I've worked with your flower, helped it to grow.
I'm returning it soon, but want you to know.
This flower is precious, as dear as can be.
Love it, take care of it, and you will see
With each new issue, with each new day
It will continue to grow in a special way
Remember this flower, as dear as can be
Though rightfully yours, part will always belong to me

Thank you for the privilege of serving as the Editor of IRCJ! Kathy Barclay, 2004-2014
ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL JOURNAL

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**About the Cover**

This issue is Kathy Barclay's last as Editor of the Illinois Reading Council Journal. Because of this, for the front cover, we have chosen a cover from each of the volumes that have been produced since Kathy took over as Editor of the journal in 2004. For the back cover, Kathy chose a poem by an unknown author that is well-loved by teachers and adapted it to convey her feelings about her experience as the Editor of this journal over the past ten years. The flowers along the bottom of the back cover are made up of past covers as well.

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**MISSION**

The mission of the Illinois Reading Council is to provide support and leadership to educators as they promote and teach lifelong literacy.

**VISION**

The Illinois Reading Council advocates quality literacy opportunities for all learners and serves as a primary organization that provides educators at all levels access to research, materials, and methodologies to promote and teach lifelong literacy and learning. Support of an active, well-organized system of local and special interest councils and state committees provides a viable network for communication, exchange of information, and grassroots involvement of a diverse membership. The Illinois Reading Council’s publications, special projects, conferences, and workshops stimulate the personal and professional growth of educators.
As many of you know, I retired from Western Illinois University (WIU) at the close of the spring 2014 semester and, subsequently, asked the IRC to conduct a search for a new editor. In June, I began working full-time as a Professional Development Manager for Rowland Reading Foundation, a nonprofit organization devoted solely to early literacy. Although I will miss my former colleagues and students, I am excited by the challenges and opportunities this new position brings.

In the spring of 2004, the IRC Board of Directors invited me to serve as the editor of IRCJ. Now, ten years later, I am pleased to present to you my 41st and final issue . . . and what an issue it is! Near the start of a new school year, and just prior to what promises to be another outstanding statewide IRC reading conference, the selections in this issue will surely serve to motivate, encourage, enlighten, and extend your understanding of reading, of students, and of supporting students in their reading development. Leading the line-up for this issue is an inspiring speech, “The Science of Reading: The Art of Teaching,” prepared and presented by Pleasant Rowland, founder of Rowland Reading Foundation. As you read about her journey as teacher, textbook author, creator of American Girl, and founder of Rowland Reading Foundation, I know you, too, will be inspired by her message: “The best solution is prevention—teaching children to read in the primary grades—the right way at the right time.”

Throughout the past decade, the contributions of many stellar authors, columnists, reviewers, and publishing staff members have earned IRCJ its place as the premier state journal in reading in the country. It is with deep gratitude that I recognize the efforts of these individuals, some of whom have been with me on this journey since the very beginning. I especially want to thank Jon Jones, Assistant Editor, for his outstanding work with the members of the IRCJ Editorial Review Board, and his editorial support and assistance in myriad ways. I also want to express my sincere appreciation to the staff of WIU’s Document and Publication Services for their incredibly meticulous attention to detail in the formatting, layout, final proofing/editing, publication, and dissemination of each issue—as well as for the amazing cover designs utilizing original artistic creations submitted by preK-12 students from throughout Illinois. (Some of my favorites are showcased on the cover of this issue.) Last, but certainly not least, a great big thank you to the Board of Directors of the Illinois Reading Council for their unfailing encouragement, trust, and support over the past ten years.

Happy reading!