



St. Louis Suburban Council
of the
INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION



September 2011

Recipient of the Honor Council & Show Me Awards

Message from the President

On behalf of the St. Louis Suburban Council of the IRA (SLSC-IRA), it is my pleasure to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to you as we begin another exciting school year. August and September seem to be the time to reconnect with coworkers and friends and welcome new friends into our schools. It is my hope that we will have new members that we will also welcome at SLSC-IRA.

The theme for our program this year is “School-wide Literacy: Charged for Change”. In the midst of all of the educational changes (e.g., adoption of Common Core Standards) and reform issues that are occurring in our profession, it will be important to think about the implications of the changes that will be taking place. How does that impact *our* work on a daily basis? I believe that we have a program this year that will keep many of these issues in the forefront and will hopefully help us to take on more teacher leadership roles to address the many issues that we confront in our teaching and learning environments on a daily basis.

Speaking of change, one significant change you will notice immediately is a much smaller newsletter. Our Executive Board will always strive to be open in our communication with you about what is happening in our council. However, we will be using our website to do much more of that communication. Remember, the website is www.stlsuburbanreading.org. Be sure and visit the website if you have not lately. We hope that you like the new format of the newsletter. It is a cost-saving move on our part in terms of printing and distribution; it helps us to go a little “greener” for the environment; and it helps us to increase traffic to our website.



Again, welcome to a new school year and I hope that it is productive, successful, and FULL of reading and writing, for both you AND your students!

Mitzi Brammer, Ph.D.
President
mbrammer@ssdmo.org

Abstract of:

Building a Strong Foundation for Writer’s Workshop with Writer’s Notebooks
Sarah Valter

One very engaging way in which we can get our young writers to explore writing is through the use of a Writer’s Notebook, a personalized notebook in which they can explore their own ideas, styles and genres of writing. The beginning of the school year is a great time to introduce “notebooking” to your students (with the added bonus of great anecdotal data about your students as writers early in the year!). You can get started this fall with a few easy steps:

1. Have students decorate their notebooks to personalize them and take ownership.
2. Establish routines, including when students will write in the notebooks and how you would like for students to use them.
3. Model maintaining your own Writer’s Notebook. Excellent ideas for helping you and your students get started can be found in the children’s series *Amelia’s Notebook* and in Ralph Fletcher’s book *A Writer’s Notebook: Unlocking the Writer within You*.

Ralph Fletcher has written, “Keeping a writer’s notebook is one of the best ways I know of living a writing kind of life.” May you and your students have a wonderful “writing kind of life” this new school year!

To read the full-length article on Writer’s Notebooks and other professional articles, please visit <http://www.stlsuburbanreading.org/professional-articles/>.

Abstract of:

**Revisiting SSR: The Implications for Educators
and Students**
Mitzi Brammer, Ph.D.

In light of the National Reading Panel's findings in 2000, many schools and districts dropped the practice of sustained silent reading (SSR) because the belief was that students needed more time devoted to explicit, systematic instruction. If students are reading to themselves, then the assumption is that they must not be learning skills and strategies. However, part of explicit, systematic, *quality* instruction is the provision of guided and independent practice for skill generalization. I hold that along with other strategies, SSR can provide this generalization.

The typical elementary school class spends less than 10 percent of its total reading instruction on independent silent reading (Krashen, 2004). Less than one-third of 13-year-olds are daily readers, which represents a 14% decline from twenty years earlier (Gallagher, 2009). These are frightening statistics. Not only will SSR afford students the time and the venue for skill generalization, research has shown that when students are given time for silent sustained reading, they do as well or better in reading comprehension tasks than students given traditional skill-based instruction (Krashen, 2004).

This article talks about the implications of SSR for educators and students. What is needed to make sure that sustained silent reading works for students, to not only increase their reading skills, but affectively, their *love of reading*? Check out the rest of this article on our website: www.stlsuburbanreading.org under the professional articles tab. We would love to hear your comments on how SSR works in your school/district.

Abstract of:

Web Wonders
Mary-Eileen Rufkahr

With the dawn of the new school year, there are also lots of "new" websites to discover and implement in your classroom. In **Web Wonders**, find out about a site packed with learning activities for beginning readers, a chance to animate your anagrams, poetry

for each day of the school year and how to "stumble" without feeling and looking foolish!

Abstract of:

Legislative Report
Mary-Eileen Rufkahr

The hallways of the state capitol have been quiet during the summer break session, but it is expected Governor Nixon will call a special session in mid-September on tax credits. Earlier in the summer, the Governor announced a round of state funding withholds/reductions for the upcoming school year, including one on pupil transportation. Stay alert for 2011-2012 dates when local teacher groups in St. Louis and St. Charles will sponsor meet and greet sessions with legislators.

St. Louis Suburban Council
2010-2011 Literacy Mini-Grant Winner
By Sarah Valter

St. Louis Suburban IRA awarded a \$500.00 Literacy Mini-Grant for the 2011-12 school year to Wendy Smith from Northview School, a Special School District school for students in grades 9-12+, for her project "Teens as Teachers of Literacy." This project will allow a team of teachers to conduct a career class in which high school students are taught about child development and literacy. These high school students will then work with elementary children from local schools to teach literacy lessons and implement service learning projects. Mini-grant funds will purchase professional texts for book studies within the class and will provide supplies for literacy lessons with children. This mini-grant was awarded at the 2011 Suburban Council's Spring Banquet.

For information on guidelines and applications for the St. Louis Suburban IRA Literacy Mini-Grant for the 2012-2013 school year. Please visit www.stlsuburbanreading.org and locate the Mini-Grant information on the right side of the homepage.

Abstract of:

2011 Spring Banquet
“Five Facts About the Reading Brain and
What They Mean for the Classroom”
Sarah Valter

The St. Louis Suburban Council of the IRA ended a successful 2010-11 year by hosting a joint meeting with the Mid-Rivers Council IRA. This Spring Banquet featured speaker Willy Wood. Attending educators from both the St. Louis Suburban IRA council and the visiting Mid-Rivers IRA council enjoyed a delicious dinner, hosted by Maryville University and board member Dr. Dan Rocchio, and had the opportunity to explore the 2010-11 Honor Council and Show-Me Award Binders.

Willy Wood’s presentation “Five Facts About the Reading Brain and What They Mean for the Classroom” focused on the latest research-based strategies for reaching readers using knowledge about how the brain works. The evening’s theme was emphasized with “brainy” table decorations of golden heads prepared by the hardworking Banquet Committee. The council is also appreciative of the evening’s Publisher’s Display sponsored by Carla Nieman, Area Representative for The Booksource, Heineman, and Benchmark Education Company and Developmental Studies Center.

To read more about speaker Willy Wood and his presentation “Five Facts About the Reading Brain and What They Mean for the Classroom”, please visit www.stlsuburbanreading.org/.



Willie Wood and Betty Porter Walls at the Spring Banquet with a “brainy” table decoration



A GLIMPSE of the
2011-2012 Calendar
St. Louis Suburban Council of IRA

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

St. Louis Suburban Council Meeting
 Where: Ladue Middle School
 When: (5:00-7:30)
 Presenter: Alan Sitomer
 Topic: Literacy and
 Boys/Adolescents

Saturday, October 8, 2011

“Literacy for All” Mini-Conference
 Where: Harris-Stowe University
 William Clay Early Childhood
 Development Center
 When: 8:00-3:00

November 3-4, 2011

Missouri Early Learning Conference
 Tan-Tar-A Resort, Lake of the Ozarks

Thursday, November 10, 2011

St. Louis Suburban Council Meeting
 Where: Ladue Middle School
 When: 5:00-7:30
 Presenter: Mark Overmeyer
 Topic: “Reaching the Reluctant
 Writer”

**For more information for all
 our events go to:**

www.stlsuburbanreading.org



Thursday, February 16, 2012

St. Louis Suburban Council Meeting
February Event/ Poster Contest

Where: Ladue Middle School

When: 5:00-7:30

Presenters: Panel Discussion with
 small group breakout

Topic: "Literacy Instruction That
 Works"

March 1-3, 2012

Write to Learn Conference
 Tan-Tar-A Resort,
 Osage Beach, Missouri

April 2012

St. Louis Suburban Council
 Spring Banquet & general meeting
 "Comprehension Across the Grades"
 Where: To be announced
 When: To be announced

April 29-May 2, 2012

International Reading Association,
 57th Annual Conference
 McCormick Place West Building
 Chicago, Illinois

**For more information for all our
 events go to:**

www.stlsuburbanreading.org

Reading Poster Contest

Kathleen McDonnell

We hope you will encourage your students to participate in the 2011-2012 St. Louis Suburban IRA Reading Poster Contest again this year. The judging will be held during our February 2012 council meeting. Everyone who attends the meeting will be asked to vote on the best poster in each category. The categories are: K-2nd grades, 3rd-5th grades, 6th-8th grades, & 9th-12th grades. The rule Missouri State Council-IRA (MSC-IRA) guidelines can also be found on the MSC/IRA website. (www.missourireading.org) The newest rule will be for the parents or caretakers to give written permission to show the posters and the winners will be listed in the newsletter and online. We hope everyone will participate.

Abstract of:

The New Look of Penny-A-Page

First Book-St. Louis' signature fundraiser "Penny-A-Page" is gearing up for an exciting year with an extra reading week, a new look to its materials and a possible new incentive for students who participate. Schools may now have a choice of either or both of the following reading weeks: **October 31 - November 6** or **February 27 - March 4**. We hope your school or classroom will join us in our efforts to get students to read more while helping children from low-income families own their first new book. *For more information go to: www.stlsuburbanreading.org.*

2011 Literacy for All Conference

Mark your calendars to attend this year's "**Literacy for All Conference: School-wide Literacy Charged for Change**" on **Saturday, October 8, 2011, 8:00am-3:00, on the campus of Harris-Stowe State University (HSSU)**. A stellar group of presenters will share research-based information on topics such as literacy for pre-schoolers, motivational strategies for middle and high school, vocabulary and comprehension strategies, and multicultural literature. For a minimal registration of \$25.00, you'll have breakfast and lunch, attend interesting sessions, receive a comprehensive conference handbook, visit with publishing companies and other vendors and authors. Join HSSU's College of Education and our St. Louis Suburban Council IRA for a powerful learning experience. **Don't miss this event!**

See the detailed brochure and registration form on our website, www.STLSuburbanReading.org. For information, contact Betty Porter Walls drbpwalls@earthlink.net or Mitzi Brammer MBrammer@ssd.org.



HARRIS-STOWE STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Education
and
St. Louis Suburban Council
INTERNATIONAL READING
ASSOCIATION



LITERACY FOR ALL CONFERENCE

“School-Wide Literacy, Charged for Change”

Saturday, October 8, 2011

7:00 am Registration

8:00 am – 3:00 pm Conference

Join us for an information rich, research-based literacy conference.

\$25.00 REGISTRATION

William L. Clay, Sr. Early Childhood Development/Parenting Education Center
Harris-Stowe State University
10 N. Compton Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63103

Conference Chairpersons/Contacts

Betty Porter Walls, Ph.D. - drbowalls@earthlink.net; wallsb@hssu.edu

Mitzi Brammer, Ph.D. – Mbrammer@ssdmo.org

REGISTRATION FORM

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
School Name/Agency		District
Address		
City	State	Zip Code
E-mail Address		

Make checks payable to St. Louis Suburban IRA.

Mail check and registration form to:

Jody Rozbicki
16735 Highland Summit Drive
Wildwood, MO 63011

Registration confirmation sent via e-mail. If you would like a confirmation, please provide e-mail address.

Registration Deadline: October 3, 2011

St. Louis Suburban Council
membership
includes your membership to
Missouri State Council of
International Reading Association

**St. Louis Suburban Council
of the
International Reading Association
August 2011 - August 2012**



Does not include membership in International Reading Association

Regular individual membership \$18.00 each person

Partners membership \$15.00 each person

2-4 individuals join together - Checks and applications from partners should be mailed in together.

Literacy Team Membership \$12.00 each person

5 or more individuals from one school join together-

Checks and applications from all team members should be mailed in together.

Student or Retiree membership \$8.00 each person

Save \$3.00 each!

Save \$6.00 each
Or \$30.00 per team!

St. Louis Suburban Council IRA Membership Application

August 2011 - August 2012

*All information with an * is required! If you do not have an email address, please indicate that on the form*

Last name* First name* Middle initial*

Home address* City* State* Zip code*

() () ()
Home phone* Cell phone School phone if not retired*

Primary e-mail address* secondary e-mail address or check I do not have an email address

School District if not retired* School name if not retired*

Position (Check any that apply)*

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre K/Elementary Classroom Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> College Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. High/Middle School Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Coach | <input type="checkbox"/> College Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Librarian | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |


Check Membership category and dues*

- \$18.00 Regular individual membership
 \$15.00 Partners membership
 \$12.00 Literacy team membership
 \$ 8.00 Full time student or retiree

New Member*
 (2011-2012 membership year)
 Renewal*

Are you a member of the International Reading Association? _____
 If **yes**, please indicate your IRA Membership number* _____ Expiration date _____
 If **no**, would you like to receive information about International Reading Association membership? ___ Yes ___ No

Please make checks payable to: St. Louis Suburban IRA

Mail to: 
 Jody Rozbicki
 IRA Membership Director
 16735 Highland Summit Dr.
 Wildwood, MO. 63011

PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

To contact Jody (membership chair)
Call: Home phone: 636-458-0004

ATTENTION

 Please check if you would like to receive your newsletter by e-mail rather than by U.S. Mail.
 E-mail address to which you would like your newsletter sent:



Fortune Befriends the Bold: Being a Passionate, Purposeful Educator

Alan Sitomer, in addition to being an inner-city high school English teacher and former professor in the Graduate School of Education at Loyola Marymount University, is a nationally renowned speaker specializing in engaging reluctant readers. He was named California’s 2007 Teacher of the Year; and he received the 2004 award for Classroom Excellence from the Southern California Teachers of English and the 2003 Teacher of the Year honor from California Literacy. In April 2007, Alan was also named Educator of the Year by Loyola Marymount University and in February 2008 The Insight Education Group named Alan Sitomer the Innovative Educator of the Year.

Mr. Sitomer has also authored 11 books to date for esteemed publishers such as Disney, Scholastic, Penguin/Putnam, and RB Education. These include six young adult novels, three children’s picture books, two teacher methodology books, and a classroom curriculum series for secondary English Language Arts instruction called The Alan Sitomer BookJam. In the past he’s been honored by the American Library Association (the A.L.A. named Homeboyz a Top Ten Book of the Year 2008, receiving the prestigious ALA Quick Pick Recognition for young adult novel which best engages reluctant readers) and within the next 18 months Alan will have four new titles hitting the shelves. His website is <http://www.alanlawrencemitomer.com/>.

Mr. Sitomer is currently on sabbatical from the classroom as he works to re-shape literacy education through policy dialogue, professional development workshops, and authoring new materials for classroom use. His next release, NERD GIRLS, will be available from Disney in June.

This session will focus on engaging adolescent readers and particularly, boys.

Alan Sitomer is sponsored by Plugged-in to Reading and Book Jam, Diane Sanderson, Sales Representative.



When: Tuesday, September 27, 2011
 Where: Ladue Middle School Cafeteria
**** Enter building from front doors/lobby area. Security doors will be unlocked.**

RSVP: Tuesday, September 21, 2011

- Menu: Mexican Delight
- ❖ Soft and hard taco shells
 - Meat and chicken with all the fixings
 - ❖ Nachos with cheese and guacamole sauce
 - ❖ Seasoned rice and refried beans
 - ❖ Apple crisp
 - ❖ Ice tea, lemonade and water

- Agenda:
- 4:30-5:00 Registration, Networking, and Publisher’s Display
 - 5:00-6:00 Dinner
 - 5:30-6:00 Business Meeting
 - 6:00-7:15 Alan Sitomer
 - 7:15-7:30 Door Prizes and Closing

Publisher’s display sponsored by Plugged-in to Reading and Book Jam, Diane Sanderson, Sales Representative

**September 27, 2011 Reservation Form
 St. Louis Suburban Council IRA
 Fall Council Meeting**

Last name	First name	Middle initial
Street	City	State/Zip
Home phone	School phone	
E-mail address	District and School	

- I am a member and plan to eat dinner. \$8.00 _____
- I am a non-member and plan to eat dinner. \$9.00 _____
- I am a non-member attending without dinner. \$5.00 _____
- I am a member, but not eating dinner. \$0.00 _____

All reservations must be received by September 21, 2011

*For reservations or questions contact:
 Jody Rozbicki at:
 636-458-0004 (home) or 314-983-5520 (school)*

*Mail completed form and check payable to
 “St. Louis Suburban IRA”*

Mail to:

Jody Rozbicki
 16735 Highland Summit Dr.
 Wildwood, MO, 63011

Mitzi Brammer
2142 Autumn Wood Drive
St. Charles, MO 63303



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September 2011 Issue

Inside this issue you will find either the full article or an abstract of the article.
To read the articles in their entirety, go to our website:

www.stlsuburbanreading.org



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RSVP for the September council meeting and dinner are due by September 21, 2011.