

EBRUARY 2003 VOL 39,

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## editor's

# **THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT GARY**

LETTER

ever before, in my three-plus years at this magazine, has one piece inflamed so many readers and generated so much mail. For the few of you who didn't see the column and have yet to write a letter about it, I'm referring to Gary Stager's December topic, "Why Teachers Don't Use Computers," p. 47.

In this column, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION'S editor-at-large said IT staff were the reason teachers don't use computers in class. In case you missed his point, he added that IT personnel were "control freaks" who made "insane, expensive and miseducative decisions."

Gary's expertise and his ability to discuss issues make his column a substantial part of the magazine. Although he writes controversial columns each month about a variety of topics, this one touched a nerve. (For instance, we didn't get a single letter when, before 9/11, he loosely compared one side



### Love him or hate him, agree or disagree, we hope Gary's opinions are worth reading, and reacting to.

in the math wars to the Taliban.) December's column prompted at least 30 letters and proved something we've long suspected: people write longer when they're mad then when they agree with you.

The bulk of letter-writers agreed they didn't like any of his ideas. The commonality was striking: there were mentions of his bitter rant, his pouty rant, his petulant rant, and that he is igno-rant.

My favorite letters weren't the ones that agreed (yes, some did), but from the people who thanked him for caring so much that he formed a strong opinion.

For those people, this issue is a keeper. Beside the letters page where December's IT column is debated, Gary's usual column, Speaking Out, includes a twist. He takes on the International Society for Technology in Education. Instead of waiting a month for responses, we solicited one from Don Knezek, ISTE's chief executive officer.

Finally, Gary has written the first of a semi-regular feature in the magazine. Gary's Mac Advocate page (p. 51) offers some hands-on advice from a Mac user on how districts can use the computers in classrooms. (This section will split time with a similar page with a PC viewpoint.)

Love him or hate him, agree or disagree, we hope everyone feels that Gary's opinions are worth reading, and reacting to.

Wayne D'Driv

Wayne D'Orio, Editorial Director



District Administration, Vol. 39 No. 2 (ISSN 1537-5749) is published monthly. A publication of Professional Media Group LLC, Fax 203-663-0149, e-mail franc@promediagrp.com. Periodicals postage paid at Norwalk, CT and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Fran Cassone, District Administration, 488 Main Ave., Norwalk, CT 06851. District Administration is a registered trademark of Educational Media, a division of Professional Media Group. **Copyright 2003 Printed in the USA** MEMBER BPA INTERNATIONAL

