

The Academic Author

8:5

For Creators of Academic Intellectual Property

November 1994

TAA establishes grants to help academic authors

Text and Academic Authors has set up grants to offset member's expenses in their research, writing and publishing of academic works.

Kathy Heilenman, TAA president, said five \$400 grants will be awarded this coming year. Applications are due March 1.

Awards will be announced April 20. The TAA Council, meeting in Chicago, approved the new academic grants program as an important, additional member service.

"We are funding this new program with funds received from Europe for the photocopying of academic work by U.S. authors," said Heilenman.

Because the European money, from Norway and Germany, was not collected by individual titles, the authors of the photocopied works cannot be identified.

"The grants will be an excellent and appropriate use of this new reprography income," Heilenman said.

"We are supporting academic authors in their work, and at the same time promoting excellence because the grants are competitive."

She said TAA hopes to expand the grants program as the association has a better feel for the reprography income it receives from abroad. Heilenman will appoint a new academic awards committee to evaluate grant applications and make the awards.

"The application process is simple," she said. "We want to know what the article will be about, something about methodology, and the qualifications of the author to do the work," she said.

Grants can help offset travel, research, manuscript, publishing and the whole range of other expenses that go into scholarly work that leads to publication, Heilenman said.

"We have no limits except that the grant is to

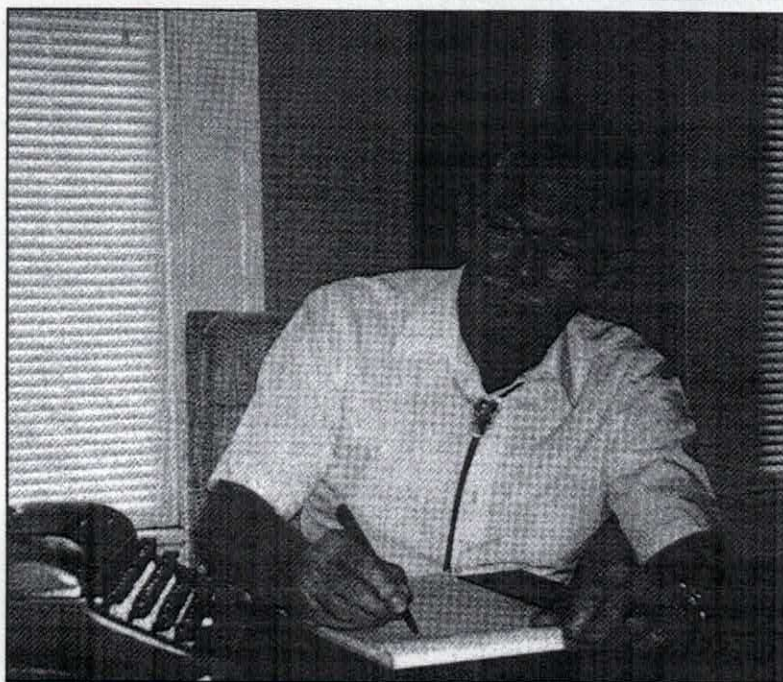
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RUSHDIE COUNT

2,104

November 1 marks the 2,104th day that author Salman Rushdie is living under threat of death.

FAMOUS AUTHOR: MIKE KEEDY



TAA FOUNDER. Math author Mike Keedy has passed the million-book mark at least twice. His name is on more than 50 titles. He founded TAA in 1987.

And now, 50 books later

By Daniel Spano

When Mike Keedy was a kid back on a Nebraska farm in the 1920s, his family didn't know quite what to make of him.

He liked school and wanted an education. That was a puzzlement to the Keedys, farm folks from way back whose outlook was pretty much limited to the rural life and agricultural pursuits.

Little did the family realize that Mervin L. Keedy, "Mike" for short, would become one of the leading textbook authors of the 20th century, his work spanning a wide range from elementary school through college.

In fact, before Keedy retired, he was the author or co-author of more than 50 titles. And when he retired, he founded the Textbook Authors Association, which evolved into today's Text and Academic Authors Association.

Today, at age 74, Mike Keedy likes to think that grandpa Albert Lincoln Keedy Sr., despite his doubts back then on the farm, would be proud.

After graduating from the Auburn,

Nebraska, high school in 1937, Mike Keedy enrolled at Nebraska State Teachers College at Peru. He worked at a drug store to pay tuition.

Then he went into the Army Air Corps, then back to college, and then ended up as associate director of the University of Maryland Mathematics Project, writing experimental curriculum materials with junior high school teachers. Those materials were tried out at junior high schools in the metropolitan Washington area from 1957 to 1960.

"That was the most gratifying teaching experience of my professional career," Keedy said. "I witnessed kids really getting excited about mathematics."

That experiment gave rise to a series of texts that may be Keedy's finest work.

Along with junior high school teachers Richard Jamesons of Alrlington, Virginia,

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Text and Academic Authors Association

KEEDY

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and Patricia Johnson of Beltsville, Maryland, Keedy wrote *Exploring Modern Mathematics, Books I, II and III*, published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston in 1963. Nationwide, the first two sold more than 1 million copies each during the modern math movement of the 1960s.

The series covered junior high school arithmetic, algebra and geometry.

As a result of the junior high school series and some other texts, Keedy's name became synonymous with math education in the United States. Why? Keedy likes to think his pedagogical philosophy and lean writing style were factors.

In some books, he used a basic exploratory approach that brought the reader actively into the learning process.

In all his writing, Keedy breaks down math concepts into small increments. He then develops them individually, being careful not to introduce other concepts at the same time. This is the trademark of his writing.

In 1961, Keedy joined the math department at Purdue.

While there, one of his students, Marvin Bittinger, walked into his office to ask how to get started on a writing career in mathematics.

Keedy offered some advice, then suggested Bittinger, who was working on his Ph.D., try to make something out of a manuscript that had been worked on by some former students.

Bittinger agreed, and they became co-authors of *Trigonometry: A Programmed Text*, published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

The book itself was not a tremendous success, but it was the starting point of a successful co-author relationship that lasted more than a quarter century.

In 1970, Keedy etched his name into the elementary school ranks with a series of texts, *Exploring Elementary Mathematics*, with co-authors Paul Anderson, Leslie Dwight, Charles Nelson and John Schlup. That series also was published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Keedy and Bittinger's writing careers surged when they wrote an Addison-Wesley series for college remedial courses.

Keedy says this effort resulted in his second most significant professional accomplishment.

"It was significant because of its pedagogy," he said. The approach, using the page margins, was as simple as it was effective.

The format had the students:

- > Read the material.
- > Work through an example.
- > Move to the margin and work a similar example.

> Check the answer in the back of the book.

> Do homework with similar material.

Keedy and Bittinger continued their writing partnership, for both high school and college math courses, until Keedy retired in 1987.

Bittinger, a prof at IU/PU-Indianapolis, still revises the Keedy-Bittinger textbooks regularly.

"I would not be at the point where I am now without Mike Keedy. I'm delighted to be associated with him," Bittinger said in an interview. "He has been a great mentor for me."

"Mike is a remarkable guy. He has so much wisdom in mathematics education and writing about mathematics. Nobody in history has spawned so many co-authors in mathematics as he has."

Mike Keedy, who frowns upon text authors who mainly imitate other authors, is proud of the fact that most of his books have been recognized as innovative if not groundbreaking.

A book for elementary teachers, *Geometry: A Modern Introduction*, with co-author Charles Nelson, is an example, as was a high school geometry book, co-authored with Nelson and Bittinger, that broke new ground by removing formal proofs and substituting informal deduction.

Keedy's life has been interesting even apart from being an academic author.

After his first year of college at Peru, Keedy dropped out to join the Army Air Corps.

He was graduated from the weather school at Chanute Field, Illinois, in 1942 and served as a forecaster at many places, including Scott Field, Illinois; Selfridge Field, Michigan; and North Africa.

On Christmas Eve 1942, he disembarked from a troop at Casablanca.

After the war, he earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Chicago in meteorology, graduating in 1946.

In 1947, Keedy attended the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, where he had was a grad assistant.

At Mountain Home, Idaho, he taught high school math and science from 1947 to 1949. It was there, site of Mountain Home Air Force Base, that Keedy, who had always loved airplanes, learned to fly.

That love of flying later would be important when he founded the Textbook Authors Association, traveling the country to stir up interest in TAA.

In 1948, Keedy went back to Nebraska, his home state, where he earned his master's degree and doctorate in mathematics at the University of Nebraska.

Over his career he taught at Nebraska State Teachers College, 1950; North Dakota State University, 1951-53; and the University of Nebraska (1949-50, 1953-57).

He also served as a supervisor of junior high

school math and science in the Baltimore County, Maryland, public schools in 1960-61. He joined the math department at Purdue in 1961.

While there he was active in the teacher education program and directed doctoral theses in math ed.

He retired in 1987.

Upon retirement from Purdue, Keedy donated money to help establish a special lab for grad students. It is known today as the Mike Keedy Computer Lab.

Asked which honor gives him the most satisfaction, he said probably being listed in *Who's Who*.

Keedy chose Orange Springs, Florida, for retirement, and there he bought a horse farm and built an airstrip.

But soon he was restless, and began thinking about starting an organization for textbook authors.

There was no such organization in existence, and when he bounced the idea off co-authors, including Paul Anderson, they were interested but didn't have the time.

Keedy, the retiree, did.

The Textbook Authors Association went into business in April 1987, the headquarters at Keedy's horse farm in Orange Springs.

Not everybody was of one mind about the directions TAA should take. Some early members advocated an adversarial stance with publishers, while Keedy insisted that TAA should be "truly professional."

Keedy's perspective prevailed.

About relations with publishers, he says:

"We may not always agree, but I hope we can disagree without being disagreeable."

For the formative years of TAA, Keedy served as president and executive director, but as the association matured, at one time reaching 1,100 members, he decided to retire for good.

Although he is retired from writing these days, Keedy still thinks about textbooks and continues as a senior adviser to TAA.

To prospective authors, he has this advice:

"Before you embark on writing a textbook, join TAA. By all means, do not sign any contracts with publishers until you know what you are doing. I've talked to a lot of authors who have had difficulties because they did not know the business. They were very unhappy authors."

Now Keedy lives in Bartow, Florida.

He no longer writes or flies but is active as a singer, both as a soloist and a member of groups.

He also pursues former hobbies, including amateur radio and remote-control aircraft.

"Learning to be retired," he says, "was hard, but now that I've gotten into the hang of it, I like it."

VOLUNTARY SCALED DUES

TAA members who earn more than \$5,000 a year from their books are asked to pay \$100 dues; more than \$25,000, \$150;

and more than \$100,000, \$250. Basic membership is \$73. Call Norma Hood, at (904) 546-5419 for more information.