



Secondary Reading League Charting the Course for Adolescent Literacy

Volume I
Issue 2

March, 2008

Upcoming Events:

- April 17— SRL's Book Talk Time
- March 13-15—IRC
- November 8—32nd Day of Reading

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Blizzard conditions didn't keep Lisa Vahey away!

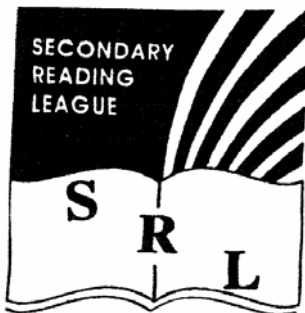
Neither rain, nor sleet, nor blinding snow kept Lisa Vahey from coming out to provide an outstanding evening of professional development for SRL members and guests. And like the mail service, Lisa delivered!

On January 29th, despite treacherous weather conditions, Lisa met with participants at the Holiday Inn in Willowbrook to lead the audience through interactive activities; reflecting and discussing the impact of teachers' effectiveness on student achievement.

Using an excerpt from, *Linking Teacher Evaluation and Student Learning*, by Pamela D. Tucker and James H. Stronge (ASCD), Lisa provided time for participants to read, reflect, write and physically get out of their seats and discuss their reactions to the article, along with their own professional experiences.

While the weather outside was deplorable, the atmosphere inside heated up from the lively discussions in which Lisa engaged participants. Lisa's passion for her profession was evident throughout her presentation from her energy and enthusiasm.

Lisa Vahey is the founder of the New Teachers Network at the Center for Urban School Improvement at the University of Chicago. She is a former Chicago Public schools teacher and Area Literacy Coach.



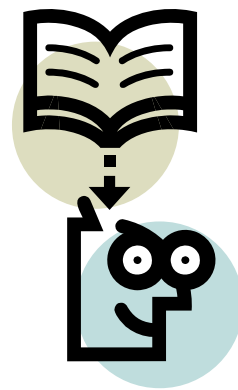
Flood Waters Damage Watseka Schools; You Can Help

Only two of Iroquois County CUSD 9's five schools escaped damage from the floodwaters that hit this small town of 6,000 residents during the second week of January. One school lost its library, another its heating system. Building damage was extensive.

IEA members interested in helping Unit 9 Education Association teachers refurbish their classrooms can send donations to local co-presidents Urszula Zumwalt or Linda Schroeder at Wanda Kendall Elementary School, 535 E. Porter Ave., Watseka, IL 60970.

Book Review

Pulitzer-winning author and activist Alice Walker faces all the might and ugliness of war head on in her title, *Why War is Never a Good Idea*. In picture book format and with clear and easy to understand language, war and its consequences become vivid, real and easily understood. While even the youngest reader will comprehend the message, this is a book for all ages! The author's concern over violence is strengthened by illustrator Stefano Vitale's brilliant jewel-toned paintings that fill the pages edge to edge. *Why War is Never a Good Idea* will stir your soul and touch your heart with its timeless warning that war destroys and leaves no one and no thing untouched. This is a title to share and talk about!



What a cruel thing is war...to fill our hearts with hatred instead of love for our neighbors, and to devastate the fair face of this beautiful world."

Robert E. Lee

Good historical fiction finds insight and understanding in unexpected places. Often opening the door to unique and unfamiliar points of view, these stories can open our eyes and expand our horizons. Using a meticulously researched setting of home-front WWII, new author Ellen Klages brings us the coming of age story of two girls. New arrival Dewey has been dubbed "Screwy Dewey" because of treks to a local dump site where she scrounges materials for mechanical inventions. Artistic Susie is also shunned because of her stocky built and her perpetual pushiness with classmates. The two misfits are thrown together and the fireworks begin. However, the real story of *The Green Glass Sea* lies in the fact that it is 1943 and the setting is Los Alamos, New Mexico. Suspense, mystery and tension are consistently obvious in day to day life here. The scientists are the best of the best, and along with their families have come to the middle of nowhere at the bid of their government. It is here where they will live, and it is here where work will continue on a top secret project to end World War II. It is here that there are so many secrets! (Mild Language)

In Roland Smith's WWII title, *Elephant Run*, fourteen year old Nick is sent from harm's way in an unstable London to his father and the family's teak plantation in Burma. It is shortly after his arrival that the Japanese invade the remote Burmese elephant village. While his father becomes a POW, Nick is forced to remain with the locals and to serve the new rulers. The situation grows more dangerous daily and Nick knows that he must find a way out. With the help of his new friend Mya, a legendary Buddhist monk and rouge elephant, Nick escapes and sets out to find both his father and Mya's brother. Smith is at his absolute best sharing an era and a world that few readers have ever visited! It is historical fiction, but it is also a thrilling adventure complete with villains, heroes and wild timber elephants!

Meet your officers:



SRL Secretary, Tammy Potts

As a graduate of Illinois State University with an undergraduate degree in Special Education, a Master's Degree in reading from Northern Illinois University, and an advanced certificate in reading. Tammy began her career as an intermediate classroom teacher, taught learning disabilities, and held the title of reading specialist for 30 years. Tammy ended her public school career back in the classroom teaching 8th grade literature.

Tammy was on the Design Team which created the Teacher Academy~Best Practices in Reading Grades 4-8 for the ISBE. She is a member of the DuPage County Regional Office of Education Literacy Team, professor for Loyola University, a church volunteer, and a happy mom and grandma.



IRC *Literacy Unleash the Power*

March 13-15, 2008

We know that adolescents face different reading challenges than their elementary counterparts. Somewhere between 4th and 5th grades, students must shift their focus from learning how to read to reading to learn. Older students face more challenging nonfiction texts in their mostly textbook-centered, content area courses. Some students are able to meet this challenge and adjust their approach, while others may not even know where to begin; therefore, it is imperative that all content area teachers strive to help students develop a more sophisticated set of reading strategies so that they can become more effective textbook readers. Please join SRL President-elect Susanne Faber at IRC on Thursday, March 13th, 1:45 p.m., in the A Lincoln Altgeld room, as she shares her experiences in "Helping Students Navigate Content Area Texts." Also, while you're attending the conference, be sure to look for the SRL registration table. We'll be located in the lobby of the Prairie Convention Center, just outside the exhibit area.



SECONDARY CONFERENCE
CONTENT AREAS – GRADES 6-1
November 8, 2008

**the Secondary Reading League's
32nd Day of Reading**

An EXCLUSIVELY secondary literacy conference in Tinley Park, Illinois

Lois Duncan

YA author of: **Don't Look Behind You, Down a Dark Hall*

Luncheon: **The Road to Becoming a Writer**

Workshops 1&2: **Writing for Young Adults:
Informal Q&A Sessions**

**Who Killed My Daughter? *Stranger With My Face *Hotel for Dogs *Locked in Time *Summer of Fear *Killing Mr. Griffin *I Know What You Did Last Summer*

Cris Tovani

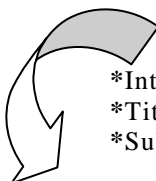
Keynote: **Why is Reading Hard? What Adolescent Readers Say About School Reading**

Workshop 1: **Using Companion Pieces to Anchor Learning**

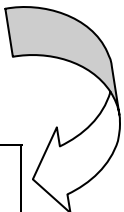
Workshop 2: **Setting a Purpose: The Crux to Determining Importance**

Author of: **I Read It, But I Don't Get It *Do I Really Have to Teach Reading? *Comprehending Content *Thoughtful Reading*

ALL Teachers of Grades 6-12 Should Be Here



*Interdisciplinary/Instructional teams *Teachers of remedial, average, & gifted *Literacy teams
*Title I teachers * Reading & Instructional specialists *Content area, Reading *Librarians
*Subject area coordinators *Media specialists *School & District administrators *Consultants



Join us for dinner and spend the night at the Holiday Inn, Nov. 7

**Visit the Day of Reading Website
www.dayofreading.org**

Sponsors: Lake-Cook Distributors McDougal-Littell
Pearson Longman Prentice Hall
Grace Educational Resources-Heinemann Publishing

Bring your team!!!!
★ Contact Terry McHugh by 10-15-08 for details on team discount
708-220-4544 tmchugh@dayofreading.org

Registration fee received before Oct. 31-SRL member \$110, or Non-member \$145

***** Oct. 31-Nov. 5, SRL member \$120, Non-member \$155; Nov, 6&7 SRL member \$130, Non-member \$165 *****

Bring your school team.

Contact Terry McHugh by 10-15 for details on team discount.

CPS Vendor # 80827

On site registration - \$175

Lois Duncan's & Cris Tovani's books sold & autographed (cash & checks only - **no credit cards or pre-purchased books**)

Location: Holiday Inn Select and Convention Center, 18501 South Harlem Avenue, Tinley Park, IL (W of I-294 off of I-80)

Directions: From I-294, I-57, I-394, and I-90/94: I-80 West to Harlem Avenue North (Exit 148B) Right at first stop light (183rd St.) Right again at Convention Drive. Proceed to Convention Center. (Easy on and off at Harlem)

Contacts: Barbara Chrz-White (847-699-0797) bchrzwhite@comcast.net Terry McHugh (708-220-4544) tmchugh@dayofreading.org

