



Spotlight

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NFRC President's Message

Happy Spring, everyone! We've made it through another long Buffalo winter. It is so refreshing to have longer days and spend more time outside. Seeing more sunshine, hearing the birds chirping, and seeing the flowers and trees awakening are all part of our wonderful spring here in Buffalo.

Spring is also a time to say how much we appreciate those that take care of us every day--in early May it is our teachers; in mid-May, our mothers; and, in June, our fathers. In that same spirit, I would like to say thank you to all of the NFRC officers, board members, and committee chair members. Thank you for your hard work this year on NFRC programming and activities. I would also like to say thank you to all of our members. Thank you for attending our events and supporting NYSRA.

I would also like to say thank you to the four new NFRC board members who have agreed to serve and strengthen our council. Thank you to Maria Nader, Kirsten Smith, Mariah Kramer, and Christina King for joining us.

Last, but not least, I would like to say thank you to the two NFRC spring 2023 award winners: John Strong and Megan Howe. Dr. John Strong won the Service to Reading Award for his continued support of NFRC over the past few years, not only through membership but also as a board member. Dr. Strong has served as the NFRC treasurer for the past few years and, this fall, he helped organize and lead our fall Professional Book Discussion Group. Thank you, John!

Megan Howe won the Certificate of Recognition Award. Meg supports literacy development and the NFRC mission in the Buffalo area by being the owner of and running a local children's bookstore, [Alice](#).

[Ever After](#), near Delaware Park. Thank you Meg for helping the children in the WNY community learn to love books and reading!

Happy Spring,

Ashlee
NFRC President



Ashlee Campbell

NFRC Award Winners!

The NFRC Service to Reading Award for 2023 goes to Dr. John Strong. He is the current NFRC Treasurer since fall of 2020. He joined NFRC in January 2020. He was involved in the fall of 2022 with the organization of a successful NFRC Book Discussion Group. Also during the fall of 2022, he represented the NFRC at a table event at a WNY Fall literacy conference. He actively supports NFRC through his commitment to offer high quality programming and his commitment to promote the mission of NFRC. Congratulations, Dr. John Strong!

The NFRC Certificate of Recognition for 2023 goes to Meg Howe. She is the owner of Alice, Ever After Bookstore on 295 Parkside Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214. She is an independent bookstore owner and is dynamic and enthusiastic plus extremely energetic and supports the community through books and reading. Congratulations, Meg Howe!

Renee Andrzejewski

2023 Volume of The Language and Literacy Spectrum Available Online

by Jennifer Reichenberg and Keli Garas-York, Editors of *The Language and Literacy Spectrum*

We are pleased to present the 2023 volume of *The Language & Literacy Spectrum*, filled with a range of important and inspiring articles. The articles in this volume address literacy theory, literacy coaching, children's literature, and writing instruction.

Christine Lare and Katarina Silvestri offer readers insight into the enactment of a multi-theoretical approach to teaching literacy in one practicing special education teacher's classroom. Cathy Toll provides guidance for literacy coaches in the form of six rules for coaching teachers under duress. Articles by Vicki Luther and the team of Kathleen Olmstead, Peter Kalenda, Logan Rath, Jeffrey Xue, and Jie Zhang provide suggestions for teaching with high-quality children's literature. Luther proposes titles to teach self-awareness, while Olmstead and colleagues offer books to inspire activism and equity. Ted Kesler and the team of Zoi Philippakos, Penelope Wiese, and Adalea Davis address the complexity of explicit writing instruction. Kesler follows four second grade teachers as they enact explicit instruction in the writing process as part of an author study, including multimodal analysis and composition. Philippakos and colleagues outline the reciprocal relationship between reading comprehension and writing composition using a strategic, genre-based approach.

The latest volume is linked here: <https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/lis/>

We invite you to read, reflect, and respond by submitting your own manuscript for consideration in future volumes. The next deadline is February 1, 2024.

Habitat for Humanity

NFRC continues to partner with Habitat for Humanity to provide books and bookcases to families receiving a Habitat for Humanity house. This is a wonderful partnership that allows NFRC to give new books and a new bookcase to each family as they move into their new home. Everyone at NFRC loves books and we want all children to have access to books, not only at school and the library, but in their homes.

This spring, NFRC donated books and bookcases to two families. The parents and children living in the homes each received a few books. Questions or donations, please contact Ashlee Campbell (ashleeb@buffalo.edu).

The Facts, Please

I have had an internal argument from when I still worked as a teacher. Much instruction was directed at deeper thinking and the process of figuring things out. My problem was about the seeming abandonment of factual information. I know test questions shouldn't always ask about simple units of information, but those tests are the end evaluation and may have affected education by diminishing the importance of solid facts.

Embracing "Shallow" Thinking is a recent article by Kevin S. Krahenbuhl and John Lando Carter (Educational Leadership, April 2023). Their focus centers on "taking time to build foundational knowledge." If there is going to be long-term retention and deeper learning, there needs to be a delivery of basic facts first.

They suggest strategies while working in the "shallows", or presenting basic information. Time must be spent on foundational information to assure understanding and retention of higher order knowledge. A too-quick delivery of lower level ideas may rob students of the ability to understand more complex thinking.

One strategy is to reframe factual knowledge as essential. Simple pretests can do this. Grades do not have to be assigned, but shallow understanding should at least be checked.

Another strategy is retrieval practice. Starting a class with a quick question-and-answer activity helps students pull information out of their minds. Using flash cards is another easy practice. Brain dumps, or writing down everything they know about a topic, is a helpful practice. Another related activity is "two things," which requires students to write down two things they learned the day before. The point is, students should have information ready to pull from their heads without having to look it up. (Example: 12 x 12—the student answers instantly 144.)

The third strategy is to make time for contemplation and "What If" thinking. This idea utilizes two things: known information, and the suggestion of "What would happen if..." This challenges students to wade into deeper thinking from a known base.

Time needs to be spent on factual information and the importance of it in instruction can make the difference in students' success. As the year comes to a close, plans for next year can include the examination of the need for embracing shallow thinking within the time allotted.

Jack Agugliaro, editor

The NFRC Professional Book Discussion Group's Spring 2023 Meetings Welcomed Literacy Professionals from Across the State

The Niagara Frontier Reading Council read and discussed *YOU CAN'T SAY THAT!: Writers for Young People Talk about Censorship, Free Expression, and the Stories They Have to Tell* for its Spring Professional Book Discussion. Following a virtual group discussion that included members of NFRC, NYSRA affiliate chapters, and librarians and children's authors across the state, over forty professionals registered to join us in welcoming renowned historian, author, and international lecturer Leonard S. Marcus for the second meeting of our virtual Spring 2023 Professional Book Discussion Group.

In his illustrated talk on this timely, important topic, Mr. Marcus offered an eye-opening look at the history of censorship in America and deepened our perspective on book censorship past and present—its patterns and consequences, and what can be done to protect young people's right to read.

As we look ahead to the 2023-24 school year, the NFRC welcomes your ideas for professional books to read, current topics to discuss, and formats you recommend for our Professional Book Discussion Group. Reach out to me at judybradburywrites@gmail.com with your comments and suggestions.

Happy, restful summer, everyone!

Judy Bradbury

NFRC Professional Development Chair

!!NFRC 2023-2024 Proposed Officers & Board Members!!

Officers 2023-2024

President - Ashlee Campbell

Past President - Heidi Clarke

Vice President for Programming Needs to be a committee, but should have a committee chairperson/ the VP

Secretary - Jack Agugliaro

Treasurer - Dr. John Strong

Director of Membership - Carol Bush

Finance/Budget Chair

Audit Chair

Board Members for 2022-2024

1. Judy Bradbury
2. Patty Oliphant
3. Christina King
4. Maria Nader

Board Members 2023 - 2025

1. Renee Andrzejewski
2. Lisa Boyd
3. Mariah King
4. Kirsten Burke Smith

Chairperson Positions

Editor of Spotlight- Jack Agugliaro

Web Designer & Editor- Mary Beth Scumaci

Social Media Chair- Blythe Anderson

Council Awards Chair- Renee Andrzejewski

Professional Development Co-Chair- Judy Bradbury

And Co- Chair

Outreach Chair-

Outreach Co-Chair - Judy Bradbury to oversee Little Free Libraries project

CTLE Chair/ Mini Grants Chair - Patricia Oliphant

Nominating Chair - Heidi Clarke

Liaison Chair- Jack Agugliaro

Join NFRC

NIAGARA FRONTIER READING COUNCIL

Become part of a community dedicated to promoting literacy education, encouraging professional development, and providing community service to the WNY area.



NFRC members include

Educators
Administrators
Parents
Education Students
Library Media Specialists
Community Members

Register at
<https://www.thenfrc.org/>

Membership Includes

- Complimentary membership to the New York State Reading Association (NYSRA)
- opportunity to attend other NYSRA events
- Reduced pricing for NFRC events
- Reduced registration for NYSRA's annual conference
- Digital newsletters from NFRC and NYSRA
- PD/CTLE credits
- Professional Book Discussion Group
- Professional Networking

Questions- contact Ashlee
ashleeb@buffalo.edu





NFRC 2022-2023 Officers & Board Members

NFRC Officers 2022-2023

- President - Dr. Ashlee Campbell
- Past President – Heidi Clarke
- Secretary - Jack Agugliaro
- Treasurer - Dr. John Strong
- Director of Membership - Carol Bush

Board Members 2022 - 2024

- Judy Bradbury
- Patty Oliphant
- (open)
- (open)

Board Members 2021 - 2023

- Renee Andrzejewski
- Lisa Boyd
- Christine Woodcock
- Mary Beth Scumaci

Chairperson Positions

Editor of Spotlight- Jack Agugliaro

Web Designer & Editor- Mary Beth Scumaci

Social Media Chair- Blythe Anderson

Council Awards Chair- Renee Andrzejewski

Professional Development Chair- Judy Bradbury

Outreach Chair- VACANT; **Co-Chair:** Judy Bradbury to oversee Little Free Libraries project

CTLE Chair - Patricia Oliphant

Finance / Budget Chair-

Nominating Chair - Comprised of the Board

Liaison Chair- Jack Agugliaro

Audit Chair - VACANT

Western Regional Director 2018-21, NYSRA – Amy DeBlase

About the NFRC:

- We are non-profit educational organization chartered by The International Literacy Association since 1958.
- We are dedicated to the professional development and enhancement of literacy in our community.
- We are involved in professional issues affecting literacy.

NFRC Mission:

Our mission is to promote literacy education, encourage professional development, and provide community service, which fosters literacy within Western New York. We hope to instill a passion for lifelong learning and encourage readers to build a vision of the future.
