illustration of how in-depth conscience helps align one's entire self to decision and action.

I also offer a book review of Edwin Friedmann's A Failure of Nerve to see how he contributes to an understanding of in-depth conscience and personality development.

Continued on page 4

Susan Ahrendt: Fidelity  
and Prison Friends

PRH education has brought me to a point where interior awareness has become a way of life. It means being attuned to the life and movements of my very depths, especially to any interior invitation. A discernment process then follows before I make a decision. That process will be articulated in this article about my decision to work with prisoners.

An Invitation Emerges

The process began at a gathering for PRH educators 2004 where I met some Belgians who were providing PRH education to persons in prison. When I returned home, the impact of our encounter remained alive and active in my depths. I recognized that it was important to pay attention to this attraction.

I was well aware that one of my own aspirations was to work with marginalized people. I had had a vision of working with marginalized peoples in a far away country or even with the poor in my own locality. But there I was, wanting to help a marginalized group right here in my own community – imprisoned persons.

I was amazed at the amount of energy I experienced. My body was alive with energy, and emotionally I experienced no fears or hesitations. My head put up no resistances. I made the decision to say yes to what wanted to come alive deep within me: to provide PRH Education to prisoners.

A Process Described

PRH Education provides a way to understand what I was going through in terms of pivotal centers of the personality. The being is the deep positive zone within the person which identifies



Susan Ahrendt

In This Issue of  
the Newsletter

- Rock, Paper, Scissors part 3
- Susan Ahrendt: Fidelity and Prison Friends
- Book Review: A Failure of Nerve
- Bits and Pieces
- In Memoriam: Maureen McAlduff and Mary Ryan
- Pull-out Directory of Educators and Workshop Descriptions
- Bits and Pieces

— Contents —

Feature Articles.....	1-3	Workshop Description....	6
Contact Us.....	5	Book Review .....	3
Educators Listings.....	5	Bits & Pieces.....	4

## Susan Ahrendt: Fidelity and Prison Friends

*Continued from page 1*

our personality, inclines us to certain actions, leads to particular relationships, and opens us to the transcendent. It was in my being that I was attracted to the Belgian educators and their work, and continued to feel so alive afterwards. This was a true example of an inner invitation.

The "I" is made up of the intellect, which thinks and reasons, as well as of our capacity to make decisions and carry them out. We experience it in our heads. *It was important that my "I" pay attention to what was going on in my depths.* I also had to be confident in my "I's" capacity to think through and act on this invitation from my being to work with prisoners.

Our *body* is our source of physical energy, and in PRH the *sensibility* is our ability to respond to and feel our reactions to what goes on inside and outside ourselves. The vision of working with prisoners literally released energy through my body and my emotions.

The *deep conscience* is the place of synthesis within where all of our pivotal centers – being, "I", body, sensibility – are consulted in decision making. It can also be considered as the voice of the being. It was crucial for me to remain faithful to my deep conscience if I was to make a reliable synthesis of all that was going on inside me.

### Deep Conscience Opens a Path

Once I said yes, I sat in my chair and my "I" questioned "just how are you going to accomplish this?" My first step was to call someone I knew who worked as a chaplain in the prison. He was familiar with PRH. He was supportive of my efforts and helpful in securing the several layers of needed approval, scheduling within the prison system's stringent time frames, recruiting participants, and suggesting avenues to explore for grants to fund my work. In spite of the many challenges my energy level remained high.

Intellectually I had the opinion that I could not write grants. This too I overcame and did the necessary work, met the various deadlines and ultimately received several grants. Throughout all of this my enthusiasm never waned. I recalled learning that the energy is given at the level of the being for its work and I was certainly experiencing that to be true. This was an affirmation

that *I was living in faithfulness* to my deep conscience.

I have completed my third year of offering PRH Education in prisons and I am amazed: at how smoothly this work has grown and evolved; at the receptivity of the four different prisons; at the ease of securing grants; at my own growth as an Educator; and most importantly at the impact of PRH Education on incarcerated men and women.

In these three years 60 inmates have completed the workshop *Who Am I?* My underlying attitude and objective from the beginning of this mission have been to enable incarcerated persons to experience their own being – the positive core within themselves – and to learn to recognize

*... a young father with a very cold and harsh look stated he had come to realize how he had always thought it was cool to look mean and tough. Now he wanted to let another side of himself show.*

their explosive behaviors so as to better manage them. I sensed these persons would be helped most by experiencing the good (at the level of their being) to provide hope and a foundation to build on.

My second objective was to enable them to take ownership of their reactionary behaviors so not to be controlled by them. These objectives along with the other benefits participants receive by taking *Who Am I?* make it a way to jump-start their lives in a better direction. A number of inmates have also participated in monthly follow-up groups. This has enabled them to continue their growth and enabled me to see tangible progress.

A few examples will suffice.

A young black prisoner who has faithfully continued his growth in the follow-up group shared how he had responded in a totally new way to a racial slur. He had attended a church service in which a white prisoner next to him made the slur when they were to extend a hand and a greeting of peace. The African American still extended his hand and greeted his antagonist saying "peace be with you". The young man shared how different this response was from what he would have done in the past, and how sad it made him that there was still so much prejudice in our world.

A young mother of three stated how her relationship with her husband has never been better. She is now able to be more open with him and she has made the connection to her past of what caused her to live in such a state of worry.

On the final day of *Who Am I* a young father with a very cold and harsh look stated he had come to realize how he had always thought it was cool to look mean and tough. Now he wanted to let another side of himself show. He came back with his hair released from the tight ponytail it had been in all week. He was struggling with how to do a video to send to his 11 year old daughter, with whom he had not communicated for two years.

These and other benefits the inmates have gained are significant. A totally unexpected bonus has been what I have received. I love working with the wide diversity of cultures, religions and beliefs I have encountered behind prison walls. This has expanded my ability to love a more diverse population and stretched my ability as an educator to "manage" potentially volatile culture clashes.

These blessings have come my way as a result of being faithful to following my deep conscience. This experience has deepened my faith in the giftedness of our PRH tool for growth and its potential to contribute to the advancement of our humanity.

*Susan Ahrendt of Sioux Falls, SD celebrates her 10th year as PRH educator this fall. Her colleagues have always suspected what her sister-in-law recently confirmed, that Susan is a gentle spirit who kills inmates with her kindness.*

## In Memoriam



Maureen

### CREATIONAL GAZE

*for Maureen  
by Bill Kelly*

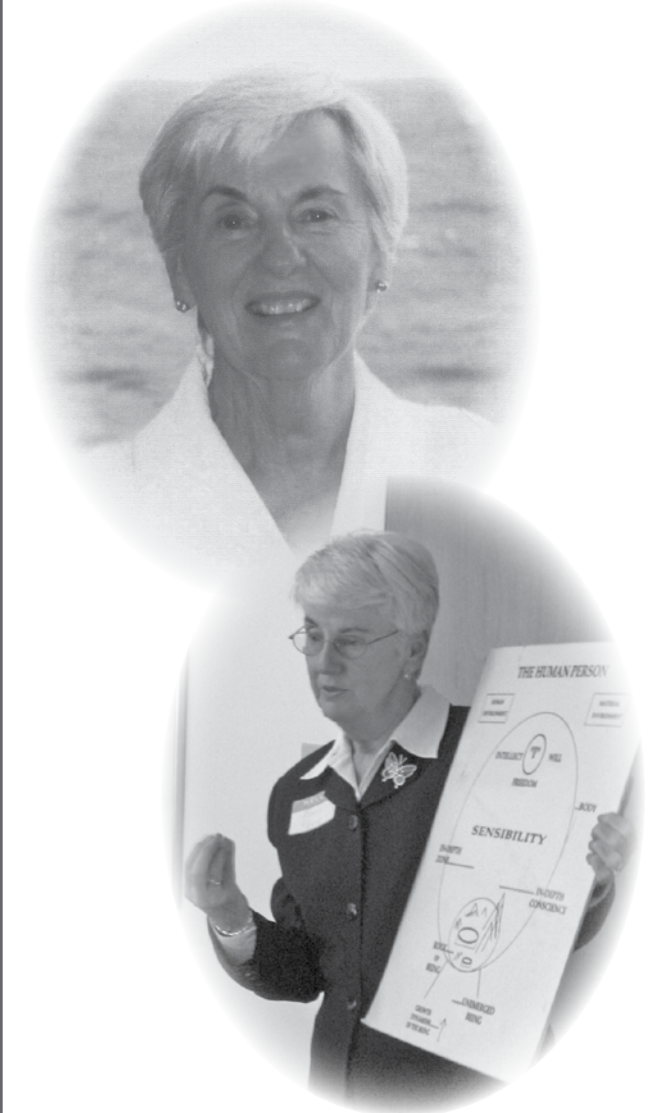
My paternal grandmother, the one who braided her hair each night like her Sioux ancestors, liked me to work with her in the garden. She had black sharp eyes that looked right through me. She taught me honesty and everytime I smell carnations I thank her.

My maternal grandmother, the one who snored and baked Irish soda bread, liked to take me to her log cabin in the mountains. She had blue round eyes that embraced me. She taught me how to pray when not in church and everytime I smell baking bread I thank her.

My spiritual grandmother, the one with the Canadian accent and little limp, likes me to write and share my feelings. She has ocean green eyes, deep mystic pools from which flow holy powers that stand me up and enable me to see my sacred self. She teaches me how to listen deep and lives loving this truth: God is simple and inside. Everytime I'm being human I'm thanking her.

### Mary Elizabeth Ryan

June 18, 1934 - November 3, 2007



## A Short Catalog of PRH™ Workshops

• Denotes a change in workshop title

Visit <http://prh-usa.org> for more information, or call an Educator to learn of Additional Offerings, Mini-workshops, etc.

### Who Am I?

In this workshop, the focus is on one's being, the positive center of the person. The being, self-image, intellect, feelings, body and deep conscience are explored to increase self awareness. Participants observe their environments and relationships to confirm what is life-giving for them. Concrete steps are offered to support on-going personal development and authentic self-expression.

### Clarifying My Relationships\* (My Interpersonal Relationships)

Participants focus on their relationships with those they love. They review and clarify their relationships in order to grow in their capacity to give and receive love.

### Leading My life

Returning to the pivotal centers in the person (Being, "I", Sensibility, Body and Deep Conscience) explored in "Who Am I?", participants observe how they function at each center. They discover what they need to support the development of their being. They identify personal life goals and how to realistically live these goals day to day.

### Listening to the Messages from My Body\* (Approach to Self Through the Body)

Through simple relaxation and movement exercises, participants grow in awareness of their body and its messages. They learn to describe feelings and follow them in writing to uncover the truth in their experience. This workshop is a step by step development of the PRH analysis skill.

### Seeking God\* (I Am Seeking God)

By exploring the history of their search for God, participants discover means to create an optimum environment for spiritual growth. They define their relationship with God, and cultivate attitudes for deepening it.

### Exploring the Transcendent Dimension of My Life\* (A Person's Growth and the Experience of Transcendancy)

Exploring their unique experience of Transcendancy, participants become aware of how this experience impacts the growth of their being. Participants learn to identify and describe their personal experience of the "More Than Me" and become aware of their journey in relationship to Transcendancy.

### Helping My Children Become Themselves

Parents explore ideas and patterns that influence their relationships with their children of all ages. Needs and aspirations of the child are examined, including the need to be loved and guided, and to be a child in a secure environment.

### Loving and Being Loved\* (My Affective Life)

Identifying unmet needs of the past, participants begin to heal from experiences of not feeling loved. They discover the basic need to love and be loved and grow in their capacity to love themselves and others.

### Learning How to Receive and Give Help\* (Initiation into PRH Helping Relationship)

People taking this workshop learn the components of the specialized PRH Helping Relationship. They practice helping and being helped with real problems. The knowledge, tools, and experience gained lead to confidence in the use of this method.

### Exploring My Present Relationships\* (My Relational Life Today)

Participants use creative expression to explore their relational life. They express sensations stirred by current relationships in line, form and color. Important aspects of growth are revealed as participants explore their sensations and current relationships.

### Exploring My Childhood Past\* (My Childhood Past)

By using art materials, participants reconnect with their childhood. Happy, as well as painful, childhood memories that are still alive today are explored. This is a healing and growth-producing exploration.

### Freeing Life In Me\* (Life Within Me and its Obstacles)

Participants explore their positive qualities through line, color, and form. Art experience is not necessary. While moving along the road to self-discovery, they recognize what enhances and inhibits their growth and especially the expression of being.

### Accelerating My Growth\* (Managing My Growth)

Participants cultivate practical skills and attitudes helpful in making the most of their potential. They learn how to plan and manage their lives for optimum growth and healing.

### What is Most Essential in My Life?\* (My Essential Course of Action)

Participants sort out what is and what is not life-giving in their activities, and where they want to focus their time, energy and creativity. They review their past and present activities to clarify their life's decision.

### Growing as a Couple\* (Becoming a Couple)

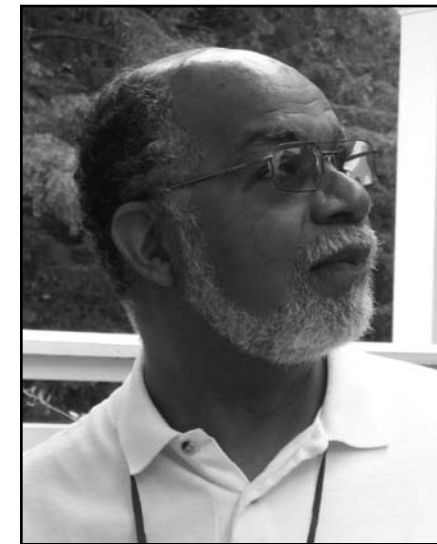
Couples learn to listen to each other from their hearts, and share more of themselves. They reflect on what they experience in their relationship in order to clarify the bond that draws them together. They also grow in awareness of the behaviors that block their growth as a couple.

### Being Fully Authentic

This workshop helps participants to understand what it means to live respect for themselves and verify whether or not they live the authenticity of who they are. They learn how to progress in their capacity to live the truth of their being.

## For Parents and Presidents - A Review of Edwin Friedman's A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix

by Ron Spann



Ron Spann

Rabbi Edwin Friedman may never become a household name, but I hope that readers of this newsletter will get to know more of his thought, if only his wonderful vision of leadership as "non-anxious presence". Out of decades of service as a family therapist and organizational consultant while also continuously serving as a synagogue rabbi, Friedman distilled an important body of thought that he drew on for *A Failure of Nerve*.

Actually, the book was completed and published after his death by family and close professional colleagues. It was written "for parents and presidents" because his definition of leadership applies to roles as diverse as parenting, or managing corporate, military, academic, religious cultural or governmental organizations.

### Life is systemic

His research turned on basic questions about why some families functioned healthier than others, and why some organizations, businesses, or military groups thrived and grew while others either grew only slightly or else went into decline over time. Answers only became clear once he was willing, as he put it, to break with conventional wisdom of social science that such groups differed too fundamentally to be compared with each other.

He had become convinced that the human variables like differences of profession, family and cultural background, class and education, and how they are organized are not at all as significant as *what is common in human experience* for assessing why in the daily life of a family, group or business things go well or poorly.

Friedman applies the principles of *systems theory* to all human relations. Simply put, we live in a web of systems in which everything is related to everything else. We influence one another whether or not we have direct contact with each other in any given business, department or family.

### Self-differentiation or Failure of Nerve?

Because of these "systemic" bonds "the integrity of the leader... promotes the integrity or prevents the 'dis-integration' of the system he or she is leading." From this it follows that growth and change require focusing on finding where the strengths are in a family or in a group system, "rather than letting the pathology or the pathogens (read troublemakers) determine [one's] focus." For Friedman, the health and emotional maturity of leaders is all-important.

He insists that emotional processes and not mere rationality determine our behaviors and beliefs. Emotional maturity, in his definition means accepting the responsibility to come to terms with these energies in the interest of fostering one's self-differentiation. This means becoming confident with those energies that are fruitful and constructive, and learning to redirect the energies that fan anxiety and become destructive. By *failure of nerve*, Friedman means the inability or unwillingness of any leaders to take the steps toward emotional maturity and thus become *self-differentiated* persons.

He admits the difficulty of that commitment, but believes that it is possible, and that in turn it can foster organizational transformation. "This would be the case not by focusing on techniques for moving others but by focusing on the na-

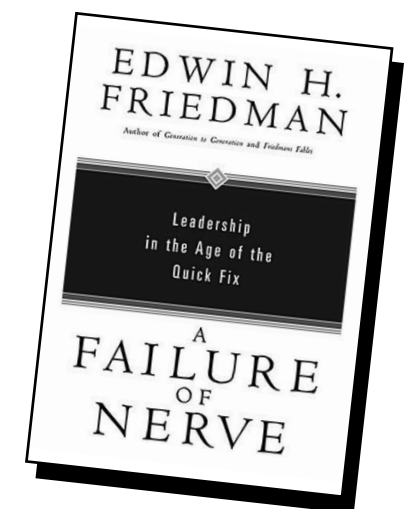
ture of *his or her own being and presence* [emphasis added]."

"The age of the quick fix" is Friedman's description of our era's obsession with gathering information and mastering techniques for handling the anxiety-provoking problems. However, in the constant search for more information, when do we know enough? How do we determine that our technique or approach is the most current? Insecurity about such questions has the ironic result of raising both the leader and the group's anxiety and crippling the ability to function well.

*The quick fix* also tries to patch cracks in the vision of *harmony* as the primary goal of relationships. Leadership initiatives push the buttons of dissidents. That triggers a reaction, the *herding instinct* to collude in sabotaging the "offending" leader, to become preoccupied with the demands of those most unhappy with such initiatives, or to regroup along lines of like-mindedness to the point of fusion for the sake of restoring harmony.

Couples can be thrown into confusion when tensions arise from one partner's need to clarify his or her individuality. For Friedman "the universal problem for all partnerships, marital or otherwise, [is] not getting closer; it [is] preserving self in a close relationship... (I eventually came to

*Continued on page 4*



## Rock, Paper, Scissors: In-Depth Conscience, the Cutting Edge of Growth

*Continued from page 1*

This issue also has the sad but loving work of memorializing two cherished educators, Maureen McAlduff, SSNJM, and Mary Ryan.

Mary, whose article on grand-parenting appeared in our last issue, planted seeds of PRH education up and down the I-75 corridor, from Michigan to Florida. She succumbed to an aneurism early last November, to all our sorrow and that of her family. Maureen died in Winnipeg this past January, after a three decade career of taking PRH to global Anglophone (English-language) settings. It is safe to say that without her witness, none of us would be reading this newsletter because she trained more than half of the educators in PRH-USA. Bill Kelly of PRH-West is an accomplished poet whose tribute to Maureen appears inside.

*We commend this issue to your benefit. Enjoy!*

## For Parents and Presidents

*Continued from page 3*

define my marriage counseling... as trying to help people separate so that they would not have to 'separate'."

Parents, in Friedman's earthy wisdom, need to get a grip: "The children who work through the natural problems of maturing with the least amount of emotional or physical residue are those whose parents have made them least important to their [i.e., *the parents'*] own salvation... [Parents] cannot produce change in a troubling child, no matter how caring, savvy, or intelligent they may be, until they become completely and totally fed up with [that] child's behavior."

### PRH and Friedman

As a PRH professional I am attracted to Friedman's emphasis on growth and on reference to *being* and *presence* as the foundation of authentic identity. The PRH strategy for healing our pathologies begins in *discovering and building on the resources of being at our depths and not the other way around.*

We also agree on the importance of human *emotional processes*. For Friedman and PRH, emotion means much more than mere feeling. In PRH we focus on the reading of *sensations*, by which we mean the vibrating energy of our being, of our emotions, our mind and body. PRH *analysis* is a practical tool for decoding these sensations in order to break free of our inherited destructive emotional processes and to integrate what we discover to be our best emotional processes, or *functionings*.

Finally, *self-differentiation* corresponds to the concern in PRH for keeping faith with the appeal of the deep conscience. Deep conscience is the voice of the being. It expresses our profoundest aspirations and dissatisfactions. To live in faith with it is a necessity not just for leaders but for anyone set on the path to growth. It is the single most compelling energy for what Friedmann calls self-differentiation.

*Ron Spann bases his PRH work in Detroit. His wife and editor says that the above is more a book report than a review. What does she know?*

## PRH Educators and Associates

### For General Information

### Please Contact:

PRH Institute-USA-Center  
8382 Ranch Estates Rd.  
Clarkston, MI 48348  
248.766.3047 off.  
prhcenter@prh-usa.org  
http://www.prh-usa.org

### ARIZONA

**CAROL A. WILLIAMSON**  
2585 Whippet Way  
Sedona, AZ 86336  
(480) 201-5171  
unityandlove@gmail.com

### MASSACHUSETTS

**IRMA GENDREAU**  
2 Dupont St.  
Worcester, MA 01604  
(508) 756-0978  
igendreau@prh-usa.org

**MARCIA BORJA MARINER**  
47 Colonial Rd.  
Sutton, MA 01590  
(508) 754-8788  
mbmar1021@aol.com

**MARK D. MARINER**  
47 Colonial Rd.  
Sutton, MA 01590  
(508) 754-8788  
mdmar1021@aol.com

### MICHIGAN

**MARY FRANCES ROBERTS**  
121 E. Boston Blvd.  
Detroit, MI 48202  
(313) 869-2160  
mroberts@prh-usa.org

**LYNN SALATA**  
8382 Ranch Estates Rd.  
Clarkston, MI 48348  
(248) 391-1383  
lsalata@prh-usa.org

### RON SPANN

7026 St. Paul  
Detroit, MI 48207-3613  
(313) 571-5145 (home)  
(248) 885-4841 ext. 113 (office)  
rspann@prh-usa.org

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

**CLAIRE COLL**  
96 Fairview Rd.  
Pittsfield, NH 03263  
(603) 435-7271  
ccoll@prh-usa.org

**PAULINE PLANTE**  
96 Fairview Rd.  
Pittsfield, NH 03263  
(603) 435-7271  
pplante@prh-usa.org

### NEW MEXICO

**TONI ROGERS**  
505 Oppenheimer #1302  
Los Alamos, NM 87544  
(505) 661-9951  
trogers@prh-usa.org

### OHIO

**PEGGY LAWSON**  
4308 Lisa Lane  
Middletown, OH 45042  
(513) 424-5534  
plawson@prh-usa.org

### VIRGINIA

**DAN LONNQUIST**  
1409 Grandin Rd.  
Roanoke, VA 24015  
(540) 342-1800  
dlonnquist@prh-usa.org

**LYNNE LONNQUIST**  
1409 Grandin Rd.  
Roanoke, VA 24015  
(540) 342-1800  
llonnquist@prh-usa.org

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**KATHLEEN CIANI**  
1921 Faison Ave.  
Fort Mill, S.C. 29708  
(248) 202-1304 (cell)  
kciani@prh-usa.org

### SOUTH DAKOTA

**SUSAN AHRENDT**  
2805 W. Bitterroot St.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
(605) 339-4283  
sahrendt@prh-usa.org

**JOAN MARIE BRANDNER**  
411 E. 12th Street  
Dell Rapids, SD 57022  
605-428-3740  
jbrandner@prh-usa.org

### LINDA LAMBERTZ

1227 30th Street  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605) 693-3794 (home)  
(605) 692-9461 (office)  
llambertz@prh-usa.org

### JO ANN STURZL

411 E. 12th Street  
Dell Rapids, SD 57022  
605-428-3740  
jsturzl@worldnet.att.net

### ASSOCIATE

### EVELEEN FORKIN

16057 Hauss  
Eastpointe, MI 48021  
(248) 542-8836 (office)  
(586) 772-2577 (home)  
eastpointe3@juno.com

### For General Information Please Contact:

**PRH Institute-USA-Center**  
8382 Ranch Estates Rd.  
Clarkston, MI 48348

248.766.3047 office  
prhcenter@prh-usa.org  
http://www.prh-usa.org

## Bits and Pieces

**PRH Institute -USA Center** moves further South – Our Michigan Educator, Kathleen Ciani has traded in her snow tires for a sunroof, as she and her husband relocated to South Carolina, near the Charlotte area. We are excited to make PRH Education available to the Carolinas.

Meantime, Joan Marie Brandner completed a project we announced here last year: a journey "down under" to offer PRH



**PRH goes international!** – Our New England Educator, Irma Gendreau, has recently returned from Mandeville, Jamaica where she presented a "Who Am I?", the first PRH workshop in this country. She was met with warm enthusiasm and openness, and looks forward to returning to do more PRH work.

