

Will
County
Reading Council

Reading Will give you a step up.

WCRC Newsletter

Spring 2009
Distributed February 16, 2009

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Will County Reading Council

Board of Directors

2008-2009 Officers

President: Amy O'Brien
amyfuerst@hotmail.com

President-Elect: Julia Dennison
juliadennison@sbcglobal.net

Vice-President: Deborah Augsburger
augsbude@lewisu.edu

Treasurer: Kristen Wooten
kkaufhold1@yahoo.com

Secretary: Joyce Eddy
jedagreen@att.net

Membership: Boomer Crotty
608Boomer@sbcglobal.net;

Historian: Darin Krol
krold@365u.will.k12.il.us

Awards: Christy Ziller
cziller@wilmington.will.k12.il.us

Past President: Joyce Hayward
haywarjo@lewisu.edu

WANTED:

Great Teaching Ideas to
share in this newsletter.
(See page 2 for an idea
from Amy O'Brien.)

Send your ideas to Deb
Augsburger for inclusion
in future newsletters.

Mark Your Calendars!

- ◆ March 19-21—Illinois Reading Council Conference—
Reading: Engage! Excite! Ignite!
- ◆ March 26—Deadline for Awards Nominations and Grant
Applications
- ◆ May 6—Focus on Writing at the Spring Meeting & Event
at St. Francis University in Joliet
- ◆ July 8-11—IRC Leadership Retreat at Grand Bear Lodge
near Starved Rock

A Note From the President:

I am excited to introduce myself as the new president of the Will County Reading Council. Thus far, I have enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with other reading professionals to promote literacy in our classrooms and society. Recently, I had the opportunity to attend my first IRC Board of Directors Meeting. It was truly inspiring to see the passion and enthusiasm for reading that was present in the leaders of the council.

In January, the WCRC hosted a Professional Idea Swap at Lewis University. We had great ideas and activities, stimulating discussion, and lots of good eats to go along with it! I left the swap with a handful of creative ideas, along with inspiration and motivation for the rest of the school year. Our spring event is in the planning stages, and we will update you as soon as the details are settled.

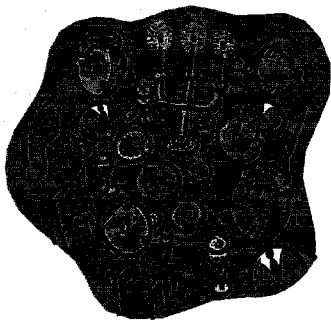
We look forward to seeing many of you in the spring. Best wishes for the remaining half of the school year!

Sincerely,
Amy O'Brien, President WCRC

Winter Professional Idea Swap

By: Amy O'Brien

On January 22, 2009, WCRC held a Professional Idea Swap. Teachers, librarians, and pre-service teachers gathered at Lewis University for a delicious pizza dinner, and the opportunity to share ideas on literacy learning. Some of the ideas presented included Star Words, Seven Words in Seven Minutes, non-fiction notebooks, motivational bulletin boards, and paper bag books. The swap was a success as participants came home with a bundle of new ideas and rejuvenation for the second half of the school year. If you are interested in obtaining any of the ideas from swap, please contact Amy O'Brien @ amyobrien82@hotmail.com.



Dinner Party

By: Amy O'Brien

Dinner Party (Voght, 2002) is a reading activity geared for 4th-12th graders in which students learn and practice how to think from different perspectives. It is a great interactive, post-reading activity that really makes an impact on students of all abilities.

At a *Dinner Party*, students invite characters from a novel to their home for dinner. Students choose or are assigned to act as different characters from the story. Once the characters are seated around the dinner table, the teacher will provide an initial prompt question to get the discussion underway. Students will then hold a discussion from their character's perspective. Additional prompts are provided for the students throughout the party. At the end of the dinner party, debrief to discuss important issues that were revealed during discussion. Teachers can make a dinner party even more memorable by dressing a table with a tablecloth, candle sticks, and dainty finger foods. Your kids will get a kick out of it!

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

No doubt you are looking forward to spring, just as everyone else is! Looking outside now might not do it for you, but we want to remind you of a very special upcoming spring event sponsored by the Will County Reading Council. We hope you will be able to clear your calendar in early May to attend a **Reception and Program** on writing across the curriculum to be presented by St. Francis College adjunct instructor Mrs. Beth Gambro who has a wealth of information on this topic. St. Francis will also host the event and further details will be shared as soon as they become available. This is an evening you won't want to miss. At this meeting three awards will be presented - the **Literacy Award** to someone who has contributed to the development of literacy, the **Reading Educator of the Year** award to an educator who has shown leadership and/or outstanding contribution to the field, and the **Reading Scholarship Award** to a graduate reading education student who shows commitment to the field. Look for information about these awards in this newsletter. Additional grants and awards are available from Illinois Reading Council at illinoisreadingcouncil.org

Fall WCRC Events are a Success

Patricia Polacco seen in Joliet

About 150 teachers, parents, and students were enthralled by Patricia Polacco when she spoke at Troy-Craughwell School in Joliet on September 18. Ms. Polacco displayed the very quilt she wrote about in *The Keeping Quilt*, and captivated her audience with stories about her childhood, her *Rotten Red-headed Older Brother*, and what really matters in teaching and learning (not high-stakes assessments!) Ms. Polacco also had very encouraging words for teachers, calling us her "heroes", and sharp words for governmental policies that put data before children and teachers. She emphasized that teaching is *much* more difficult than what she does, writing wonderful stories for children.

Patricia Polacco's visit was co-sponsored by the Joliet Public Library (Black Road), the Lewis University College of Education, and Will County Reading Council

Santa Celebrates Readers at Joliet Public Library

On December 17, 2008, the Black Road branch of the Joliet Public Library was crowded with families in anticipation of a visit from a VERY IMPORTANT READER: Santa! Our own Boomer Crotty was again in fine form as the jolly old elf. Will County Reading Council members distributed over 100 free books to children attending the event. Parents received brochures on family literacy topics, donated by the Council. WCRC officers also assisted library staff in the popular craft and refreshment stations.

Barack Obama Classroom Library awarded to Will County Teacher

Cindy Morgan, a 5th grade teacher in **Lynne Thigpen School in Joliet** was the recipient of the second Barack Obama Literacy Award classroom library. The Barack Obama Library Award was created in 2006 through a generous gift to the IRC from (then) Senator Obama. This award is a 5th-8th-grade classroom library, valued at over \$1000. The collection is comprised of carefully selected literature that is culturally relevant for African-American readers and targets students in middle-school. Information and the award application are available on the IRC website.



Will County Reading Council Awards

The **WCRC Reading Scholarship** is granted to a member pursuing a graduate degree in reading. These candidates have demonstrated dedication to the profession through continuing professional development. The recipient will receive two hundred and fifty dollars and recognition of this honor at the spring event.

The **WCRC Local Literacy Award** is bestowed upon an individual who has made a significant contribution to literacy at any level, regardless of membership. This award is not limited to professional educators nor is it limited to a certain level of education. The candidates must merely have given their time and effort to assist others towards literacy.

The **WCRC Literacy Educator of the Year** is awarded to a teacher who has made inroads into the education of children. These candidates have helped others on a path to lifelong learning. They have inspired their students to become readers and have served as models for other teachers.

Please use this form to nominate yourself or others for one of the three awards described above. Please send your nominations, by **Thursday, March 26**, to
Christy Ziller, 403 Central, Wilmington, IL 60481 cziller@wilmington.will.k12.il.us

I would like to nominate:

Name

Street

City, State, ZIP

phone number and email:

For the following award:

_____ Reading Scholarship

_____ Literacy Educator of the Year

_____ Local Literacy Award

Reason (or submit a separate letter):

My name and contact information:

Name

Address, phone, email

Spring Event:

Writing*

Across the Curriculum

with Beth Gambro

***(topic/title may be adjusted)**

Wednesday evening

May 6, 2009

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

St. Francis University

President's Room

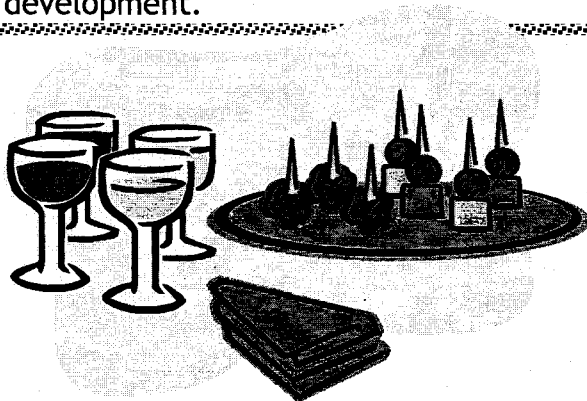
Join us for a Wine & Cheese Reception, our annual meeting, and our keynote speaker. More details to come!

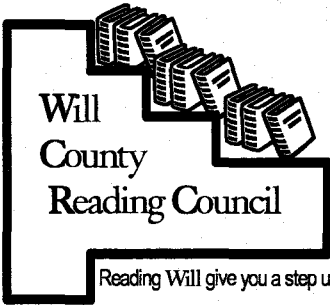
No Admission fee!

Suggested admission donation: One gently used book to support school classroom libraries.

Beth Gambro

A literacy consultant, teacher, reading specialist, IRC member and member of the Yorkville Public Library Board of Trustees, Beth Gambro is a dynamic and motivating speaker. She is an inspirational teacher and leader in areas of writing across the curriculum, best practices in reading, and teacher professional development.





Will County Reading Council

Will County Reading Council is committed to:
promoting the value of literacy in our society;
encouraging professional growth among educators by
connecting them to best practices in the classroom;
and providing leadership in the field of literacy.

*Membership in Will County Reading Council
includes membership in Illinois Reading
Council.*

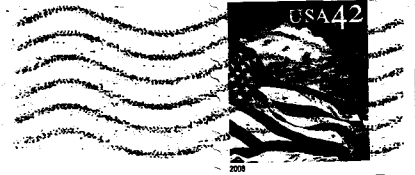
Visit www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org to join.

*Benefits of membership in Will County
Reading Council include:*

- *Professional Development opportunities*
- *The Award-winning Illinois Reading Council Journal — 4 issues per year*
- *Networking with other Reading Professionals*
- *Advocacy of current research and information about reading*
- *Scholarships, Grants & Awards*
- *Innovative & Inspiring Professional Conferences*

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C/O Deborah Augsburger
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