



An Honor Council of
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Association

Nassau Reading Council Newsletter

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Happy Holidays! We hope everyone enjoyed our first Professional Development Workshops. Our second series starts shortly. We look forward to informational strategies, entertaining authors and an inspiring conference! See you there!

Your Editors,

Sarah, Susan and Nancy

Reminder: Make sure you have signed up on mylearningplan.com for your BOCES credit.

Need to honor or memorialize a special person? Our Literacy cards honoring Books for Babies or International Literacy are available for purchase at the sign-in table at each workshop.

Upcoming Events:

February 2, 2012 Jim Bruchac: *Be Good, A True Cautionary Tale: The Girl Who Helped Thunder; When the Chenoo Howls*

February 9, 2012 Maria LoRusso *Data Driven Instruction*

March 1, 2012 Marion Blumenthal Lazan *Four Perfect Pebbles*

March 23, 2012 *Annual Conference at the Marriott*

March 29, 2012 Dr. Kathy Hinchman *Academic Literacies*

April 19, 2012 Laura Robb *Writing to Read*

June 4, 2012 *Young Authors' Celebration*

News from the President of New York State Reading Association

Welcome to the New NYSRA Webpage,

As President of NYSRA for 2011-2012, it is my great pleasure to officially announce the opening of our new website. I hope you are as excited as I am about the new look and the reorganization of the website materials. One of the major changes of this website from our old website is that it is participatory and interactive. Bookmark the NYSRA Website URL: www.nysreading.org

□ Here are some of the website's highlights:

Organized by Goal Area: This means you can logically find information related to NYSRA Goal Areas, which reflects the format for NYSRA Meetings.

Local Council Options: Local councils are now able to edit and revise. Much like editing in Microsoft word, local councils (those not having

their own website) have the option to easily edit blogs (allows text, video, audio, images).

Upcoming Events on Homepage: Members can find events happening state-wide on the calendar.

Multimedia Website: This is a work in process, but you will find videos and podcasts uploaded to highlight the work of NYSRA (e.g., conference presentations).

Searchable Website: This is a new function for NYSRA and enables persons to find what they are looking for in an efficient manner.

Coming Soon: Running slideshow of images and more.

Many people are responsible for the new website and I want to personally acknowledge their leadership roles. A special thank you to the members of the Digital Literacy Committee (Debbie Dermady, Kay Gormley, Carol Hacker, Peter McDermott, Dorothy Troike, Liz Yanoff,) and Jeremy Hammond and Christine Paige (Co-Webmasters). The Digital Literacy Committee joins me in thanking NYSRA Board Members 2011-2012 who offered feedback and we are much appreciative of their reviews.

Additional information will be forthcoming and training will be held at the fall Assembly of Delegates (September) to be held in Latham, New York. The website is user-friendly and there are some items on the website should you need assistance navigating the site. If you notice major inaccuracies, please email Kay Gormley @ gormlk@sage.edu

or

Peter McDermott @ pmcdermott@pace.edu

□ Looking forward to working with you this year and hope to see you at the NYSRA Annual Conference to be held in Rye Brook, New York on October 23rd - 25th, 2011. Continue to check the website for conference updates.

Yours in Literacy,

Joanne Joyner-Wells □ joynerwells@aol.com □ NYSRA □ President -
2011/2012

We are sure this will be a valuable resource for all of us!

Reading in the Content Area by Robin Brandvein



Donna Tassone, our Young Authors' Contest Coordinator with our authors.

On January 12, 2012, Kate Corkery and Karen Scharf gave an outstanding presentation on "Reading in the Content Area" at Molloy's new Public Square multipurpose room. The focus of the seminar was on how we can use picture books to impart background knowledge ("Front Loading"), and to develop vocabulary on a variety of topics in many disciplines.

Picture books are not just for the lower grades, but for all grades. The key is to use quality books with rich illustrations that are "movingly literate" to introduce students to new peoples, places, and times. Many picture books are written with the adult reader in mind and don't have simplistic vocabulary. Start with the Read Aloud to demonstrate fluency and to improve listening skills. The "proper" fluency level is to read a word within 4/10 of a second.

Kate and Karen talked about some of the projects completed using picture books. These included, illustrating Haikus, creating small groups of 11th grade honor students and 3rd graders to produce their own books, comparing Cinderella stories from different cultures, having students create different word type lists upon the second reading of a book (robust words, habitat words, etc.); and creating scrap books for the classroom based on owning the new vocabulary words introduced in the books. One especially appealing project involved each student creating a page in an alphabet book about Antarctica. The book started with "Z" because Antarctica is on the opposite side of the world.

The speakers gave many examples of picture books that help students learn core knowledge associated with art, music, physical education, science, math, English, and "bibliotherapy" (dealing with problems kids face).

This is a "must repeat" presentation so that Kate and Karen may present additional ideas for use of picture books in both primary and secondary classrooms.

Dr. Marlyn Press

We are very proud of our member, Dr. Marlyn Press who was published in *The California Reader*. Marlyn and two colleagues researched the importance of interactive read alouds. Marlyn Press is an Assistant Professor of General and Special Education at the Touro College Graduate School of Education in Brooklyn, NY. She taught for many years at several school districts in Nassau County, NY before teaching college. She has presented at many conferences and written close to 30 articles on literacy topics. You can contact Dr. Press at marlynpress@hotmail.com.

International Literacy Project By Marcia Mondschein

Our 21st exchange of educators with Guatemala has just been completed. Luz and Janice expressed over and over again how grateful they were to be selected as recipients of the annual scholarship awarded by the Nassau Reading Council and the New Jersey Reading Association. Observing our schools was more valuable than they ever could imagine. They saw how schools with limited budgets are compensating to provide their students with learning opportunities despite the budget cuts. They observed classrooms where constructivism is alive and well. They observed children from grades K-3, making decisions, working in groups, working independently and sharing ideas.

As part of their visitation, they traveled to 5th Avenue and saw people from all over the world. Their visit to the American Museum of Natural History was definitely a major highlight. The knowledge gained from the exhibits will be shared in Guatemala. Seeing the Statue of Liberty was the highlight of their visit to New York City.

The welcomes they received at the Bowling Green School in East Meadow, Virginia Rd. School in White Plains, Sunquam School in Half Hollow Hills,

California Ave. School in Uniondale, and the Northside School in Levittown, were exceptional. Additionally, thanks to Dowling College and Pace University for their support. Many administrators and teachers not only opened the doors of their classrooms for our guests, but opened their hearts as well. They departed with model lessons, supplies, and teaching ideas which they are eager to share with their colleagues at the monthly Consejo meetings.

Our project has come a long way in 22 years. More than 478 mini-libraries have been donated to deserving public schools throughout Guatemala. We have hosted 65 Guatemalan educators. We have held 8 international literacy conferences in Guatemala, attracting over 1000 educators per day for three days. Our project has spread throughout the United States as educators have repeatedly joined our efforts from over 24 states. Mail arrives daily from educators asking to join us and support our project.