

Ken March, Editor

Send any information regarding upcoming speakers or that you would like included in *SPOTLIGHT* to:

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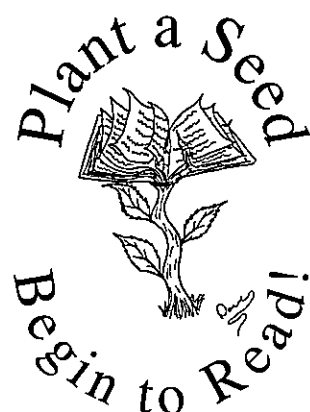
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"Dates To Remember"

Niagara Frontier Reading Council Activities

- February 24 Winter Brunch: "Creating Classrooms That Foster Lively Discussion"; Dr. Janice Almasi (see article page 1)
 - March 1, 2, 3 Delegates' Assembly
 - April Michael Kibby, Ph.D. "Practical Steps For Informing Literacy Instruction: A Diagnostic Decision Making Model." Time and place forthcoming in a flyer (see article page 1).
 - April 28 - May 5 41st Annual International Reading Association Convention. (New Orleans).
 - June 8 Mall Exhibit: "Plant a Seed, Begin to Read," Mall Exhibit (see article page 4)
 - August 19, 20 Fourth Annual "Lessons From Children" (see article page 2)
 - October 5 Annual Fall Conference: Jacque Wuertenberg (see article page 2)
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- February 10 "What Matters: Grassroot Conversations." Whole Language Umbrella Teleconference.
 - May 4 - 5 Retreat at Chautauqua Institute: "Multiple Intelligences." Buffalo Region TAWL Group.



1996 NFRC MALL EXHIBIT

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

by Libby Leeds

The annual mall exhibit is one way to promote Summer reading in the community at large. Much help is needed to make this event a success. You can help by: saving student responses to literature for us to display (all work will be returned), volunteering to read to children, distributing information to parents for one hour at the mall or volunteering to help orchestrate the event. This year the exhibit will take place at the Walden Galleria Mall on Saturday, June 8 during the hours of 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM. To volunteer or for more information, please contact Libby Leeds at 439-8819.

SPOTLIGHT



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Council #35575

Winter 1996



President's Message

by
Patricia Parkinson

A special thank-you on behalf of the entire N.F.R.C. membership goes out to Carol Eberhardt, Conference 1995 Chairperson, and her committee for the many, many hours dedicated to organizing and preparing for the Fall Conference. While the number of participants was disappointing, those who attended enjoyed this event, carried away valuable information and made connections with other professionals. Congratulations on a job well done!

There are three important activities remaining on the 1995-96 calendar of events. Please make every effort to participate and bring another educator with you. Our Winter Brunch will be held on Saturday, February 24, 1996 at the Sheraton Inn Buffalo Airport on Walden Avenue. The speaker will be Janice Almasi. More information can be found in the article in this Spotlight. Mary Shea, our Program Chairperson, has also announced the speaker for our Spring Brunch. Michael Kibby, Ph.D., State University of New York at Buffalo will keynote this event. A separate flyer will be forthcoming, announcing the time and place of this event.

One of the goals for 1995-96 was to see more of our membership involved in council activities. Here is one way you can participate. Our annual community service project, the Mall Exhibit, will be held on June 8, 1996 at the Walden Galleria Mall. In the able hands of Libby Leeds, plans are underway, however, in order for this to be successful, volunteers are needed to read to children, speak to parents about the value of reading and writing etc. Mark this date on your calendar. If you are willing to donate some time to help out, more information is provided in this issue.

Our new slate of officers for 1996-97 is being announced in this issue of Spotlight. I am confident that these individuals will continue their dedication to the Western New York community and education professionals by providing valuable programs and service activities throughout the year. Please consider volunteering your services to assist N.F.R.C. in accomplishing these important undertakings to benefit students, parents and educators.

Mark Your Calendar!!!!

by Mary Shea

NFRC Winter Program February Brunch
Sheraton Inn Buffalo Airport (Galleria Mall)
Saturday - February 24, 1996 - 8:30 a.m.
"Creating Classrooms That Foster Lively Discussion"
Presenter: Janice Almasi

Janice Almasi will present practical ideas for classroom instruction that will help teachers and reading specialists plan for, initiate, and sustain peer discussions of literature. The ideas presented will be linked to theories of social cognition (Vygotsky, 1978) and scaffolded instruction (Rogoff, 1990). Topics such as selecting literature, forming groups, stimulating conversation among students, facilitating interaction, and assessing student's growth will be addressed. Typical scenarios, videos, and transcripts from authentic discussions will be used to illustrate formats for creating lively discussions.

Janice Almasi is a former classroom teacher and reading specialist. She is currently an assistant professor of reading at the University of Buffalo and is affiliated with the National Reading Research Center at the University of Maryland. Her research focuses on patterns of social interaction, discourse, engagement, and cognitive processing during peer discussions of literature. Her research was awarded the International Reading Association's Outstanding Dissertation of the Year Award in 1994 and the National Reading Conference's Outstanding Student Research Award in 1993. Dr. Almasi's work has been published in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *The Journal of Reading Behavior*, and *Educational Psychologist*. Her co-edited book on classroom discussions with Linda B. Gambrell of the University of Maryland will be published by IRA this spring.

See registration form on insert

1996 - 97 Nominations For Slate Of Officers

The nominating committee of the Niagara Frontier Reading Council has announced the slate of officers and board of directors for 1996-97.

Carolyn Peszko Flynn will serve as the council's president. Other officers include: Past President Patricia Parkinson; President-elect Cathleen March; Vice President Bonnie Prunella; Treasurer Lois Bening; Recording Secretary Rene Brock and Corresponding Secretary Libby Leeds. Board of Directors for 1996-97 include Celia Cionek, Rita Pollard, Susan Hirsch and Jeanne Williams.

SPOTLIGHT

Niagara Frontier Reading Council
International Reading Association

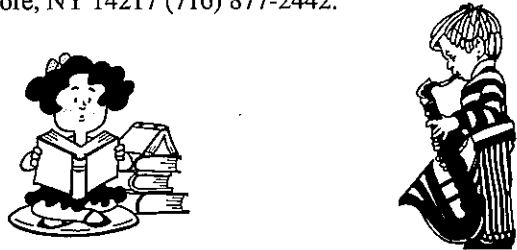
Lilac Lane - Royal Gardens
Buffalo, New York 14094

Call For Street Performers Fourth Annual: "Lessons From Children"

Showcase talents of your students in the fourth annual "Lessons From Children" Conference to be held on August 19 and 20. The committee is seeking children who sing, dance, read a piece of original writing, demonstrate Origami, tell stories or share other talents to conference participants during the lunch hour. Individuals and groups are both welcome.

This conference provides a once in a lifetime opportunity for children to share their talents and abilities with a most appreciative audience of educators and community members involved in literacy learning.

Send names of children (or call) who would like to participate to: Cathleen March, 6801-A Lilac Drive, Lockport NY 14094 (716) 439-1992 or Rene Brock, 247 Hamilton Boulevard, Kenmore, NY 14217 (716) 877-2442.



1996 ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE TO BE HELD OCTOBER 5th

by
Libby Leeds

The Niagara Frontier Reading Council is pleased to announce the speaker for the Annual Fall Conference will be consultant, teacher and author Jacque Wuertenberg. The conference will take place on Saturday, October 5, 1996.

Jacque Wuertenberg is a language arts consultant whose speciality is teaching children, parents and teachers how to become actively involved in language production, reading and writing. Thorough lectures and workshops, students are motivated and encouraged to compose, illustrate, revise, edit and publish their own books. Teachers and parents learn strategies to help student-authorship become an essential, continuing part of the curriculum.

Jacque is a native of St. Louis who literally has a world of teaching experience. As a language arts consultant, she has lectured all over the United States and Canada. As a teacher she has taught students in West Africa while she served in the Peace Corps as well as teaching in Hong Kong and in the United States. As a consultant she coordinated school programs from Florida to Alaska and from Cyprus to Singapore. She is also the author of three books: *Encouraging Writing in the Classroom*, *Helping Children Become Writers*, *Helping Children Become Writers at Home and at School* and the video "The Young Author's Program".

Jacque will be bringing with her many fantastic ideas as well as a great love for teaching. We look forward to her presentation next October. See you there!

Fourth Annual "Lessons From Children"

August 19 - 20, 1996

Hosted by S.U.N.Y. at Buffalo

Cosponsored by Buffalo Public Schools and Sweet Home School District

Kenote Speakers:

Anne Bingham ... multiage education issues
Jo Phoenix ... skills instruction
Diane Snowball ... spelling instruction

Presenters:

Children and Teachers from
Greater Western New York Area

Tradebook Authors

(more information in Spring, 1996 *Spotlight*)

Author's Workshop

(for teachers and graduate teachers-to-be)

Join Dr. Sharon Kulhanek and Dr. Monroe H. Whiting for a week of listening to and chatting informally with authors. This is an opportunity to share ideas with new friends about using pleasure reading books in the classroom.

When: July 8th to July 12th, 1996

Time: Daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Place: Marriott Hotel, Millersport Hwy., Amherst, NY

Continental breakfast, mid-morning and
afternoon break included.

Participants: Limited, 100

Participating Authors:

Brod Bagert: *Let Me Be...The Boss* • *Chicken Socks*
Elephant Games

Rebecca Kai-Dotlich: *Sweet Dreams of the Wild*,
Poems for Bedtime

Natalie Walsh: *Making Books Across the Curriculum*
Easy Book Making Projects

Ginny Kroll: *Naomi Knows it's Springtime* • *Masai and I*
I Got a Family • *Hats Off to Hair*

Monroe Whiting: *The Poetry Packet*

Chris Demarest: *Benedict Goes to the Beach* • *My Blue Boat*
My Little Red Car • *No Peas For Nellie*

Steven Kellogg: *Pinkerton Behave!* • *Chicken Little*

Paul Bunyon: *A Tall Tale* • *Island of the Skog*
Can I Keep Him?

Jim McKenna: *Story Reader*

Frank Hodge: *Hodge Podge Books:*
What's New in Books For Kids

For registration form please contact Mr. Whiting, Canisius College, School of Education & Human Services; 2001 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14208

Niagara Frontier Reading Council's 1995 Fall Conference Highlights

by Carol C. Eberhardt



Carole Brox, Mary Georger and Lois Bening enjoy a "Rainforest Breakfast" at N.F.R.C.'s fall conference

Author-illustrator Lynne Cherry, story-reader Jim McKenna and entertainer Glenn Colton all contributed to a wonderful celebration of our "Journey to Literacy" on Saturday, October 21 at Benjamin Franklin Elementary School. Ms. Cherry's presentation, which included slides and videos, implored us to teach our children well, that this is our only world and that we need to be good to our planet. Mr. McKenna offered many interesting and practical suggestions for bringing good literature into our children's environment and Glenn Colton presented an "environmental awareness" theme in his performance.



Fall conference: Pat Brown and Nancy Svensson, conference committee members chat with author Lynn Cherry.

An extraordinary "Breakfast in the Rain Forest", planned and presented by chairperson Carol Eberhardt and co-chair Julianne Drake delighted attendees. The day included an exemplary display of children's artwork coordinated by Benjamin Franklin Elementary librarian, Pat Brown, who also functioned as co-chair. Past president Mary Shea organized book sales with Barnes and Noble and publishing company exhibits, organized by Mary Georger, rounded out a conference which received overwhelming ratings of "outstanding" in all categories. Many thanks to Barbara Iannarelli, whose hard work allowed pre-registration and on-site registration to go smoothly for all! The conference concluded with a raffle, organized by Julianne Drake; over thirty winners left with prizes related to our on-going "Journey to Literacy."

Niagara Frontier Reading Council offers a sincere thank you to Ty C. Federick for all of the effort and energy required of him as he opened his school to NFRC, and to Dr. Robert McClure, Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda School District superintendent, who welcomed us and encouraged us to continue in our commitment to literacy for all.

Title I Update

by
Bonnie Prunella

Many school districts weathered the recent cuts in Title I programs this year. Federally funded programs will face another reduction in the third year of the reauthorization plan. The New York State Education Department put together a statewide plan for Title I programs and they will continue to monitor a program's efficacy through year end reports.

In order to assist schools in providing quality programs, New York State is forming School Support Teams, who's goal will be to work cooperatively with schools wishing to establish school-wide programs. School Support Teams will be made up of teachers, administrators, representatives from professional organizations, representatives from colleges and universities, and others who are knowledgeable about current research and practices in teaching.

One of the goals of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1995 (IASA) is to make professional development a major focus in schools. Schools receiving Title I funds must provide for professional development in their Title I plan. This inservice must address the daily work of the educators and improve their knowledge of new strategies for instruction, managing the classroom and working with parents. Regular classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff members who work with Title I children must be included in this professional development.

Both of these efforts, School Support Teams and local professional development plans, will play a key role in helping disadvantaged children achieve high standards in their education. These efforts are critical to improving teaching and learning in our schools.

Spring Brunch

Mary Shea, Program Chairperson has announced that Michael Kibby, Ph.D. will be the guest speaker at the Spring Brunch. He will discuss his recent publication, "Practical Steps for Informing Literacy Instruction: A Diagnostic Decision Making Model," the International Reading Association Book Selection for October, 1995. Because many teachers have adopted wholistic, child-centered or literature-based instructional rationales and now assume full responsibility for designing reading instruction for each individual in their class, Michael Kibby, an experienced clinician who works closely with teachers in the school setting, has created a cognitive organizer of the components and strategies important to successful reading and a schema for evaluating each student's reading proficiency in a rational and efficient fashion. He will share his easy to follow flow chart that guides teachers through the process of assessing and evaluating student's reading strategies and abilities, evaluating instructional materials and developing diagnostic teaching sessions for the purpose of designing appropriate reading instruction.

A separate mailing will announce the time and place of this brunch

Legislation Report September, 1995

by
Carolyn Peszko Flynn

Maureen Goodwin reported that NYSRA has hired a government relations firm, CARR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, to assist the organization in glean information and working with the legislative bodies in Albany. Bill Carr, president, has many years experience working with the State Board of Education.

They will be responsible for sending a letter and brochure explaining the mission and goals of NYSRA to the state legislators in early January. This is the first of several statements that will be prepared and sent including position papers regarding how reading could and should be taught in New York State schools. The organization is presenting its position that phonics is only one strategy effective readers use and that a balanced approach should be emphasized. This action is being taken in response to a bill that is being presented to the legislature that states phonics is to be the primary and only way that reading should be taught in New York State.

Maureen stressed advocacy. We cannot let the politicians make educational decisions and not allow these decisions to be tied up with funding issues. She stressed we need to address the political climate at the national level as well, particularly in regard to proposed cuts. A key figure we need to address in New York State is Senator D'Amato. Hand written letters from the heart, supporting educational funding, will mean more than form letters. The proposed cuts are draconian and we still have time to write.

A special session was planned for the NYSRA Conference at the Concord where representatives from each Council were asked to attend and offer their ideas and thoughts.