

Table of Contents.....

Volume 12, Number 1, 2005

LOIS E. HOLE	2	Lois Barranoik
FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK	3	Dianne Dunse
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	5	Irene Masciuch
PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	6	Rhonda Hunter
NEWSLINE		
From the Regionals	8	
LRC Starts Alberta Library	13	Fern Reirson
ARTICLES		
Aboriginal Children's Literature in the Classroom	14	Joyce Purdy
Journeys Without End	20	Kenneth Oppel
Fractured Fairy Tales: Or, You Want to Do What to the Library?	22	Cathy M. Yusep
Mother-Daughter Teacher-Librarian Team	25	Linda Shantz-Keresztes
Staying Faithful to Our Mission: 100 Years of Teaching	27	Barbara Brydges
Information Literacy Skills in a Teacher Education Program		
Wired for Words: An Online Youth Book Club for Avid Readers	29	Linda Shantz-Keresztes
PROFESSIONALLY SPEAKING		
2005 Alberta Library Conference	33	Irene Masciuch
Kaleidoscope 8	36	Dianne Dunse
2005 AGM Minutes	39	Pat Ropchan
SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS		
A Year in the Life of an AISI Teacher-Librarian Consultant	42	Ellen Sears
Teacher-Librarians and the City Centre Education Project: A Collaborative Model	48	Anne McClement
Role of the Teacher-Librarian	50	<i>Learning Resources Council Handbook</i>
Glimmers of Hope	55	Dianne Harke, Debi Ruhl and Stephen Abram
International Collaboration: Japanese School Library Association Comes to Canada	58	Fern Reirson
A Message from Alberta Milk	60	Pamela Drinnan
School Libraries and Teacher-Librarians 2003/04	62	Statistics Canada
National School Library Day	66	Pat Ropchan
Literature and the New Social Studies Program of Studies	68	Early Childhood Education Council
AWARDS		
Laurence G. Wiedrick Award Acceptance Speech	70	Lois Barranoik
Historic Data for LRC	71	Kaye Steward
<i>Focus on Inquiry</i> Wins International Recognition	76	Dianne Oberg
NOTES		
LRC Name Change	78	
LRC's Website	78	
Good Books, Not So Good Books	78	Teddy Moline

Lois E. Hole.....



Fondly Remembering the Honourable Dr. Lois E. Hole, C.M., A.O.E. Lieutenant Governor of Alberta

THE HONOURABLE LOIS HOLE WAS THE EPITOME OF GRACE, generosity and compassion. The “Queen of Hugs” represented all that was, and is, good about Alberta. Her love of the arts and her belief in libraries and public education continue to encourage all of us who consistently advocate for appropriate funding and staffing in school libraries. She was an author and a gardener, but, most importantly, she was someone who loved people. When she passed away on January 6, 2005, the entire province mourned.

In 2003, Lois Hole received the Learning Resources Council Award of Merit. Given annually by the Learning Resources Council, this award recognizes the nominated individual for his or her outstanding contribution to the promotion of school library programs. Her Honour was a worthy recipient based on her promotion and encouragement of library use and collection building through the Lois Hole Library Legacy Program. This program “invites friends to help build the collections in all Alberta libraries,” including school libraries. “The Legacy Program allows for a donation in the donor’s own name, or to honour a friend, family member or organisation” (www.visityourlibrary.net/lhlp/). As educational professionals, we know that well-developed collections assist with resource-based instruction in our school programs and encourage students to read, to be challenged, to be inspired and to gather ideas for their own writing. Her gracious

acceptance of the Award of Merit emphasized the integral role of libraries in society and the necessity for their survival to ensure a positive future for our children. This belief in a better future was eloquently stated by Her Honour and can be found on the website promoting the Lois Hole Care and Nurture Legacy Fund (www.holesonline.com/memloishole.asp):

I have faith in a better future, because I have faith that most human beings want to do the right thing. If we can put aside differences of ideology, if we can learn to love one another, then one day we will enjoy a world where no one need live in fear, where no one need go hungry, where everyone can enjoy a good education, the fellowship of friendly neighbours, and the security of a world at peace with itself at long last.

Listening to the Honourable Lois Hole speak made me proud to be a teacher and a librarian. Although she is gone, her memory and her ideas live on. Text from the Lois E. Hole Annual Lecture in Public Education may be found at www.publicschools.ab.ca/Public/loishole.htm. I encourage everyone to take the time to visit this website.

—Lois Barranoik

From the Editor's Desk.....



A GAIN, I CANNOT PUBLISH THIS journal without making any comments. I am the acquisition director who collects and compiles articles that LRC members and friends send to me, but with all that knowledge and

those great ideas, it is hard not to have an opinion.

We dedicate this issue to our beloved Lieutenant Governor, Lois Hole, who sadly passed away earlier this year. She was a strong supporter of libraries; she was always available to promote our positions in schools. She was a friend indeed. Kevin Taft, provincial Liberal leader, said we must “continue to nurture the garden of flowers and people that she planted.” How true! We teacher-librarians must continue to nurture the garden of libraries that she promoted. Thank you, Lois Hole, for the wonderful memories you gave us.

The article entitled “Glimmers of Hope” is a good sign that we are making slow but sure headway. We will be a big part of the education system someday! Wherever our members are serving as teacher-librarians, teachers and principals are seeing the difference. Students have always seen the difference, so they will just be better served.

Our minister of education understands the value of libraries and teacher-librarians; let's hope government will provide school boards with the necessary funding for all schools in the province.

To promote teacher-librarianship, use the included nomination form to spotlight a special person. Give us the information and we will spread the word. Also, inform teachers, who are interested in the school library as a profession, of the bursaries and grants available for educational courses. The application for the Learning Resources Research Grant can be found in the handbook at www.learningresources.ab.ca. There is also the Dianne Oberg Graduate Prize in Teacher-Librarianship which can be applied for with a letter of application and curriculum vitae to the Graduate Coordinating Committee, Department of Elementary Education, University of Alberta. The prize is awarded annually and applications are due September 1 of each year.

The executive members' e-mail addresses only are printed in this issue. I hope that this is all one really needs for communication. This leaves less chance for mistakes and problems when school and home addresses change in the long year between issues. Please send comments if this is not adequate, and we will change in the next issue.

In Edmonton, we have had a few celebrations. Following are photos from those fun gatherings.

The next issue is one year away. Keep the *Teacher-Librarian Today* in mind and remember to contribute whatever is pertinent to our members. Submissions are welcome any time during the year for publication in October 2006.

—Dianne Dunse, Acquisition Director

Teacher-Librarian Reunions



A great gathering of retired teacher-librarians from the Edmonton area was held at the U of A in September 2004. Two grand ladies from our teacher-librarian history in Alberta are (l to r) Heather-Belle Dowling and Blanche Friderichsen.



Teacher-librarian reunion (l to r): Sylvia Dubruk, Gerry Maguire, Shirley Gaffney, Dianne Dunse, Teddy Moline, Blanche Freidrichson, Phyllis Molyneux, Marna Taylor, Jennifer Hinchcliffe, Gail Cioni, Marilyn Easton, Leslie Aitken



Teddy Moline at her retirement brunch in Sherwood Park, June 2004. Seated left to right are Jane Hill, Mary Jones, Teddy Moline, Judy Whetstone and Ray Schmidt.

President's Message

WELCOME TO A NEW SCHOOL YEAR THAT WE HOPE WILL BE very positive and exciting for teacher-librarians. With the appointment of a new minister of education, Gene Zwozdesky, things are looking up for us, because the new minister is well versed in the need for well-funded libraries and teacher-librarians. He spoke to a delegation of teacher-librarians from Japan that toured Edmonton and spoke in the legislature about the need for increased funding for teacher-librarians and counsellors. We have responded by providing him with the documents on our inquiry process and the guide, *Focus on Inquiry*. In our letters to him we continue to encourage him to improve library services and provide the necessary funding.

We are looking forward to next year's joint conference with the Educational Technology Council (ETC), which is the new name for the former Computer Council. The theme is "Literacy in the Digital Age," and it will be held May 5-7, 2006, at the Kananaskis Lodge. Please look for the link to the conference on the LRC site. One regional has attached its website to the provincial site, and we encourage other regionals to send their material to April Tilson, our webmaster.

We are very excited about our focus for next year. Having a great turnout at our annual general meeting is important because we will be reviewing our constitution and will need a full quorum for the changes to be passed. We will be sending you information about the constitutional changes in the new year, so check your e-mail and keep up to date. We are also looking for a new name for our council that will more obviously convey who we are and what we do. Please send your suggestions to me for consideration. We need to add the role of the webmaster to our constitution. In addition to constitutional changes, we need

to incorporate a statement of intellectual freedom in our handbook (go to www.learningresources.ab.ca). Last year's focus was updating the duties of the teacher-librarian. This year we will review the duties of the nonprofessional in Alberta schools as set out by the ATA and Alberta Education to help us clarify the role of library assistants and technicians.

We continue to have representation in the Strategic Alliance of Library Advocacy, the provincial body that provides advocacy to libraries in Alberta and the Canadian Association for School Libraries. We are excited about the plans for School Library Week, and we hope that you participate in some manner to highlight your school library. Please watch our provincial website for information on this event.

We love to hear about the interesting things you are doing in your school libraries. Please continue to submit your events to either the website or this journal. Have a wonderful year.

—Irene Masciuch



Left to right: Gene Zwozdesky (minister of education), Fern Reirson (GERLRC president), Debbie Engel (chair of Edmonton Catholic School trustees), Svend Hansen (chair of Edmonton Public School trustees), Moriyuki Morita (director of planning division, Japanese School Library Association) and Reiko Sekiguchi (professor, Library and Information Science and Education, Otsuma University)

Past President's Message

TEACHER-LIBRARIANS CONTINUE TO BE ACTIVE IN STUDENT education and are especially aware of the necessity of using an inquiry process to help the millennial generation find, sort and sift through the vast amount of available information. Unfortunately with the dearth of teacher-librarian positions, and with teachers being isolated in their classrooms, students may not get the opportunity to learn how to cope with our information society. This crisis has reached the attention of other organizations, which are eager to support education in some way.

The Learning Resources Council has a tireless group of dedicated teacher-librarians who meet and advocate for all students and teacher-librarians in Alberta. The following is a report of various LRC activities:

Minister of Education Gene Zwozdesky

The minister met with all 62 school boards in Alberta. As an LRC representative, I spoke with him briefly in Medicine Hat (where he hugged Patty Ambrosio and said that teacher-librarians were his favourite people) and presented him with *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*.

He also attended one of Lois Barranoik's classes, where she demonstrated collaboration between a teacher and teacher-librarian. Lois, a teacher-librarian at Windsor Park and Rideau Park Schools in Edmonton, recently received the 2005 Laurence G. Wiedrick Award. As a result of talking to Lois, Mr. Zwozdesky sent a handwritten note of encouragement concerning our work.

We also sent a letter of congratulations to Mr. Zwozdesky on his appointment and, in the same letter, requested that additional funds be made to school boards for allocation to school libraries.

LRC Handbook Revision

The handbook is available on our website with an updated and revised "Role of the Teacher-Librarian." Regional presidents must familiarize themselves with the document and the various revisions that have been made.

The revised "Role of the Teacher-Librarian" was also presented to Mr. Zwozdesky.

LRC Brochure

LRC has an updated brochure which will be available at the Alberta Teachers' Association, various conventions and conferences, and online.

LRC at Conventions

Thanks to Greater Edmonton Regional president Fern Reirson, LRC was represented at the Northeast Teachers' Convention. Other conventions will also be asking for specialist council representation in the future.

Focus on Inquiry

This excellent document has been nominated for the 2005 IASL ProQuest Information and Learning—eLibrary Commendation award. Posters about the inquiry process puzzle are now available.

Strategic Alliance of Library Advocacy (SALA)

This alliance of provincial library associations, which advocates on issues of provincial and national scope and provides support for ongoing advocacy efforts of individual associations, meets six times per year. As a new member, LRC was warmly received and can look forward to support from the other organizations.

Several items were discussed including Rocky Mountain Book Awards; the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library, a three-year project to digitize all postsecondary institutions; the APLEN (Alberta Public Library Electronic Network) campaign "The Library Renewed"; and Alberta Education's promotion of the Online Reference Centre targeting Grade 6 students in Alberta.

Association of Publishers

The research report "Canadian Books in School Libraries" has been distributed to numerous

organizations and the association is asking for our help to make it more widely known. The document can be downloaded free from www.publishers.ca.

CASL-PAC Teleconference (Canadian Association for School Libraries-Provincial Advisory Committee)

Presidents from the provincial school library councils met through a teleconference to share information about the successes and concerns in school libraries across the country. We discovered that most provincial school libraries are in a crisis. Toronto, however, has recently added 65 teacher-librarians, and the Ontario Library Association will be sponsoring a \$100,000 research study to collect evidence on the benefits of school libraries. This may be something Alberta could connect with as well.

We are also to give feedback and advice on issues for CASL to consider on a national level in order to coordinate all of our efforts on behalf of school libraries for mutual benefit.

CASL is a division of CLA (Canadian Library Association). The membership fee for CASL is \$50 per year. Go to www.caslibraries.ca/membership/form.pdf.

SLIC www.schoollibraries.ca/

School Libraries in Canada Online is a journal of the Canadian Association for School Libraries, which, besides providing a great deal of information, is seeking submissions to the journal.

Regionals

The various regionals have also been very active this year. These are just a few examples of what has been going on throughout Alberta: Edmonton hosted Japanese teacher-librarians and helped print the *Focus on Inquiry* posters to supplement the *Focus on Inquiry* document; Calgary has a unique AISI project, Revitalizing School Libraries, which would be a great model for all districts; and the Southeastern Regional, at the instigation of public and college librarians and the trustees, has been conducting a district review of libraries.

Conferences

Kaleidoscope 8, "Journeys of Heart and Mind," was an excellent conference enjoyed by all. We look forward to the next one!

Thanks to Irene Masciuch for all her hard work on the Alberta Library Conference 2005 "Celebrating Our Past, Embracing Our Future." It was an excellent conference, set in beautiful Jasper, and enjoyed by all.

—Rhonda Hunter

From the Regionals

Fort McMurray, *Christine Baxter*

October start up accomplished our goal of establishing plans for the 2004/05 school year.

National School Library Day (fourth Monday in October) was celebrated in all public schools reminding staff and students of the importance of the library in education. Various contests, who's who, storytelling and promotional events, highlighted the library as a partner in learning.

Christine attended Kaleidoscope 8 in November and reported on the sessions, authors and guest speakers. She provided brief biographies, novel lists and grade/curriculum relevancy and displayed titles she purchased for her school.

The goal of December's literacy initiative, Loonies for Literacy, was to put a book in every basket for Santa's Anonymous. The generosity of the Fort McMurray Public School staffs, coupled with the sponsorship of the Scholastic Book Fairs Services in Langley, British Columbia, allowed this effort to be extremely successful. This was our ninth year of involvement with Santa's Anonymous and disadvantaged children receiving the gift of reading at Christmas.

Our 2004/05 literacy promotion was scheduling Canadian author Elaine Essien into seven Fort McMurray public schools with Grades 3 and 4 students May 9–11. Essien writes about central Alberta during early settlement.

Gordon Korman will be touring our schools June 5–9, 2006.

The AGM on May 26 marked the retirement of Christine and William Baxter, members of our regional for over 15 years. Welcome to newly elected Laura Rogers, president, and Jeanne Purdy, secretary-treasurer.

Calgary, *Dianne Leong-Fortier*

The Calgary Regional planned and facilitated a diverse and rewarding series of professional development events for the 2004/05 school year. Events

focused on collaborative teaching and learning strategies in information literacy education across curricular areas, inquiry-based learning, recommended resources for new curriculum development and implementation and school library program development.

Professional development events included presentations on the following:

- Best practice involving collaborative teaching and learning between curricular area teachers and teacher-librarians in both public and private schools K–12, and a presentation on the revitalization of school libraries project through AISI (Alberta Initiative for School Improvement), September 2004;
- An overview by a specialist of the new social studies curriculum, and evaluation and selection criteria to provide a lens through which to view new resources, January 2005;
- The annual Calgary Regional breakfast for the Calgary Teachers' Convention, February 2005;
- A session titled "Novel Connections—English Language Arts," which combined expertise and collaboration between an English language arts (ELA) specialist, the Calgary Regional English Language Arts Council and the Learning Resources Council (the session provided valuable information compiled by Alberta teachers and ELA specialists who were involved in the reviewing and selection of Alberta Education's new authorized ELA novels and nonfiction resource list).
- The LRC Annual Awards and Retirement Banquet honoured the exemplary work and expertise of teacher-librarians, library assistants and administrators, and celebrated the contributions of retirees—fellow colleagues, teachers and teacher-librarians.

The Calgary Regional is strongly committed to providing leadership and increasing awareness of the importance of the school library program, information literacy education and teacher-librarians in schools.

Calgary LRC Awards and Retirement Banquet, June 9, 2005

by Irene Masciuch, Past President

It was with great pleasure that the Calgary LRC hosted its annual awards and retirement banquet. A group of 48 people gathered at the Village Park Inn to enjoy a wonderful meal, great companionship and the opportunity to honour our colleagues. We had five

award winners and four retirements. Retiring are Val Hartney, Sheri Coutts, Maryska Gill and Barb Peterson. It was wonderful to hear about their great contributions to school libraries. Many thanks to these wonderful teacher-librarians for the work they have done. Val Hartney has served on the local and provincial executive and Sheri Coutts has been on the local executive council.



Donna Grove, area I AISI teacher-librarian consultant, receiving the Bev Anderson Award of Merit for Teacher-Librarian from presenter.



Presenter Fran Geitzel with retiree Sheri Coutts.



Tom Colbens Certificate of Merit for Library Assistants—presenter Marsha Hales, recipient Yvonne Demoskoff from James Fowler High School, Tom Colbens, recipient Mary Losowy of Queen Elizabeth Junior/Senior High School and presenter Erin Hansen.



Presenter Peggy Shierman with retiree Val Hartney, past treasurer of LRC.

Many thanks to the two of you for helping your professional development organization!

The Bev Anderson Certificate of Merit for School Administrators in Support of School Libraries went to Keith Johnson, area 5 system assistant principal. His three presenters left no doubt in our minds of how strongly he supports school libraries and how great an advocate he is for making sure that all schools have a teacher-librarian. The Bev Anderson Award for Teacher-Librarians went to Donna Grove, area 1 AISI teacher-librarian consultant and Mariaan Camp from Webber Academy. These two wonderful teacher-librarians are vibrant and innovative in so many ways. It was wonderful to have Dr. Christine Spring-Gifford in our midst to tell us about the background of the Bev Anderson Award. Bev was a teacher-librarian and administrator who left a wonderful legacy. Her work involved that of a teacher-librarian, system person in charge of libraries and finally a principal. It is a true honour to receive the award designated for this wonderful person. Tom Colbens attended our celebration again and awarded two wonderful library assistants with their awards. Tom was instrumental in developing the role of the library assistant for us in Calgary. Mary Losowy, from Queen Elizabeth Junior/Senior High School, and Yvonne Demoskoff, from James Fowler High School, exemplify the wonderful things that can result from collaboration. We had a wonderful evening celebrating the achievements of these dedicated people.

Greater Edmonton, *Fern Reirson*

GERLRC has been busy this year with international visitors, workshops and advocacy. Beginning in the fall, two planning meetings were held to identify how best to support library/school staff. As a result, many workshops, presentations and visits were organized to provide professional development and highlight the multiple facets of a teacher-librarian's role.

In the fall, Dianne Galloway-Solowan arranged for representatives from World Book Online Reference Center and E-Library to demonstrate the features of their resources from the Online Reference Center. Many commented that it was particularly beneficial and practical.

On February 4 and 5, GERLRC and the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium cohosted two workshops to assist administrators, teacher-librarians and teachers to build and lead a culture of inquiry. Friday's all-day session with Duncan Anderson on building a culture of inquiry was of particular interest to the 20 social studies teachers and teacher-librarians attending. Saturday was for school leaders, and Dr. Toni Samek, from the University of Alberta, spoke about librarians advocating for human rights and global citizenship, and Duncan

Anderson talked about how to lead a culture of inquiry. Other joint workshops are planned for the fall 2005 with the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium.

A delegation of 25 teacher-librarians, professors and teachers from Japan's School Library Program spent three days in Edmonton in early January visiting Alberta Education and public, academic and school libraries. GERLRC hosted a dinner held in honour of Minister of Education Gene Zwozdesky, and school trustee chairs Svend Hansen (Edmonton Public) and Debbie Engel (Edmonton Catholic). Their presence helped to bring recognition to school libraries and school districts in our province and to show our guests the importance of their visit. The delegation visited six Edmonton schools.

Two key parents from Windsor Park School council helped to raise awareness of the role of teacher-librarians in school media library programs during a meeting with Minister Gene Zwozdesky. They highlighted their concerns about the lack of teacher-librarians and spoke about the valuable role Lois Barranoik plays in their school. Gene Zwozdesky followed up by visiting Windsor Park School on January 21, 2005, to observe Lois team-teach a lesson with a Grade 3 teacher. His comments to other people following his visit were extremely positive.

On March 8, Jackson Heights School community gave a presentation to the Edmonton Public School Board about how the school library media program affects their school's instructional focus on reading comprehension and student achievement. A delegation consisting of the principal, teacher-librarian, school council chair, classroom teacher, four students and a community volunteer shared how the school library media program affects their lives. Following this presentation, James Nees, a CBC radio reporter, interviewed me about the state of school library media programs in Alberta, which aired on April 10.



Dianne Oberg and Dianne Dunse (l-r) stuffing envelopes at the work bee.

Much work went into designing, producing and distributing the *Focus on Inquiry* puzzle model posters by Drs. Jennifer Branch and Lois Barranoik. A work bee was held in March during which 15 teacher-librarians stuffed envelopes. One colourful poster was mailed to each school in the province courtesy of the Learning Resources Council. Please check the LRC website about ordering more posters.

Our annual general meeting was held on May 25 with Ken Tingley, historian and author of *A Is Alberta: A Centennial Alphabet Book*, presenting some of the stories of Alberta in celebration of our province's centennial.

Finally, we are pleased that some regional members have received awards this past year for their work and commitment to school libraries. Dr. Lois Barranoik



Focus on Inquiry work bee in Edmonton to stuff envelopes for distribution to all schools.



Author Ken Tingley, guest speaker at the GERLRC AGM.

received the 2005 Laurence G. Wiedrick Award at the Alberta Library Association conference in Jasper. At the International Association for School Libraries in Hong Kong, Drs. Dianne Oberg and Jennifer Branch will receive the 2005 E-Library Commendation Award for writing *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning*.

Peace River, Sherry Nasedkin

I'm pleased to announce that this is my last duty as regional president. At our annual general meeting held on March 11, 2005, Nancy Ingram was elected as our new leader. Nancy is an experienced teacher, an avid volleyball mom, a shopaholic and a fresh voice in the world of teacher-librarianship. We are sorry that none of us made it to Jasper this month, but Nancy is looking forward to meeting everyone in September.

Year in Review

1. *Focus on Inquiry*. We've continued to build on the integration of the *Focus on Inquiry* document into our schools. We are building the K-9 document this year. Our district has provided some substitute release time, and we are using our LRC money to buy more time to complete the work.
2. Author visits. Spring author visits included Alistair MacLeod, Michael Kusugak, Marty Chan and Glen Huser. These renowned authors were at the Wordspinner conference in Grande Prairie and added visits to our schools.
3. Our district was involved in an interesting research project on Canadian literature with the U of A.
4. Our final meeting is planned to set direction for next year. We have several ideas for speakers and workshops!

Hope you all enjoy the conference!

Southeastern Regional, Rhonda Hunter

The three elementary teacher-librarians who recently retired have had their part-time positions filled by dedicated and capable teachers, and the junior high school has allotted a teacher .16 time in the library. We now have nine part-time teacher-librarians in our regional.

The Shortgrass Library System continues to be a cooperative partner with the schools. Because of Bob Batchelder and his staff, our automated library system operates smoothly and ensures that our students can access material from any other school in our system. As



Erin Doyle received an Award of Merit at her retirement from the Southeastern Regional for her years of support as director of Children's Services at the Medicine Hat Public Library.

a result of requests from teacher-librarians, Shortgrass added a connection to the public library and to the Online Reference Centre through tabs on our ipac. This makes it very easy to help students research the physical library as well as the numerous databases available.

Even with the new teacher just learning how to organize and run a library, we managed to conduct some projects:

- We celebrated National School Library Day in a small way by proudly wearing our T-shirts and offering cakes and other goodies to teachers.
- We organized a *Focus on Inquiry* workshop through SEAPDC. Duncan Anderson did a wonderful job walking us through the process. He also offered to let us use his PowerPoint presentation to help teachers who were unable to attend the workshop.
- An Alberta Education representative helped the new teacher-librarians learn about the World Book Online Reference Center in an afternoon professional development session.
- We hosted author Glen Huser during the Chrysalis Celebration and Eric Wilson and Alice Walsh later in the year.
- A literature fair was held at one elementary school with teacher-librarians, trustees and other dignitaries acting as judges.
- Teacher-librarians, public librarians and other library staff have initiated a Children's Literature Roundtable.
- A review of school libraries was conducted as a result of meetings of public librarians, college librarians, school librarians and trustees, who were concerned about the lack of teacher-librarians. The recommendations from this review will be presented to the board when it is completed.

LRC Starts Alberta Library

by Fern Reirson

DURING SPRING BREAK, I VISITED A FRIEND WHO WORKS IN THE Alberta Office at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. While touring the embassy, I noticed that this new Alberta Office had paintings and pictures by famous Alberta artists and photographers, but no Alberta literature. I shared this observation with Murray Smith, minister-counsellor for Alberta, and suggested that books would highlight Alberta authors, who are one of our province's richest and unique resources. Smith requested a list of suitable authors and books.

As a goodwill gesture, the LRC sent 20 books by Albertan authors to the Alberta Office in Washington, D.C., along with a suggested purchase list. Mr. Smith responded with a letter of thanks: "Many thanks for the books you sent to our office. They have been put on display here in the Alberta Office in Washington, D.C., and are a great addition to our growing library of Alberta books."

This will become a lending library to promote Alberta/Canadian literature and authors, and to educate others about Alberta. I can think of no better Alberta centennial project than the birth of a library about our province.



The start of a lending library about Alberta initiated by the LRC in the Alberta Office, Washington, D.C.

Aboriginal Children's Literature in the Classroom

by Joyce Purdy



Joyce Purdy is beginning her second year of studies in the doctoral program at the University of Alberta in the area of elementary language arts. She has taught elementary school for 10 years, the past 3 of which have been spent teaching Grades 2–3 at an inner-city school in Edmonton. Her classroom consisted of not only Aboriginal children but also children from many

different cultures. She has used multicultural literature with response activities in her classroom and has seen the positive effects literature can have on students.

A story is a sacred thing.
That should be passed from age to youth
I choose to share my best with you
That you might own and share them too.
—David Bouchard, *Song Within My Heart*

IN THE CANADIAN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM, CHILDREN INTERNALIZE the values and morals of our culture. What does it mean to be Canadian? Diakiw (1996) outlines 10 commonplaces that make us uniquely Canadian. Among them the fact that we are a nation of immigrants, we have strong Native roots and we continue to engage in equity struggles. He also states that school is an important place to explore, discuss and identify with these commonplaces. My experience over the past three years has been teaching Grades 2 and 3 in an inner-city school with a mixture of Aboriginal, Asian and Caucasian students. In a society that is becoming increasingly diverse, educators must instill a tolerance and sensitivity

toward others as well as a concept of what it means to be Canadian. One way to accomplish this is through quality literature. Teachers can introduce children to the many cultures that make up our society and at the same time help them to appreciate and understand our differences. Research has shown that Grades 2 and 4 students, especially, can change their attitudes toward multicultural diversity when books are shared with them (Wham et al. 1996). In this article, I review 12 books that can be described as Aboriginal; however, the criteria used can pertain to any multicultural literature. I then suggest some response activities that teachers can use in their classrooms.

There are many considerations to bear in mind when choosing literature that adequately reflects another culture. For example, storytelling played an important part in the Aboriginal culture. An elder would gather the children around the fire during long winter evenings and tell spiritual stories that taught lessons and instilled values. Thus, cultural values were passed on to the upcoming generation. When these stories are written by someone other than an Aboriginal, nuances can be altered so that the story does not reflect a true retelling. A European author may find it odd that an Aboriginal story is repetitive or that the main character does not always have a motive, and the story may be rewritten to fit European standards (Singer n.d.). Teachers must seek sources or the advice of people who are knowledgeable about these issues. The Aboriginal Collections Committee, a subcommittee of Edmonton Public Schools, is an excellent resource for teachers looking for authentic Aboriginal literature. The group was formed in 2000 with the goal of recommending Aboriginal resources for use across the curriculum. (Their website can be accessed for a small fee and is listed in the appendix.) From 9 to 29 per cent of children attending Edmonton's schools are of

Aboriginal origin, and most of this population resides in the city centre. The committee believed that by making Aboriginal culture a more meaningful and integral part of the classroom experience, literacy would be enhanced.

The books that I have chosen to review focus on the Plains Aboriginal people and represent a range of available literature. The selections include both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal authors and illustrators, and stories that are both historical and contemporary. The criteria for the books were taken from various sources (Bainbridge and Wolodko 2001; Reese 1999; Huck 2003) and then compiled into a list that I felt encompassed what was important. The criteria are as follows:

1. Is the story sensitive to the culture presented? Are the facts correct?
The terms *First Nations* or *Aboriginal* can refer to a diverse group of people, each with its own culture, language and history. Each group is distinct and should be regarded as such in the literature. For example, teepees should not be shown in a book about a northwestern tribal group. In the same way, totem poles should not be shown in a story about the Plains tribes.
2. Are there stereotypes?
For example, often an Aboriginal person is depicted as the strong savage, and the European as the heartless oppressor. Some well-known classics, such as Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* books, and Lynne Reid Banks's *The Indian in the Cupboard* treat Aboriginal people in stereotypical or disrespectful ways.
3. Does the book invite understanding and acceptance? How will it affect a child's self-image?
4. Who is the author? If the author is not from the culture being written about, does he or she cite references? Does he or she have a reputation for doing thorough research before writing? What is the author's perspective?
5. Is everyone treated the same, or are differences shown and acknowledged?
6. Can children relate to the settings, characters and storyline, and compare and contrast these things to their own lives and situations?
7. Do the text and illustrations complement each other, adding to the effectiveness of the total book?
8. How is language used? Language should not be used to demean another group. Are there special words with special meanings? If so, are they explained?

Books That Portray a Historical Perspective

Goble, Paul. 1996. *The Return of the Buffaloes*.

The Plains people's lives depended on the availability of the buffalo, and this story beautifully re-enacts that relationship. Goble, originally British, is now an American citizen. Although Goble is not Aboriginal, his books reflect a thoroughness of research and sensitivity toward Aboriginal people. The front page includes his references, and in this book, he includes a note explaining the *parfleche* or pouch used to carry dried buffalo meat, along with the designs used by various tribes to decorate their *parfleche*. The story takes place in the northern part of Dakota, and I selected it because the lives of the Plains people of Alberta paralleled that of the Lakota tribe to whom Goble refers.

When the buffalo do not reappear in the spring, a mysterious woman appears and sends the buffalo to the people. The story captures the desperation the Aboriginal people must have felt when buffalo herds could not be found. With most of the tribe weak from hunger, two young boys are sent to find the buffalo. They are unsuccessful, and a scout says, "I did so want to tell something good to make my parents smile again,"—a comment with which a child from any culture can relate. The buffalo woman then appears, and admonishes them for not coming to her sooner. She assures them that she will feed the people. The buffalo come, as promised, and Goble fittingly ends the story by telling the reader,

Today, National Park Rangers take tourists down into the caverns to look at the strange and beautiful rocks deep inside the earth . . . sometimes they feel an extraordinary wind inside the cave . . . this wind is the breath of yet more buffaloes . . . waiting for the mysterious and wonderful woman to let them out.

The description in Goble's book lends itself to drama activities. Pictures are created so effectively that children can enter the scenes depicted and do tableaux and voice-in-the-head. The teacher could ask students, What must it have been like for the scouts to come back to the tribe and tell their parents that they could not find buffaloes? Various scenes could be depicted and then retold in writing from the perspective of a character in the story. Alternatively, the village could be created on a huge mural, with students choosing a name and a role within the community. Living the experience through drama helps children to understand and appreciate the Aboriginal lifestyle.

Bruchac, Joseph. 1996. *Between Earth and Sky: Legends of Native American Sacred Places*. Illustrated by Thomas Locker.

In the introduction to the book, Bruchac states that First Nations people recognize seven directions: east, south, west, north, earth, sky, and the seventh direction, which is “within us all” and “harder to see.” The book begins with a young boy speaking to his uncle about sacred places. His uncle teaches him about sacred places encompassing the seven directions, such as the “Thunder Beings” to the north. The story continues about a race among the animals and man that took place “where the great mountains rise up to the sky”—perhaps the Rocky Mountains. As a result of the race, “When the people hunt Buffalo they do so with that same respect the Creator wished for all beings.” There is text on the left-hand page with the right-hand page dedicated to Locker’s incredible paintings. A detailed, child-friendly map at the back of the book shows the location of many tribes, and there is a page suggesting pronunciations of some of the Native words used in the book.

The themes presented in this book are universal: respect for nature, giving back to society, what *sacred* means to a person, and the “seventh direction within us” all of which are possible topics for discussion. For effective reader response, it is helpful to ask children to pay attention to what they are thinking before, during and after the reading. If children are having difficulty, the teacher could model the process by doing a think-aloud. For example, the teacher could ask what the word *sacred* means and if sacred places exist in students’ lives. Children are then allowed to explore what sacred means to their family and report back to the class.

Contemporary Stories

Bouchard, David. 2002. *The Song Within My Heart*. Illustrated by Allen Sapp.

Allen Sapp recently won the Governor General’s award for his remarkable paintings that complement Bouchard’s poetic verse. The story is about a *nokum* (grandmother) who helps her grandson to understand his first powwow. Bouchard wrote the book from memories told to him by Sapp, who grew up in Northern Saskatchewan. The pictures of Aboriginal dancers and drummers bring the reader into the Aboriginal culture. In the painting entitled *An Indoor Pow-Wow*, we see the

drummers seated in a circle, the traditionally dressed dancers taking small steps, and we can practically hear the “HEY hey hey hi hey hey HI.” The picture comes alive. The text itself would lend itself to an affective response: “Listen to the singers, They are also telling stories, Some of pleasure, some of sorrow, Some of birth or life here after.” Experiences of sorrow and pleasure could be discussed, followed by journal writing.

Loewen, Iris. 1993. *My Kokum Called Today*.

There are interesting parallels between *My Kokum Called Today* and *The Song Within My Heart*. A 12-year-old girl’s *kokum* (grandmother) calls her in the city and invites her to come to the reserve for a round dance. The softly coloured line drawings depict a contemporary family, as does the language. For example, mom wears jeans as she packs the trunk of the car, and the girl says, “Neeto Squeeto!” as she scrambles to pack her things including the moccasins that her *kokum* made for her. The story is a lovely tribute to the *kokum* and her role in this girl’s life, as well as gently educating the reader to Aboriginal ways. “My *kokum* is always busy. She makes moccasins and beaver mitts. She picks raspberries . . . makes jam from the berries . . . makes the best bannock in the whole world. . . .” The back jacket of the book says, “She learns that women, especially grandmothers, are the ties that hold together the many Native families dispersed in rural and urban communities.”

Reader response activities related to this book and the Bouchard one could centre on the role of grandmothers or grandparents in a child’s life. The teacher and students could brainstorm a list of activities done with the *kokum/nokum* in both books, and the children could make a similar list about themselves and a grandparent. Discussion could include the role that elders play in our lives, and their importance in passing down the stories of our families. In both books, families gathered to have a powwow or a round dance. The teacher could ask students, “When do your families get together and what do you do when you are together?” Personal stories could then be written, illustrated and shared. This would also be an excellent opportunity to try some storytelling. The teacher may need to model this by telling her own story about a family gathering. Children could try telling their stories first to a partner and then in a group. The tradition of storytelling among Aboriginal people could become a part of the literature study. Telling and listening to stories is something that all children enjoy and benefit from.

Wheeler, Bernelda. 1986. *Where Did You Get Your Moccasins?* Illustrated by Herman Bekkering.

Truss, Jan. 1987. *Peter's Moccasins*.

The first book is not as recently published as books cited so far, but it is skillfully written in a question-and-answer format. Jody brings his moccasins to school, and the children ask him questions about them, such as “Who is your *kookum*?” and “What did she use to make your moccasins?” The black-and-white pencil drawings show eager schoolchildren gathered around Jody and his moccasins. His answers, although not typical of a young child’s speech, explain the process of making moccasins, “By washing and scraping, and pulling and smoking a deer hide, my *kookum* made leather.” At the end of the book, one sees that culture is retained in a modern-day society. That is, when the children ask Jody where his *kookum* got the beads, he replies, “From the store.”

A slightly different angle is presented in the second book. Peter brings his moccasins to school (made for him by his *kookum* as well—with tufted moose hair and porcupine quills), but is too embarrassed and shy to show them to his classmates. He finally brings them out of his backpack at the end of the story and is proud to show them to his classmates. After reading both books, the children could be asked to bring an artifact, or an object from their own culture, and/or an object that their grandmother or grandfather made for them. Each student could write about where their object came from, why it was given, how it was made and how the child feels about it. The objects could be shown to others in the class, who write questions, individually, about the object. Over the next few weeks, the students could take turns asking questions to find out about the object, much like the format in Wheeler’s book. The artifacts could be on a display table accompanied by a descriptive paragraph. When everyone has shared his or her story, the children will have a large repertoire of knowledge about other cultures as well as an understanding of their elders and the important role they play in everyone’s life, despite different ethnic origins.

Littlechild, George. 1993. *This Land Is My Land*.

George Littlechild is a First Nations artist whose artwork is creative and meaningful. This book is an inspiration to Aboriginal children of Alberta because Littlechild was born in Edmonton. He has become a role

model for children in that he has overcome adversity and wants the best for himself and his people. The book is about his own perspective on growing up and the history of his people. Littlechild writes simply and effectively, without rancor against the “white man.” Instead, he simply presents his life the way it was and displays an attitude of forgiveness and healing. He dedicates this book to his ancestors, who played an important part in his life. The book jacket says, “In Indian Country we are reviving our culture and traditions. . . . My goal is to heighten awareness of the history and experiences of Native Peoples . . . and to promote understanding among all peoples.” The colourful, symbolic artwork depicts numbers, shapes, colours, animals and people in collage form. After studying his work, children could paint their own pictures about themselves and their life, reproducing Littlechild’s art style.

VanCamp, Richard. 1998. *What’s the Most Beautiful Thing You Know About Horses?* Illustrated by George Littlechild.

The author grew up in Northern Canada, as he tells us on the first page, and he asks thought-provoking questions while telling the reader about his life and culture. The questions themselves would be ideal for drama activities. For example, ask children to find a partner and ask him or her, “When horses and dogs talk to each other, what do you think they say?”

Legends

The list would not be complete without the inclusion of Aboriginal legends. Many cultures tell legends and myths to explain the world around them. Such stories were often told with humour, despite the serious nature of the stories themselves (Wason-Ellam 1988).

Ahenakew, Freda, trans. and ed. 1988. *How the Birch Tree Got Its Stripes and How the Mouse Got Brown Teeth*. Illustrated by George Littlechild.

The preface of both books, true to Native oral tradition, acknowledge the author who put the story into words by stating, “This is a traditional story, which is collectively owned by the Cree Indian people. The royalties from the sale of this book go to the Saskatchewan Indian Languages Institute.”

Ballantyne, Bill. 1994. *Wesakejack and the Bears and Wesakejack and the Flood*. Illustrated by Linda Mullin.

These books are legends about the Cree trickster, Wesakejack (also spelled Wesakechak). Wesakejack, which means “flatterer” (Wason-Ellam 1988), often plays tricks on animals. In *Wesakejack and the Bears*, he does just that, whereas *Wesakejack and the Flood* is a story of cleansing and recreating the earth. The trickster is often a prankster in other cultures, but in Canadian Aboriginal literature, tricksters can take on the role of a benevolent helper for their people. One valuable aspect of both books is that the text is in both Cree and English.

After reading many legends, the children could write and retell their own “why” stories. A list could be made of natural weather phenomena, such as thunder, lightning, hail, the northern lights and snow, or the particular traits of Alberta animals, such as a beaver’s flat tail, a skunk’s white line, a porcupine’s quills or a crow’s claw. Children could then explain a particular trait or phenomenon.

Tricksters could be compared by creating a character web. The name of the trickster is written in the middle circle, and the traits of that person written in bubbles around the centre. In this way, character traits can be compared and contrasted. Children could do a dependent authorship activity, whereby they write a letter from one trickster to another.

Conclusion

Exploring this topic has shown me that teachers need background knowledge to look critically at multicultural and, specifically, Aboriginal literature. Support must be given so that teachers can do this effectively. It is also important to remember that literature and society are changing all the time. What may be appropriate today could be quite inappropriate a few years from now.

Stories are powerful. Through story, we find out that we all share the human experience, no matter what culture we come from. Regardless of the make-up of the classroom, it is important to read stories from many cultures. Canada is a diverse country, and children should be exposed to other cultures in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. Every ethnic group has made, and is making, contributions to our society, and should be identified and celebrated. Reading Aboriginal literature not only teaches our students about the history of Canada but also helps children of Aboriginal descent to feel included and valued. Through stories, every child in a classroom can be proud of his or her culture while feeling connected to other classmates and their cultures—for that is what it means to be Canadian.

Helpful Resources

Aboriginal Collections Committee, Edmonton Public Schools. www.rds.epsb.net.

Aboriginal Collection Online is available for a fee. Books related to Aboriginal themes are annotated and given a rating.

Campbell, M. 1983. *People of the Buffalo: How the Plains Indians Lived*. Illustrated by D. Tait and S. Twofeathers. Altona, Man.: Douglas & McIntyre. This book provides background information about the Aboriginal people who lived on the prairie.

McCue, H. 1999. *The Learning Circle: Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada*. Ages 4 to 7. Ottawa, Ont.: Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

This is an excellent resource for teachers of children aged 4 to 7. The book is divided into themes, such as storytelling, seasons and sharing. The teacher can choose to read or tell the short stories in the book and then choose from related activities outlined in the book.

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Journeys Without End

by Kenneth Oppel

Excerpt from *Kaleidoscope 8 Conference Keynote Speech in Calgary, November 2004*. Copyright © 2004 Kenneth Oppel.

Kenneth Oppel won the Governor General's Literary Award for Children for *Airborn*, a tale about a cabin boy on a luxury airship plying the skies of an "alternate Earth," battling pirates and coping with the stirrings of adolescence. He is also the creator of the *Silverwing* series about a unique species of bats.

IF EVERY STORY IS A JOURNEY OF SOME SORT, I THINK THE BEST stories are journeys without end. They don't stop with the last sentence of the book, but live on in our own heads, sometimes for the rest of our lives. The best stories leave us with the knowledge that the characters keep going; their world is too large to be contained in the few short pages of a book. Not only do we remember these characters' stories, but we also, in ways, small and large, frivolous and profound, shape our own lives after them.

The British critic Barbara Hardy has observed that "we dream in narrative, day-dream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative."

I think all of us want to believe we are the protagonists of our own lives. We want to believe in beginnings, middles and ends. We want to believe our actions matter, and set in motion a causal chain of events. This is not always true, of course. But a story, I think, is a natural way of framing all our thoughts, emotions and aspirations. Stories are hugely influential in our lives.

What I'd like to do is share with you some of the books that have taken me on great journeys. Many of them will be well known to you. But doubtless many of you will have had wildly different experiences of them. Most of these are books which I discovered in childhood, and I absolutely loved them. At the time, I might not have been able to articulate why. But they

were hugely influential for me as a person, and often also as a writer.

Like all the best books, Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*, in its very opening lines, seizes us by the lapels and pulls us in:

At the far end of town
Where the grackle-grass grows
And the wind smells slow-and-sour when it blows
And no birds ever sing excepting old crows...
Is the Street of the Lifted Lorax.

That grackle-grass lets us know right away we've been transported to an otherworldly place. And what on earth is a *Lorax*? And yet this world is not so unlike our own. I grew up hearing about smog and the pollution of the Great Lakes. In Seuss's pictures we see a ravaged world of withered, defoliated trees, smudgy night skies. The tone is set and the central mystery is posed. How and why did this thwarted world come into being?

This is also a story about story and its power to transform, for the main narrative is told aloud to the boy by the mysterious Once-Ler, (you may remember he lurks in his *Lerkim* on top of the store) and this evokes the intimacy of a lost oral tradition. The story is important, and, as it were, being told directly to us. It is a story about paradise lost, human temptation and failure. It is a cautionary tale about the environment.

In *The Lorax*, all the Truffula trees get cut down to make the baffling and useless *thneeds*—if you haven't seen them, they're really something: they've got at least three sleeves, or one of those might be a neck hole, and they've got what look like trouser legs long enough for stilt walkers, but those don't have holes at the end. As the Once-Ler says:

"It's a shirt. It's a sock. It's a glove. It's a hat/
But it has other uses. Yes, far beyond that.
You can use it for carpets. For pillows! For sheets!
Or curtains! Or covers for bicycle seats!"

Anyway, the thing's a complete piece of junk. But how many *thneeds* we all have!

Is this tale overtly didactic? Yes. How could such a *cri de coeur* be anything but? But I think all books are didactic at some level. People tend to pejoratively label

something didactic only when they don't happen to agree with what it's saying. If they do agree, then it's an astute masterpiece. Seuss's book doesn't just try to teach or instruct, it also delights as well, through its headlong rhyme, flamboyant use of language and illustration, and its pure emotional heft.

I absolutely believe that the *Lorax* was the catalyst for my later views on consumerism and the environment—and helped make me the neurotic mess I am today. I think it was all those pictures of the *Thneed* factory and its toxic emissions. Seuss called it *Gluppity Glupp* and *Schloppity Schlopp*. It's so green and yellow and viscous. It's a nightmare. Also, there were those coughing birds and sick animals.

To this day whenever I see smokestacks, I don't think power, jobs, economy booming—I wonder how much *Gluppity Glup* they're producing, and how they're disposing of all their *Schloppity Schlopp*. I just hope they're doing a good job of it.

I've already mentioned how I think the best stories have no end, and *The Lorax's* final words explicitly launch us on another journey:

SO...

Catch! calls the Once-ler.

He lets something fall.

It's a Truffula Seed.

It's the last one of all!

You're in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds.

And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs.

Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.

Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.

Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.

Then the Lorax

And all of his friends

May come back.

The words pose a question, a challenge, not just to the boy, but to each one of the book's readers. How much do you care about the natural world, and what are you willing to do to protect it? Some people might find this book manipulative and heavy-handed, but, like the Truffula seed, it certainly implanted in me a concern (verging on anxiety) over the fate of the planet.

I LOVED this book and still have it, as I do all my childhood books. And I know it was one of my most highly favoured, because I didn't write a price on it.

Despite all Seuss's exhortations, I went through a rampant consumerist phase, when I wanted to sell all my old stuff and buy new. I was six years old, and I badly needed to generate some income. I needed cash flow to grow my company in new directions. So I kept writing prices on all my toys and books. I still have some books with 5 cents and 10 cents written clumsily in marker on the covers. Trust me, it was a bargain. But *The Lorax's* cover is unblemished. Even then I could not sully it. To this day, I still love selling books, but prefer if they're actually written by me.

Other influential childhood books:

- *The Tale of Two Bad Mice*, Beatrix Potter
- *Charlotte's Web*, E. B. White
- *The Great Brain* books, John D. Fitzgerald
- *The Mad Scientist Club* books, Bertrand R. Brinley
- *Danny the Champion of the World*, Roald Dahl
- *Emily of New Moon*, L. M. Montgomery
- *Doonesbury*, G. B. Trudeau

Fractured Fairy Tales: Or, You Want to Do What to the Library?

by Cathy M. Yusep

Cathy Yusep is the specialist teacher-librarian in charge of the Calgary Board of Education's Professional Learning Centre. She is responsible for overseeing the evaluation and selection of student and teacher resources, the results of which are published four times a year and used in her board and across Canada. Her current work includes providing professional learning opportunities on literacy for teachers and staff.

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“TALK TO ME ABOUT YOUR LIBRARY,” I SAID, AND WHAT followed is actually the end to this short story. So please, dear reader, allow me to start at the beginning, where a tale normally begins.

Once upon a time, a beautiful, young princess was curled up on her bed reading poetry. . . . Oh, who am I kidding? It was just me in my jeans and sweatshirt, sitting at my kitchen table, catching up on my reading homework (professional journals), when I read an article about classroom libraries. One particular school had made a conscious decision not to have a central school library but instead to divide the library collection among the classrooms. Each classroom had two carts—one for fiction and one for nonfiction. Anything other than books was stored in the workroom and staffroom and was accessible only to staff. After my first reaction, in which my heart started to race uncontrollably and my blood pressure rose until I could feel the blood coursing into my brain, I decided to calm down for fear of having a heart attack.

I wanted to rant to anyone, whether they wanted to listen or not. “Arrrgh! How could they possibly do this?” No one was around, but both of my dogs dove under the sofa, fearing for their safety. I then stopped, surprised and astonished at myself. How could I so quickly condemn people who are trying something new and daring? I have always prided myself on being open to change, even embracing change, and have often been accused of demonstrating risk-seeking behaviour. Now I was acting like an old fuddy-duddy, caught up in the past and unwilling to change.

Perhaps I had been away from the day-to-day work in schools for too long (I have been working for the school district for two years now after 14 years working as a teacher-librarian and, more recently, a school administrator). Maybe things had changed in schools so drastically that they no longer needed a central, vibrant, dynamic school library. Do our students really need or even deserve a library in their school or not? Why bother if having a few carts of books in their classroom would suffice? Is this something from the past? Am I stuck in the Dark Ages?

I then decided to take a trip out to my friend Linda's school—Hawkwood Elementary School in Calgary—to search out some answers. I had been to Hawkwood Elementary School a number of times over the past few years for various meetings and school-related business, but this visit was a fact-finding feat, or, better yet, a clue-collecting clamber (I know that the clever alliteration will not be lost on you, gentle reader). I needed to know if schools still needed a library or if it would be wiser to put that money somewhere else (because it all comes down to the money, doesn't it?).

The open invitation I gave to various administrators, teachers, students and parents at Hawkwood Elementary School was “talk to me about your library,” and, oh my goodness, they did talk.

Principal Ivan Mihaljevich and teacher-librarian Linda Steen (full-time, flexibly scheduled) sat and talked with me in the middle of their school library. We were surrounded by students who were busy choosing books, working on group projects and busily working at computer pods. There were all sorts of kids—small kids, big kids, older kids, younger kids, kids of all sizes, shapes and colours. One or two teachers were busy with kids in various corners of the library. Huge murals at each end of the library beautifully depicted the foothills and mountains of the Calgary countryside.

My colleagues had a lot to say:

- We promote avid readership, lifelong learning and independence. . . . We provide strategies for learning within an inquiry-based, resource-based learning environment.
- We have an open door policy. Kids are welcome to come at any time during the school day—any time that they need to, with the permission of their teacher.
- We do not do whole class book exchanges. . . . [That] doesn't make sense. When a kid needs a book or another resource, that's when they come and get it.
- [The] Policy of Intellectual Freedom drives what we do. . . . freedom of choice.
- We respect and trust our kids. If you trust kids, they will rise to the occasion.
- We do very well on the provincial achievement scores. However, this is not about achievement scores. We teach our students with the future in mind.
- The library directly supports our district vision: Educating Tomorrow's Citizen Today. What better way to achieve that?

"Talk to me about your library."

A parent, Janet, sits with me and quietly but enthusiastically tells me about the teams of parents, teachers and students who are involved in what happens in the library.

[The library] is the centre of our learning community. Kids are able to discover new and unexpected finds. My daughter visits the library daily. She struggles with reading and finds great pleasure in borrowing old favourites that she is able to have success in reading.

We select quality literature to be sold at our book fairs. Everyone is involved: parents, our teacher-librarian, our library assistant, kids. . . . Linda, the teacher-librarian, has provided our kids with skills that they will take with them. They will be confident users of the public library—able to find what they want.

Parents are very busy these days and so are their kids. Many do not have time to visit the public library regularly. . . . We are so proud of our library.

"Talk to me about your library."

Three students from Grades 5 and 6—Daniel, Isaac and Sierra—were initially quiet but then began to enthusiastically tell me and show me what they think of their library. "We love it," they say. "We can come when we need to. It's so easy to find what we want because it is really well organized and Ms. Steen has taught us how to search on the OPAC [Online Public Access Catalogue]. Can we show you how to use the OPAC? Would you like us to show you around the fiction and nonfiction? We love the picture books. The art in them is so cool. I use them to help me with my questions."

Then I drop the bomb. I say to them, "Here's an idea. How would you like it if I could persuade Mr. M. and Ms. S. to allow you guys to take all of the books that are for your grade into your classroom so that you can have them with you all of the time instead of having to traipse down the hall to the library. Pretty cool idea, hey?"

Dead silence and worried looks came over the students. One of them spoke slowly. "Would we still be able to come to the library?"

"No, it would not be a library any more—it would probably be a staff room. The teachers need more space to work."

The students responded with worry in their voices, "Well, that might seem like a good idea to some, but first of all, how would you decide what should go into the Grade 6 classrooms? . . . We wouldn't be able to get to the picture books because they would probably have to go into the Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 classrooms." They picked up speed and volume at this point. "The teachers in the other classes wouldn't want us to disturb them, so we wouldn't be able to get the books in their classrooms. How would we find anything?" Then, in very firm voices they said, "That's a rotten idea. We love our library and we want it to stay this way."

With those words ringing in my ears, I bid farewell to everyone, left the Hawkwood Elementary School library and rode into the sunset.

I was relieved and strongly believed once again that the notion of a vibrant, dynamic school library is not a fuddy-duddy idea, an outdated concept or something that risk-takers scoff at. I had just seen an example of education at its best. It was cutting edge and was on an example of strong pedagogical philosophy being put into practice—exactly what good learning and teaching are all about. When a library is run thoughtfully in this way, it is about as good as it can

get. This example is not a fairy tale; it is alive and well in Calgary.

I would like to end this article with the same words that ended the article I had read on classroom libraries:

But every school needs a vision of what school and classroom libraries need to become. Without such visions, there will be no plan of action. Without some plan of action, nothing will change. If we are to create thoughtful schools where all children become literate, we need school and classroom libraries that provide all children access to the books they need to accomplish that end. (Allington and Cunningham 1996)

If you believe that our pedagogical practice needs to be supported by sound research, you may be interested in reading the news release "School Libraries Improve Student Achievement," which discusses a comprehensive Canadian study that has found a significant connection between high student achievement and schools with libraries that support student learning. Read the article at www.cbe.ab.ca/students/resources/nr_062603.asp.

Reference

Allington, R. L., and P. M. Cunningham. 1996. *Schools That Work: Where All Children Read and Write*. New York: HarperCollins College.

Mother–Daughter Teacher-Librarian Team

by Linda Shantz-Keresztes

Linda Shantz-Keresztes is past president of the Learning Resources Council and AISI teacher-librarian consultant for the Calgary Board of Education.

THE CALGARY REGIONAL OF THE LRC AND THE CALGARY Board of Education (CBE) are proud to have a mother and daughter teacher-librarian team. It is common to have a parent and offspring in the teaching profession, but uncommon to have a family specialization in library programs, particularly in our time of teacher-librarian shortages.

Maureen Haney has been a long-time teacher-librarian and important member (treasurer) on the Calgary Regional executive. Erin Hansen has recently returned to Calgary from British Columbia and is working in a senior high school library where she previously had a temporary position. They both have been actively involved in the Calgary Board of Education library community and the Learning Resources Council.

Thanks to Maureen and Erin for supplying their biographies and photo for *Teacher-Librarian Today*.

Maureen Haney

I have always been an avid reader and naturally gravitated to the public library. As a teenager, I worked as a page for the children’s department of the Glengarry Branch of the Calgary Public Library from Grades 8 to 12. I come from a family of teachers, so the decision of whether to become a librarian or a teacher was difficult. I found the perfect solution and did both.

I have been teacher-librarian at the following CBE schools:

- Vincent Massey Junior High
- Sir John A. MacDonald Junior High
- Ecole William Reid
- Spruce Cliff Elementary
- Sam Livingston Elementary
- Penbrooke Meadows Elementary
- Lester B. Pearson High School

While taking a parenting break from teaching, I worked part-time in the young adult department of the Calgary Public Library.

A native Calgarian, I am married to Bob, also a teacher, and we have three adult children. Erin is the oldest, and I am very proud and honoured that she has followed in my footsteps. We have two sons, who are not teachers!

I love my job. I am passionate about books, information literacy and children. I am fortunate to have worked with students at all levels and have come to realize how important the job of the teacher-librarian is at every level. I have worked with many wonderful children and dedicated teachers. I can’t imagine having any other career.

Erin Hansen

As my mom is fond of saying, I was “grown” in a library, because while pregnant with me, she was a teacher-librarian. I have always had great respect for what my mom does and asked her endless questions about what her job involved. I didn’t have a clue how huge her job was, though, until I stepped into the role for myself. Mom, you have my greatest respect for your abilities to multitask and manage so large a role.

I followed in my mom’s footsteps and became a page with the Calgary Public Library while still in junior high. I then spent six years working part-time in a bookstore, spending most of my earnings on books!

Teaching is in my blood—both parents and many relatives have been teachers. Love of learning and reading was strongly promoted in my house, and I credit my parents for pushing for me to succeed, providing many resources for me to use and teaching me how to use them properly.

I have degrees in technology and specialties in science and English, as well as having recently completed my M.Ed. I have taught in British Columbia and Alberta with both private and public boards. My

experiences with the CBE have been fabulous, and I am so thankful for the support and encouragement of the administration of Queen Elizabeth Junior/Senior High School, who so greatly advocate for libraries. I love to help students learn and am passionate about promoting literacy in all its myriad formats. I am very excited to be in a library that is heavily used. Assisting students and teachers to find the resources that they need is a great joy! I have never before been this excited to come to work each day!



Library of the Calgary Branch of the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta in 1947.

Staying Faithful to Our Mission: 100 Years of Teaching Information Literacy Skills in a Teacher Education Program

by Barbara Brydges

Barbara Brydges is the director of Information Services, Faculty of Education, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta.

THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY is celebrating 100 years of teacher education in Alberta this fall, commemorating the charter granted to the Calgary Normal School in November 1905. For almost all of those 100 years, there has been a library serving the teacher preparation program in Calgary. It's a library that has had eight different names over its history (today it's the Doucette Library of Teaching Resources), and it

has occupied seven different locations, but it has always had one unique feature—not the nature of its collection, though that's always been an interesting mix of academic and curriculum materials—but its focus on library instruction.

As early as 1931, the principal of the Calgary Normal School, Dr. Coffin, wrote in his annual report that, "A normal school library must be kept up-to-date and not the least of its functions is to show students how books should be classified and cared for." In 1939 he reported that "a course of instruction in library classification and procedure is given to each class group; despite the fact that the library accommodation is much over-taxed, that more shelf-space is urgently needed and an assistant to the librarian is desired."



Library of the Calgary Branch of the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta in 1947.

By 1950, the Normal School Library had become the library of the Calgary Branch of the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education. The library was run by Isabel Grant, who had qualifications as both a teacher and a librarian, and she placed great emphasis on what we today would call information literacy skills. This was a time when academic librarians spent little, or no, time on instruction. By contrast, Grant provided first-year education students with seven hours of scheduled library instruction on the topics of organization of the library; using reference sources; library resources in the classroom, including discussion of evaluating materials; sources for materials; the newspaper, including its influence in the modern world; and a comparison between professional journals in the collection.

In 1964, on the eve of the University of Calgary's achieving autonomy from the University of Alberta, the Faculty of Education took back its textbook materials from the main university library and opened its own materials centre. This was concurrent with Kay Snow's appointment to establish a school library program within the faculty. For the ensuing 20-some years, the materials centre and the school library program, under the leadership of Kay Snow and Phil Hauck, worked together to prepare teachers to use and manage school resource centres. They can be given at least partial credit for that wonderful period when Alberta school libraries were among the best in the world.

Today, we take seriously this heritage and our responsibility not just to teach education students how to use the library for their own work, but to ensure they understand the inquiry process and the skills involved in being information literate. Our challenge is to find a way to accomplish this within a program that is not course-based, but which is organized around case-study and seminar discussions.

During the 2004/05 year, we took our most successful approach to date. All first-year students, organized in groups of 30-50, had two-hour long orientations in which we introduced them to the inquiry process. They read excerpts from one of their first cases and then brainstormed to identify questions that arose from the reading. This enabled us to demonstrate the search process with a real question in mind.

Throughout the year we offered workshops, for individual student sign-up or to be booked by instructors for classes, on the topics: finding resources for lesson planning, children's literature for the classroom and teaching the skills of information literacy. Total attendance at these workshops was almost 600, from among 400 first-year students.

We are still far from satisfied that we are reaching all the students or that we're providing them the necessary depth of knowledge, so we'll be trying some new approaches this year. One hope is to find a way to bring experienced teacher-librarians onto campus, so that our students can discover the benefits of collaborative planning with information professionals.

Unfortunately most of our students will be employed in schools that don't have teacher-librarians. Therefore, the single underlying objective of all our instruction is to convince aspiring teachers that inquiry skills can, and must, be taught in schools and that they, as classroom teachers, must be knowledgeable enough to teach these skills to their students. Like our predecessors, we know that our library instruction has a unique, dual purpose: to assist our students in the completion of their program but, even more, to prepare them to transmit information literacy skills in their own classrooms.



Doucette library assistant Tammy Flanders presents children's literature.

Wired for Words: An Online Youth Book Club for Avid Readers

by Linda Shantz-Keresztes

Linda Shantz-Keresztes is past president of the Learning Resources Council and member of the Wired for Words teacher-librarian team.

Background

UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF VARIOUS PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEER efforts of Calgary Board of Education (CBE) teacher-librarians who developed a list of recommended books for the site, Wired for Words (www.wiredforwords.com) was officially launched in November 2001. Wired for Words was hosted and maintained at Canada.com until the fall of 2003, at which time a reorganization of the site and partnership occurred.

Today, TELUS and CBE remain committed to the project. Redesigned, maintained and hosted by media services at the CBE and authored by professional teacher-librarians at the CBE, the new site has been in operation since January 2004.

The Wired for Words site is proud to have won the Calgary Mayor's Choice Award for Technology in Learning and the AMTEC (Association for Media Technology in Education in Canada) Media Award of Merit.

Description of the Site

Wired for Words engages youth worldwide in a fun, interactive online book club that can be accessed by all youth, regardless of their socioeconomic status. The website promotes reading and a love of literature by providing an annotated list of recommended books for

keen readers ages four to young adult. All featured books are evaluated by professional teacher-librarians, with an emphasis on high-quality literature, current publications and Canadian content and authors. The website is also interactive: young readers can submit their own reviews of featured titles, make book suggestions and read others' reviews as well as link to current literary events of interest to them.

Six new titles for each age category are provided in the new features section of the site every month. Previous months' features are found under the past features button. Wherever possible, the description of the feature is linked to the author's website so that readers can get more information about the author and that particular book. Book reviews are found under readers' reviews, both new and past.

In addition to the features and reviews, Wired for Words includes a "what's the buzz?" section that highlights upcoming literary and reading-related events.

These are the special features of the Wired for Words site:

- Professional teacher-librarians from the CBE submit outstanding book titles. These books meet rigorous evaluation and standards criteria that are used widely in school jurisdictions across the province and beyond.
- The Wired for Words site currently contains over 400 featured titles and continues to grow monthly.
- Books selected for the site offer a variety of genres, appealing to both boys and girls.
- The site is a valuable source of Canadian content: 25 per cent of the featured titles are Canadian and works by Canadian authors are featured each month.
- The site focuses on quality literature across a K-12 range and links to author sites, wherever possible.
- The site is colourful and appealing.

- The site is a tremendous resource for the community as a whole or anyone looking for recommendations on stimulating books for young readers.

Wired for Words strives to maintain an environment of excellence through selection of outstanding books and the posting of acceptable readers' reviews. Teacher-librarians screen all writing on the website for appropriate content and language.

Introducing the Wired for Words Team of Teacher-Librarians

Pat Farley is the teacher-librarian at Hillhurst Community School. She is the mother of two avid readers and is most comfortable herself with a book in hand. As students at her school know, Mrs. Farley has many favourite books and is really excited about the richness and variety in children's literature today.

Irene Masciuch is a teacher-librarian and English as a second language teacher at Cappy Smart Elementary School. She taught for 20 years in Spruce Grove, Alberta, and spent four years as a library media specialist in Washington State, U.S.A. Her love for literature, connecting technology to learning, and assisting teachers, students and parents to dive into literature has brought her to this fabulous project. She loves to search for and share great literature in text and on the Web.

Linda Steen has been a teacher-librarian for the CBE for over 25 years. She has loved books and reading for as long as she can remember. The best part of her job as a teacher-librarian at Hawkwood School is talking to teachers and students about books. She loves helping children find those just right books that will inspire them to become avid readers and lifelong learners.

Jacquie Vincent is the teacher-librarian at Ernest Morrow Junior High School. She has been in education for more than three decades and loves having the school's best classroom, the library. Reading is a favourite pastime, because stories, both fiction and nonfiction explore the world of human experience. Where else could readers meet so many extraordinary people in diverse times and places?

Linda Shantz-Keresztes is a teacher-librarian consultant with the AISI (Alberta Initiative for School Improvement) project: Revitalizing School Libraries. She has been a teacher, teacher-librarian and district library specialist for 30 years. Literature, storytelling and the arts are at the heart of her commitment to reading as a quality of life activity. Linda believes that "a tale well told is worth its weight in gold."



Wired for Words teacher-librarians (l-r): Linda Steen, Jacquie Vincent, Pat Farley, Irene Masciuch, Linda Shantz-Keresztes

Strategies for Using the Site with Students

Here are some suggestions from the Wired for Words team of teacher-librarians:

- Create a special display featuring books from the site. Call the display Recommended on Wired for Words, and include reviews of the various featured books. It is sure to become a popular spot in your library or classroom. It will take the commitment of parent volunteers to replenish the display in the library with new titles several times a day.
- Put coloured dots on the Wired for Words books so students can easily find them on the shelves. Promote the titles during book talks with classes.
- Read a picture book to your primary classes and then write a group review for the site. Older elementary students can do their own reviews of a class-read book. This is an excellent way to integrate technology into other curriculum areas in a more authentic way.
- Primary reading literacy strategies can be worked into the site by having students locate book titles by the alphabetical index. For older students give word or question clues for locating titles by characters,

authors or storylines. Students can create their own question clues for their classmates.

- Organize a Wired for Words Book Club at your school and select featured books from the site to read. Readers can chat live and online about their favourite titles.
- Combine online-catalogue search strategies with the Wired for Words site. Ask students to search the online catalogue to see if their library has their Wired for Words title choice. Students will immediately want to get the book and write a review. If you don't have the titles in your collection, this is a great way to have students involved in building your library collection with highly profiled site titles.

- Students from divisions 2 to 4 can create lists of "must reads" in their book journals from various online book sites, including Wired for Words. This is an excellent way to entice students to read a variety of genres and to improve book-reviewing skills.
- Junior and senior high students can conduct searches online in various genre categories, favourite authors and titles for community of readers programs.

Thanks to the Media Services unit of the Calgary Board of Education for permission to use information from the Wired for Words site for this article and from other documents produced by the unit. Thanks also to the Wired for Words teacher-librarians for sharing their profiles and student strategies.

www.
wired
for words
.com

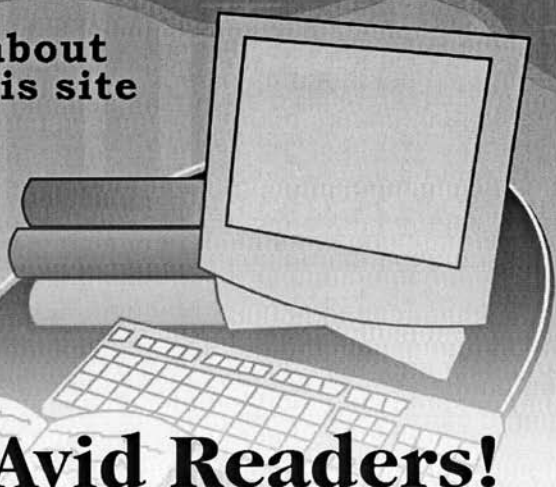


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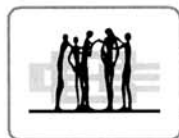


Attention Avid Readers! Hooked on Books?

Check out the **Wired for Words** site
and indulge in your favourite pastime.

www.wiredforwords.com

All books are recommended by teacher-librarians.
Brought to you by the Calgary Board of Education
in partnership with TELUS.



Calgary Board of Education



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Professionally Speaking.....

2005 Alberta Library Conference

by Irene Masciuch

Irene Masciuch is the LRC president and the 2005 conference cochair.

THIS WAS A BUSY YEAR FOR CONFERENCES FOR LRC MEMBERS. Kaleidoscope 8 was in the fall, the Alberta Library Conference (ALC) was in the spring and the Canadian Library Association conference was in June.

At ALC 2005, 29 LRC members, 224 LAA members, 215 ALTA members and 48 nonconfirmed members, which includes the speakers, were in attendance. A total of 529 delegates registered for this conference, but over 750 attended in various capacities (guests, vendors and so on). Ten speakers were obtained on behalf of the LRC.

Due to the generosity of Punch Jackson, our keynote speakers had a setup in the main hall area. This year's theme revolved around Alberta's centennial celebration. Many people in the field of school libraries were honoured at a special presentation on Thursday as an opening reception event.

Our outstanding keynote speakers were Susan Aglukark and Lawrence Lessig. Both left us in awe of their talents and skills. Susan interspersed many of her wonderful songs with her story of the challenge of coming from a small Inuit town to the big southern part of Canada and the development of her singing career, one that she had fought for many years. Lawrence

Lessig is well known within the community of public librarians for providing situations where copyright laws do not stifle innovation. He is chair of the Creative Commons project, professor of law at Harvard Law School and founder of the school's Center for Internet and Society. Even though he spoke on what could be a dull and dry topic, he presented the most interesting PowerPoint presentation we have ever seen. He showed us how the work of various different people could or has been put together to create a unique work that furthers innovation and creativity but still respects the whole notion of copyright. Although his books *The Future of*

Ideas (2001) and *Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace* (1999) are available to anyone on the Web, he reaps the benefits from having them published. We all left with a different view on the notion of copyright.

For our author talks, Richard Scrimger and John Seagrave had us in stitches and provided us with great insight into their motivation for writing. Richard is an author of children's books. His key piece of advice when writing fiction is to lie well. Really well. He told us many stories about his family, and at the end we were left wondering what was true and what was a lie! John's writings relate to his time as a fur trader in northern Canada. He was the last fur trader for the Hudson's Bay Company, and his tales showed how he had to adapt to work with the people of the North.

We enjoyed presentations about the history of school libraries from Dr. Christine Spring-Gifford and Barbara Brydges. Teddy Moline and Fern Reirson provided delegates with ways to implement *Focus on Inquiry*.



Keynote speaker Susan Aglukark.

Toni Samek, from the University of Alberta, presented a talk on the Freedom to Read Initiative for Alberta's English arts teachers. She made many references to how the *Focus on Inquiry* document supports and addresses intellectual freedom for our patrons. Barbara McNeil, from Saskatchewan, gave us information on media literacy, and boys and reading. Both presentations were well attended and of high interest to delegates. The AISI initiatives group on revitalizing school libraries presented delegates with a way to provide schools with a teacher-librarian for some time in the school year. Wendy Grønnestad-Damur and Lindy Pratch, two librarians from the Edmonton Public Library, showed us how the teen survivor online summer reading club worked. They were requested to share it with other libraries as well. Joanne de Groot presented on the topic of picture books and the Alberta curriculum, a topic that is gaining popularity in many jurisdictions around the province. A local Calgary author, Carolyn Fisher, showed us the process of storyboard to storybooks. And Diane Galloway-Solowan took us through Alberta's Online Reference Centre.

Jasper is a wonderful place to hold a conference. Spring was very evident everywhere we looked. We were not plagued by snow (as we have been in the past) and enjoyed sunny and warm days. Of course no conference in Jasper would be complete without at least one animal event. This year our new president-elect Dianne Leong-Fortier was chased back into our meeting cabin by a rather large elk. He came right up to our deck and wanted to join us in our celebrations! We decided to use the back door of the cabin after that.

We were thrilled to present Dr. Lois Barranoik with the Laurence G. Wiedrick Award of Excellence for her contributions as a teacher-librarian. Lois Barranoik has contributed to the development of school library programs through her work in many professional roles—teacher, teacher-librarian, school district consultant, school library educator, researcher, and conference and workshop presenter. She was the full-time teacher-librarian at Centre High School in Edmonton's Boardwalk. Lois was a key member of the instructional team, providing an innovative high school program designed to help students who have had difficulties in regular high school programs to upgrade their education and to complete Grade 12. Currently, while she completes the writing of her doctoral dissertation, she is serving as a half-time teacher-librarian at Windsor Park Elementary School.

Lois has an outstanding ability to participate as a teaching partner in developing school library programs

that support and enhance student learning. Lois has demonstrated originality in her professional work, designing (and helping others to design) library programs and facilities that are suited to the unique demands of the students and teachers who use them. She has drawn on the research literatures of education and of library and information studies to address problems of practice. She faces tasks with openness and with a readiness to develop new and fresh approaches. As her very long list of professional workshops and conference presentations indicates, Lois has been very active for more than 10 years in developing and promoting the use of the library through inservice education programs. She was also cochair of the organizing committee for the Alberta Library Conference and served as president of the LRC for one year.

Lois has taught an undergraduate course, Resource-Based Teaching. Her guest lectures in several graduate courses have been equally well received. She has co-taught a graduate course, Instructional Practices in Library and Information Services. As a teacher, Lois demonstrates exemplary planning and presentation skills; she uses active learning strategies to help the students grasp unfamiliar concepts. Lois's exemplary teaching skills have been recognized in two nominations by her peers for Alberta Learning's Excellence in Teaching Award. Lois is now the instructor for the online graduate course, School Library Collection Development, in the Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program at the University of Alberta. Through that course and through her publications and presentations, Lois reaches teacher-librarians across Canada and beyond. Lois's doctoral research, for which she was awarded the University of Alberta's most prestigious doctoral scholarship, will extend the current research related to "the research process" or inquiry-based learning. Her proposal to present her doctoral research was accepted for the Research Forum held in conjunction with the annual conference of the International Association of School Librarianship that was held in Durban, South Africa, in 2004. Without a doubt, Lois's work will continue to have a positive impact on the development of school library programs in Canada and around the world.

ALC 2006 "Literacy in a Digital Age" will be held at the Kananaskis Lodge May 4–6 in conjunction with the Education Technology Council conference (ETCATA), formerly known as the Computer Council.

Please watch for a call for speakers. If you have any ideas for speakers, please e-mail Lynda Smith, conference chair, at lpsmith@cbe.ab.ca.

ALC 2005



Fern Reirson presenting at ALC.



PEC liaison Greg Jeffery and conference cochair Irene Masciuch (l-r).



ATA staff advisor Frank Horvath and Alberta Education representative Terry Kernaghan (l-r).



Webmaster April Tilson and publications editor Dianne Dunse (l-r).



Secretary Pat Ropchan and Calgary Regional president Dianne Leong-Fortier (l-r).



Teddy Moline and 2006 conference cochair Lynda Smith (l-r).

Kaleidoscope 8 November 2004

by Dianne Dunse

IT HAS BEEN ALMOST A YEAR NOW since Kaleidoscope 8 but the memories are bright and clear. It was another special time to get together with teachers, librarians and teacher-librarians to enjoy the authors and illustrators that we promote in our places of work. Following is a photo essay on the events of K-8. Enjoy! Remember! And be ready for K-9 in 2008.



Conference chair Jane Magee with the poster *Journeys of Heart and Mind* by Brian Deines.



Author Linda Granfield.



Keynote audience.



Tea party as we say goodbye for four years.



K-9 cochair Cathy Yusep.



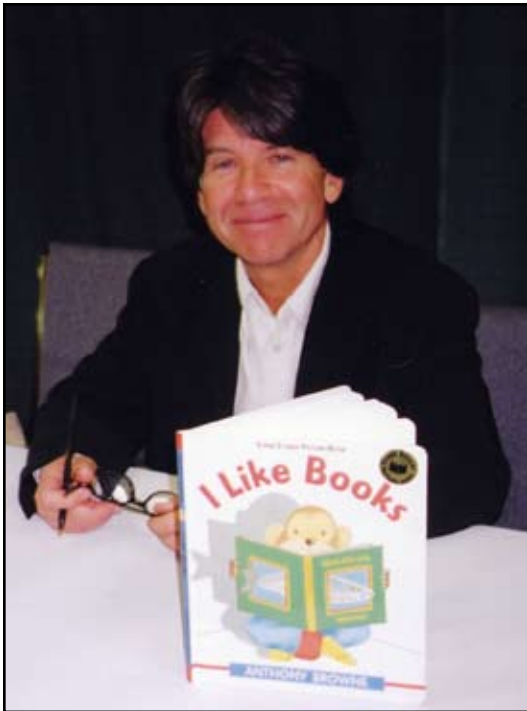
Author Karen Levine.



Lining up for autographs.



Executive members Fran Boyden, Jane Magee and Nikki Coles.



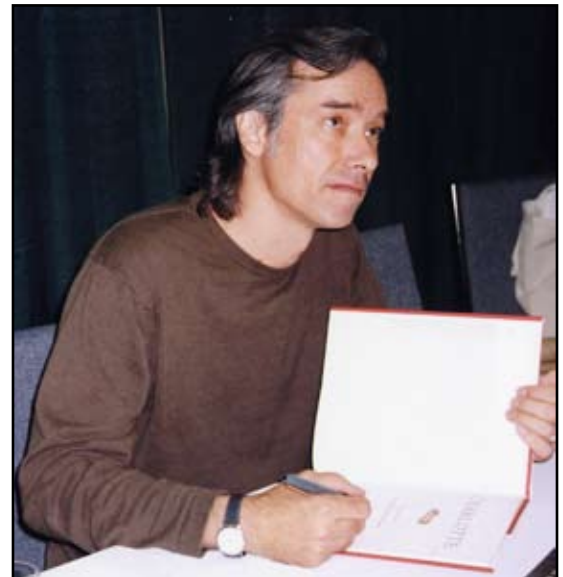
Author-Illustrator Anthony Browne.



Bag lunch on the rug!



Dianne Dunse and author Kenneth Oppel.



K-8 illustrator Brian Deines.

2005 AGM Minutes

April 29, 2005

by Pat Ropchan

1. **Call to order:** Rhonda Hunter called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.
2. **Greetings and opening remarks:** Rhonda introduced executive members and expressed thanks to Linda Shantz-Keresztes for her role as past president, and Irene Masciuch, president-elect and conference chair 2005.
3. **Approval of agenda:** April Tilson moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Jane Magee. Motion carried.
4. **Introduction of 2004/05 executive.**
5. **Minutes of April 16, 2004 AGM:** Dianne Leong-Fortier moved to accept the minutes of the last annual meeting. Seconded by Lynda Smith. Motion carried.
6. **Reports:**
 - 6.1 **Treasurer.** Membership has increased due to the K-8 conference; this will be reflected in our ATA grant. Donna reminded regionals to submit audited financial statements to her by mid-July. The travel allowance has been increased from \$.25 to \$.40 per kilometre. Seed money for conferences is \$2000. Donna moved that we accept the proposed budget for the following year. Seconded by April. Motion carried. A budget committee will be established to examine the budget process.
 - 6.2 **President: Rhonda Hunter:** Rhonda reported on positive interactions with Gene Zwozdesky, the minister of education, and read out a

personal note she received from him. In her letter congratulating him on his appointment, she included information about what is required to bring school libraries up to par. The role of teacher-librarian document has been updated (previous edition was 1985) for our handbook. It was also sent to the minister. The LRC handbook has also been revised. A brochure, posted on our website and available at conferences, has been published but will be revised and edited over the coming year. Fern Reirson represented the LRC at the Northeast Teachers' Convention. Other conferences will be asking for LRC representation. The *Focus on Inquiry* document has been well promoted and sold; it has been nominated for the 2005 IASL ProQuest Information and Learning—elibrary Commendation award. LRC has joined the Strategic Alliance of Library Advocacy (SALA) and will need to send a representative from our



2005/06 LRC executive. Back row, l-r: Frank Horvath, Greg Jeffery, Dianne Leong-Fortier, Dianne Dunse, Fern Reirson, April Tilson, Terry Kernaghan. Front row, l-r: Pat Ropchan, Linda Shantz-Keresztes, Irene Masciuch, Donna Grove, Rhonda Hunter, Lynda Smith.

executive to the meeting in June. Rhonda attended the last meeting at which discussion focused on Rocky Mountain Book Awards, the Lois Hole Campus Digital Library, ALPEN (Alberta Public Library Electronic Network) and the ORC target of Grade 6 students. The research report *Canadian Books in School Libraries* can be downloaded from the Association of Publishers' website (www.publishers.ca). CASL-PAC (Canadian Association for School Libraries-Provincial Advisory Committee) teleconference included the presidents from the provincial school library councils who discussed the concerns facing school libraries in Canada. SLIC is seeking submissions for the next issue (www.schoollibraries.ca). CASL memberships are \$50 per year. Rhonda congratulated Jane Magee and Irene Masciuch for two excellent conferences.

- 6.3 **Past President: Linda Shantz-Keresztes:** Linda spoke about her role related to advocacy, elections, awards and the revision of the LRC handbook. The award and election nomination form will be posted on the website and included with the fall issue of *Teacher-Librarian Today*. The handbook, which includes the rewrite of the Role of the Teacher-Librarian, has been posted on the website. Our education grant award has been increased to \$1,000. A job description of the webmaster and an Intellectual Freedom statement will be added to the constitution.
- 6.4 **President-Elect: Irene Masciuch:** Her main duties have been related to the conference. Edmonton and Calgary Regionals both applied for and received a Kaleidoscope grant (\$500 each). Irene was the LRC representative for the visit by the Japanese delegation of teacher-librarians.
- 6.5 **PEC: Greg Jeffery:** Gene Zwozdesky attended Provincial Executive Council at which some of the discussion was on teacher-librarians. *Clarification of services to councils:* membership in councils and attendance at teachers' conventions are not available to central office administrators who have opted out of active membership. *Administrators Issues and Concerns committee:* a new ATA committee has been established. The issue of teacher-librarians is starting to appear in collective bargaining. *Unfunded liability:* four-phase-plan to begin some serious work to retire this liability. There was a positive reception by the minister of a presentation related to the Teachers' Retirement Fund.
- 6.6 **Staff: Frank Horvath:** *Reporting of grade level of achievement:* The government is moving ahead

using a phase-in approach rather than a trial approach. By 2008, all schools must report in four core subjects. *Computer adaptive testing:* government sent request for proposals to private industry. Questions were raised about who could handle this (testing companies in the U.S.), maintenance of this bank, undermining of the role of the teacher. Grade 4 achievement tests will not go forward. Requirements for the reporting of multiple-choice test results in Grades 6 and 9 to parents have been modified to include only one Grade 6 and 9 class in each jurisdiction. *School Act:* changed to include new areas of responsibility for teachers. *Accountability:* government has used provincial testing as a measure of accountability. ATA is working with stakeholders on a set of principles guiding a sound accountability system. The *Accountability in Education Document* (prepared by a PEC subcommittee) was approved in principle by ARA. *Education Week: Alberta Centennial ...* ATA started Education Week in 1928 to ensure that Albertans know more about the good things being done in schools. We need to encourage more celebration during this week. *Education budget:* Boards are only getting 3.8 per cent.

6.7 **Publications:** *Teacher-Librarian Today* will be published in October and will be dedicated to Lois Hole. Dianne asked for submissions and photos about Lois Hole, things happening in your library and so on. Laurence Weidrick Award winners will be updated and posted. The due date for submissions is June 15, not June 30. School library honourees from the slide show at the conference will be included in *Teacher-Librarian Today*. Kaye Steward will send Dianne Dunse the speech she gave at the opening event of the conference for inclusion in the journal and will give April materials from the last celebrated anniversary of the LRC.

6.8 **Alberta Learning:** Revised Teaching Resources Policy will be posted shortly (includes websites and e-resources). Video consortium information was highlighted. *Focus on Inquiry* document: sales figures for the first fiscal year: 2,540 copies sold. Since April 1, 158 more have been sold.

6.9 **University Liaison: Jennifer Branch:** as printed

6.10 **LAA Representative: Anne Carr-Wiggin** as printed

6.11 **Website: April Tilson:** The handbook and brochure are online and the Calgary Regional site is linked to ours. April extended an invitation to other regionals to be included.

Please send requests and items for posting. April will look into updating the look of the web page this next year.

6.12 Conferences

6.12.1 **ALC Conference 2005: Irene Masciuch:** 29 LRC members attended the ALC Conference in this year of four major conferences.

6.12.2 **Kaleidoscope 8: Jane Magee:** K-8 resulted in a profit of \$25,000. Jane thanked the LRC and the members of the executives with which she worked to bring the conference to fruition. Cathy Yusep has been named the chair of K-9.

6.12.3 **Conference 2006: Lynda Smith:** May 4-6. ATACC and LRC joint conference. Richard Tapp is the ATACC conference chair. The conference theme is "Literacy in the Digital Age."

6.13 Regional Reports

6.13.1 **South East: Rhonda Hunter:** Rhonda reported on time allotted to four elementary teachers and cutbacks in the high schools. An impressive list of events was organized in the regional. A district review of libraries is ongoing.

6.13.2 **Calgary: Dianne Leong-Fortier:** Dianne outlined a series of PD events provided for TLs and teachers in the region. The regional has developed an event/workshop evaluation form that will be posted on the LRC website. The Calgary Regional has developed its own website which is linked to the provincial LRC site. The initiative this year is to try to expand membership.

6.13.3 **Central:** No report.

6.13.4 **Edmonton: Fern Reirson:** The regional sponsored an ORC workshop plus workshops by Duncan Anderson and Toni Samek. Advocacy conducted by the regional included hosting the Japanese teacher-librarians (of which there are 20,000 in Japan. Who will host subsequent visits by groups to maximize?). Gene Zwodzdesky came to see Lois Barranoik teach, and Fern will invite him to see her do a video-conferencing lesson with a teacher. Fern gave presentations to the school board and was interviewed by CBC. Fern will send a web link for the parent group which is advocating for school libraries. Contact Lois Barranoik for *Focus on Inquiry* posters. A discussion took place about the problem of membership lists from ATA not being up to date or complete. Fern moved that we request that the ATA provide the regionals and the provincial president with a full membership list on a monthly basis. Donna seconded. Carried. This will be an agenda item for a subsequent meeting.

6.13.5 **Peace:** As printed.

6.13.6 **Fort McMurray:** As printed.

7. Election of Officers:

President: Irene Masciuch

Past president: Rhonda Hunter

President-elect: Dianne Leong-Fortier

Secretary: Pat Ropchan

Treasurer: Donna Grove

Conference Chair: 2006: Lynda Smith

8. **Awards:** April Tilson, on behalf of the LRC, presented the Laurence G. Wiedrick Award to Lois Barranoik.

9. **Action Items:** No action items.

10. **New Business:**

10.1 **Name change of the LRC:** Please submit name suggestions to Irene Masciuch

10.2 **New award in honour of Lois Hole:** This award will be for a community leader who is recognized by the LRC for advocacy in the name of school libraries. The award will consist of a plaque and a book (up to \$50).

10.3 **Webmaster:** This position will be added to the executive.

Irene moved that all reports be accepted as presented. Donna seconded the motion. Motion carried. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Grace MacDougall. Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

The ATA Educational Trust

The ATA Educational Trust is a registered charitable organization closely affiliated with the Alberta Teachers' Association. Each year the Trust offers a number of bursaries and grants to Alberta teachers. During 2005/06, more than 50 teachers from across Alberta will share approximately \$40,000 in grants and bursaries offered by the Trust.

The Trust now offers conference grants that teachers can use to help cover the costs of (1) attending a specialist council conference or (2) making a presentation at a specialist council conference. The deadline for applying to attend or make a presentation at a conference taking place in 2005/06 has passed. If you are interested in applying for a grant for the 2006/07 school year, please check the Trust website sometime in December at www.teachers.ab.ca/Professional+Development/Grants+and+Scholarships/.

School Library Programs

A Year in the Life of an AISI Teacher-Librarian Consultant

by Ellen Sears



Ellen Sears has worked for the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) for 23 years as a teacher-librarian in elementary, junior and senior high schools. Her last teacher-librarian position was at Crescent Heights High School before taking this consultant's position in 2003/04. She has previously been editor of Teacher-Librarian Today. Copyright © 2005 Ellen Sears.

AISI Application Process

WHEN THE POSTING FOR A TEACHER-LIBRARIAN CONSULTANT for the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) project came up in late June 2003, I applied for it. I was interviewed for the position on June 30 at 3 p.m. while others were packing their bags and heading off for a fabulous holiday somewhere. A week later, I was awarded the position and needed to make that dreaded call to my principal to let him know that I was moving on. He was very supportive of this leadership opportunity, and we parted ways. I later returned to my school library office to gather my files and belongings and to leave the familiarity and comfort of the school where I had made good friends and shared laughs with great colleagues. With a sad heart and questioning my sanity, I ventured forth onto that unknown path.

Travelers, there is no path, paths are made by walking.

—Antonio Machado, Spanish poet

Major Responsibilities

The position posted indicated library consultant services to 22 schools in CLC 5 (now part of area IV). I would be involved with Grades 1–9, not high schools that had teacher-librarians. The purpose of the project was to provide leadership and professional development to build teacher capacity for broad-based information literacy and to promote the development of quality collections of resources. This position provided school-based and CLC support for the schools involved with the other complementary AISI projects. The major responsibilities were as follows:

- Collaborate with school personnel in building the capacity of students, teachers, administrators and parents to create information-literate learning communities. (See Dr. Jamie McKenzie's work on this topic at www.fno.org.)
- Ascertain the information-literacy needs specific to each school and their stakeholders through discussions with principals and their staff.
- In collaboration with library staff, assist schools in developing a comprehensive, learning-based collection development plan for each school's learning resources (both print and electronic).
- Ensure that the renewal of the library collection reflects the needs arising from the inquiry-based learning projects that occur within the information-literate community.
- Coordinate site-based professional development in teaching and learning related to information-literacy strategies.
- Support further professional development and promote communication through active participation in the provision of resources and expertise to the existing school library network and the Calgary Board of Education Community of Practice website called Information-Literate Learning Communities.

- Assist in establishing project evaluation measures.
- Work within the project budget.
- Work collaboratively with system specialists to ensure best use of system resources.
- Assist the system principal, AISI and project coordinator in the continuing support for districtwide library initiatives.



AISI Project Goals: Revitalizing School Libraries

When I received a copy of the project application, four distinct improvement goals were stated:

1. Students will increase their appreciation of the creative arts, literature, various media formats and other aesthetic representations, and a value for lifelong learning.
2. Students will increase their information-literacy skills including responsible and ethical use of information; respect for information from diverse perspectives and values; the capacity to critically evaluate the relevance, authenticity and validity of information and its source; the capacity to strategically process, organize and filter information to meet individual or collaborative learning needs; modifying, revising and transforming information for communication to an intended audience; and demonstrating competence and proficiency in the technical uses of traditional and digital information and media tools (Asselin, Branch and Oberg 2003).
3. Teachers will incorporate inquiry-based learning opportunities in a variety of curricular areas.
4. School communities will demonstrate an increased awareness of the traits of an information-literate school over three years.

The project is directly related to General Outcome 3 of the Alberta Education English Language Arts Program of Studies, Manage Ideas and Information, which states: "The ability to manage information is important in school, in the workplace, on the land, and for personal growth and satisfaction."

Our goal is to create information-literate learning communities, as profiled by *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada* (Asselin, Branch and Oberg 2003, p. 5).

As a result of working collaboratively with classroom teachers in the integration of information-literacy skills

and strategies, the teacher-librarian consultant expects that student achievement will increase as curriculum planning and instruction will be responsive to the needs of all learners (Lance 2002).

The Basic Setup

As late August came around, I realized that I didn't know where my office would be located, so I called the director who had sponsored this project in her area of 22 schools. She contacted the project coordinator, Jane Magee, who informed me that I would be housed in an office in the library at Mount Royal Junior High School. They had a desk and a phone available for my use, and the rest was left for me to set up. I called the principal there and introduced myself and was reassured by her supportive and welcoming message. She let me know I would be considered as part of their staff, so that was a blessing. I had been feeling disconcerted by the change and anxieties about the job that were floating about. When I met the library assistant there, we formed a fast bond that lasts today. She welcomed me there and invited me to be involved with the events in that school library. Together, we immediately started looking at the collection, and during the year we improved the collection and automated the library.

This project is the only AISI library project in the province, and while I have many teacher-librarian colleagues in the profession, most are school-based and their numbers have dwindled drastically provincewide over the past 10 years. So becoming part of a new network of teachers and library assistants helped to ease that sense of disconnection that a person can experience when changing from being school-based for many years to doing system work. I kept busy with getting supplies,

such as a file cabinet, table and file folders, cell phone, laptop and digital camera for the work ahead. I bought two journals to record my work, thoughts, insights and ideas, and recorded them faithfully, so that when the AISI annual report was due, I would have some pertinent data to include in it.

The Nature of the Work: Where's the Blueprint?

From this starting basis, I set up my lists of contacts: the schools and their addresses and phone numbers, and their administrators and library staff names. Then I contacted school principals by letter to inform them of the project and its goals and intentions. The next step was to follow up with an e-mail and the letter attached so that no one would be missed. Once this had been done, I telephoned (cold calls) principals to ask for an appointment to come to the school. Most principals were open to the project and wonderful in allowing me to meet with them and then meet with their staff at a staff meeting or a future professional development event.

Many asked for time to present the nature of inquiry to their teachers, because this was a hot topic in the area. The 22 schools had an AISI project entitled "Multiple Literacies: Looking into Inquiry," whereby a group of principals met and discussed the nature of inquiry and how to best implement it. The administrator inquiry group welcomed me to their meetings, and I explained the project and other matters about their library collections. Making these contacts really helped to launch the project into the minds of the administrators and from there calls for assistance began to emerge. The group was involved with the Galileo Project from the University of Calgary, and each school was engaged in some kind of professional development with Galileo and their teachers. I was so fortunate to be able to attend the Galileo orientation and to meet and work with teachers who were engaged in this approach to inquiry.

After one such meeting, I was contacted by a school principal, who was frantic to get help and support for the library so that students could have access to newly purchased

resources. I will be forever grateful to Richmond Elementary School for the invitation to work with their library assistant, who needed to sort through the new resources that had been purchased with a \$16,000 fundraiser by the parents. I discovered that this school was a model in revitalizing school libraries prior to my appearing on the scene. They discarded books, painted the library facility and ordered vast amounts of learning resources and new furniture. It was looking and smelling so new that it was like Christmas day there! A great deal of clerical work was needed to get the resources processed and in the automated database. The library assistant was only working .429 (a standard with the CBE in elementary schools). Help was needed, so we organized parent groups to do some of the work that library volunteers have been doing for decades. Family members were seconded as well to help process volumes of work. All in all, it took almost two years, and the results are wonderful. The students are the beneficiaries in this massive endeavour.

In the school where my office was located, I worked with the junior high library assistant getting the collection weeded and preparing a Collection Development Plan, a three-year period. We spent a great deal of time doing this work because the collection was outdated in many sections and there were limited funds to replace resources as well. When the library assistant lobbied for increased funds from the principal and school council, she was rewarded with more funds to increase the collection based on the established priorities in the school-development plan. This result was very gratifying.





Key Teachers

One thing that really surprised me was that I knew a lot of teachers at the various schools that I served. Most had worked with me when I was a teacher-librarian, so they were very willing to get involved with their students in an inquiry project at some point during the year. They became key people in planning and collaborating, and I thank them for their willingness to partner with me and do this work. I appreciated their trust that I could fulfill their expectations. This was very rewarding in what can be lonely work. In fact, this feeling became a recurrent theme in my work throughout the year. In my area, there were three teacher-librarians in the 22 schools; two of them were halftime and had classroom teaching duties as well. The area high schools had full-time teacher-librarians, but I wasn't involved at that level during the first year of this project. I networked with these people, but I wasn't working in their schools.

Assessment of Library Needs

Once I met with principals, I was able to assess the needs of individual school libraries and look at the resources there, determining what should be culled and what gaps were in the collection. Then, the prioritizing of needs for a resource-based school library budget was done. This activity involved a member of that school staff—a library assistant or a teacher designate for the library. Often this person was an administrator assigned to the library. Just as often, this person lacked experience, education or training in their libraries, but was a willing spirit and wanted to improve the collections, usage, awareness of online resources available and connection with students or curriculum. They were willing to read recommended articles or books, attend workshops and do one-to-one

consultation. Many times I presented this project and its intention to build information-literate learning communities within the area to schools on professional development days, at staff meetings or during sessions when AISI provided funding for teacher release time.

I found that there were so many issues and concerns to be dealt with in the schools. Some collections had greatly deteriorated and needed to be tossed and started again. We salvaged what we could and then begged for budgets to refurbish. In one school, a corporate partnership donated \$2,500, and combined with the school's decentralized budget of \$2,500, the school was able to

order new resources, the priority being fiction for their elementary students. An additional amount pledged for the following year allowed for a decent beginning to the collection changes. At one time, a school library budget fund in the CBE was determined to be 30 per cent of the school budget, but those guidelines have fallen by the wayside out of necessity in many schools. With cutbacks in funding, time wears away at a collection and it shows. How can inquiry take place with insufficient learning resources? Inquiry requires a broad range of resources to accommodate a broad range of students. Electronic resources are vital to this process, as are audiovisual resources, but we still need books. Providing adequate funding for this need is critical to student learning and reading interests.

How many times in the first year of this project did I see storage rooms full of books? (What do we do with all those extra copies of the Heritage series that were given to schools? They sit in storage rooms these days, too good—rich in Alberta history—to throw out and not good enough or inclusive enough for our progressive learning practices.)

How many professional libraries within schools continue to have outdated practices in books still on their shelves? And the dust! We spent hours washing and cleaning. How many library assistants working part-time with hundreds of children to serve can do all the cleaning in addition to their regulated duties of managing school libraries? Volunteers become scarce and nonexistent in many schools as more and more parents work outside the home.

Well, library assistants had a lot of questions and wanted to have someone in leadership who would provide answers and advocate for their concerns. Within the area where I worked, a grassroots library focus group had been established and met every second month to discuss their concerns, how to do certain tasks

and how to solve problems together. This group included library staff from the 22 schools that I was assigned, so I became involved with them as a member and learned of their difficulties. They wanted to be heard by senior administrators outside the schools and their loudest cry was over the lack of teacher-librarians to encourage the use of the libraries in terms of teaching and learning, and the lack of training. They wanted a library standard and library policies and someone to go to when conditions were not good. They perceived a real disconnect between students, resources and someone to teach students how to use the resources. In other words, the students were lacking in information-literacy skills and strategies. This group advocated to have their needs addressed through the area office. Fortunately, the newly appointed area assistant principal became involved with the group and listened to their concerns. As a result, one of the area development strategies became support for library assistants and respect for the work they do in their schools. I too listened well and started a lunch-bunch group with my 22 schools so that the part-time people could attend meetings once a month during the day if they were unable or unwilling to attend the meetings held by the other group after school. I brought in speakers and the information from the library focus group, and we networked our information well. I felt enriched by this group. We knew that a new web-based automation system was coming, though 18 out of the 22 schools in my area had not been on the old automated system at all. This same 18 were part of a total of 45 schools out of 220 in the CBE that had never been bar-coded, so there was much discussion and work to bar-code their collections. This was a great cleanup time with adding, deleting and discarding material that shouldn't be migrating over to the new system coming in the fall 2004. I was busy determining all the details of the impending changeover. I travelled a lot in the first year and divided my time between needy school libraries and teaching collaboratively with teachers.

Teaching and Learning

There have been excellent experiences working with teachers. In one elementary school, we collaborated on an inquiry, called "The I Wonder" project, where children could create their own inquiry into any topic, by choosing a topic of personal interest to them. The dedication, motivation and commitment that came from that work were astounding and gratifying. Children were taught how to ask good questions (essential

questions) about their work to facilitate deeper thinking about it. Diverse thinking skills and connected thoughts were readily explored. It was very exciting to work with the children as they were taught learning resources, online resources and the names of people who could provide answers to the questions. I helped one young boy set up an interview with an excavator because that was his all-consuming interest. He came away with satisfying answers to his questions.

At another school, we had a schoolwide inquiry into what the community looked like before the building of the railway, and from there, wonderful events and activities occurred that focused on Aboriginal studies. The children participated in Aboriginal dances and learned the steps involved; they created art and sketching from actually looking across the ridge at the prairie as it might have been before European settlement; and they talked with elders, who showed artifacts of their culture and told stories and honoured the Aboriginal way of life, customs and beliefs. Informational inquiry occurred in the school library with all the grades and children went to centres set up in various classrooms too. It was an absorbing two weeks. Later, a celebration of the event took place with food and dancing in the gym. Bannock and stew were served to children and parents in a communal environment. The very nature of inquiry lends itself to this kind of commitment and motivation and seems to inspire wonderful learning events.

Previously I mentioned Richmond School as a model of revitalizing the school library, and I want to state for the record how the principal there went one step further by hiring an assistant principal to do administrative work



and to assume the teaching and learning responsibility for inquiry processes in a .6 library position. I applaud that effort to entrench inquiry and the basis of this work within that school community.

I presented this AISI project to 150 elementary school principals in the spring of 2004 as part of a larger presentation about the crisis in school libraries and the work that needs to be done to improve the situation. Copies of *The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries* by Ken Haycock (2003) were distributed to principals, who were also made aware of the new publication *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*. The nature and scope of this project allowed the principals to see another model that could be implemented in the improvement of their school library.

Professional Development

I believe that the opportunities for personal growth and development with AISI are unlimited. The AISI office meets the needs of its program teachers and consultants in a myriad of ways to facilitate innovation and new practices. Through working closely with their teachers in the field, they determine what workshops and sessions would be of benefit to the AISI community, and experts are brought in to provide the necessary information. Workshops on communication and writing for newsletters, journals and letters or e-mails are basic to doing work within schools.

Then a great deal of support is given as one tries to put together the AISI annual report. Having never done one, I was nervous—I had to compile a report that made sense and showed how the work helped student achievement so that the funding wouldn't get yanked. Fortunately, I had kept extensive journal notes (field notes), gathered evaluation forms for every workshop or presentation that I gave in schools and interviewed students, teachers and principals. The hope is always to

validate one's work, so it was gratifying to discover in the fall that the project would be extended to include four more teacher-librarian consultants. The nature of the project would be the same, but we would work as a team in the five areas of the CBE. Our offices would be situated in our respective areas. This was exciting news that I learned at the end of June. I would not be alone in this work anymore! This change also meant that I would now have 45 schools, not just 22!

This project has just completed its second of a three-year AISI cycle. There is a great deal to tell the readers about the second year and the upcoming third year but we are limited in space. So I hope that the second and third parts, which involve five AISI teacher-librarian consultants working systemwide in the CBE and in their various areas, will be a future article.

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Teacher-Librarians and the City Centre Education Project: A Collaborative Model

by Anne McClement

Anne McClement is a teacher-librarian at Eastwood School, Edmonton, Alberta.

THIS ARTICLE IS AN ACCOUNT OF THE TEACHER-LIBRARIAN'S ROLE as it pertains to the City Centre Education Project (CCEP) in Edmonton. This is a unique project in Edmonton with an exhaustive list of innovations, but this article explores the teacher-librarian's role as related to the three pillars of the city centre project:

1. Improvements in teaching
2. Improvements in organizational services and functions
3. Improvements in working with agencies

Pillar One: Improvements in Teaching

During the fall of 2001 a group of teacher-librarians were brought together for a three-year project. We had varying degrees of experience in school libraries, but we all had solid teaching experience. We approached this next career stage with excitement and apprehension.

Our first question, other than how to organize the seven libraries we inherited, was, how to increase achievement for the 1,700 students we represent? How can we work with and sometimes through teaching staff? Will we survive?

It quickly became apparent that we all had something in common—we collaborated easily together and bonded quickly. This was our strength. We began to assess where we were in terms of collaborative planning and teaching, and informally used David Loertscher's (1999) levels of instructional consultation taxonomy. We were aware that many of the school staff had never worked

with a teacher-librarian before or had done so when the role was quite different. We quickly realized that we had a long road ahead to develop the collaboration necessary to successfully infuse information literacy skills into the curriculum.

With the guidance of Drs. Diane Oberg and Jennifer Branch, both invaluable contacts from the University of Alberta, we devised an informal but strong commitment to improve the level of collaborative involvement. We began examining and reflecting on the international research that gave credibility to a high level of collaborative involvement with teachers and promotion by the principals. This steadily increased in all city centre schools, and in the third year, the development of the *Focus on Inquiry* document made our position more relevant. There was no shortage of research related to the impact of the teacher-librarian on achievement, but having this in one concise resource gave us more vigour.

Some of our collaborative planning with teachers is still on the fly, but there are more instances when it has been formally planned. Even after four years, we feel that we are in the beginning stages, but we have a definite foundation. Some of us have some strong computer skills, so the ability to integrate information and communications technology (ICT) objectives into topics of study, cross referencing with the language arts, science and social studies objectives seemed attractive in developing partnerships.

The Improving Aboriginal Success Through Cultural Pride Project also facilitated the leadership of the CCEP teacher-librarians as we worked with Sandra Woitas to develop partnerships and resources that would help students and teachers see their studies through different eyes by infusing Aboriginal knowledge into the science and language arts.

In our monthly group meeting, we hold grade-level meetings for all city centre staff. Many groups meet more than the designated times, but the focus is on sharing to increase and improve services for students. Many great teaching ideas and projects are shared during these times.

We also benefitted by visits to other schools, such as the afternoon with Dr. Lois Barranoik, the teacher-librarian at Windsor Park School. Lois warmly welcomed us and acted as a strong mentor, stimulating us to continue striving for collaborative units of instruction.

How We Organize

One core belief of the CCEP is that poverty should not limit access to quality experiences. Not many would argue with that, but it proves to be difficult to implement that belief into the materialization of quality resources.

Our first major challenge was to get over the hurdle of bibliographic control and then provide both physical and intellectual access to resources. We insisted on trained technicians to help clear this obstacle, and now, after three years, we've all converted to a common type of database, Follett, in the hopes that one day we'll be linked to a common website. Teachers and students can access the collection remotely now, and after years of insisting on bibliographic control, people can locate those resources more quickly and accurately.

The second challenge was the question of how expensive resources would multiply, while increasing the average age of the collection. The age of collections has improved due to help from administrators, Sandra Woitas and her links with corporate partners. For example, in the 2003/04 school year Parkdale and Eastwood Schools saw a total of \$96,000 in new resources, with 90 per cent being selected by the teacher-librarian. From 2002 to 2004, Eastwood School Library updated the collection to show an average age in the 1990s, a big difference from 1976 in the 2001/02 school year. The best resources were purchased and promoted throughout the schools, and to further multiply the collection, we developed an informal interlibrary loan system, often carting boxes of books back and forth in our vehicles for quick service. Sandra Woitas often referred to us as the bag ladies.

Digital technologies increased and were improved in each school as well, and each went through a complete physical renovation. Many hardworking, collaborative teachers and library technicians were involved in this endeavour. To varying degrees, each teacher-librarian began to become more involved in providing intellectual access to technology and skills, promoting technology use while insisting on a critical eye in evaluation of new software.

Working with Agencies

The list of agencies involved in the city centre project is exhaustive, but one example would likely be the

Riverview Rotary Club's partnership with Eastwood School. After receiving a proposal experiencing many positive interactions in a few city centre schools, they have funded more than \$55,000 in resources, including furnishings, art, technology and books. Planned giving works! They donate community suppers, much time for read-in week and much more.

The Chapters Indigo Give a Gift of Reading is another collaborative project initiated within CCEP. It allowed each of our 1,700 students to receive a brand new book, matching their interest, for Christmas. It required the teacher-librarians to play Santa's elves for awhile, but smiling faces were a great reward. This program will expand to other Canadian cities in the next few years.

There is no question that working with agencies is changing how we do business throughout the libraries in city centre. Library services and resources are now in great demand in the city centre!

How we teach, how we organize, and how we work with agencies, the three pillars of the city centre project, enhance the role of the teacher librarian as an instructor, a manager and a leader. We feel honoured to be part of this project, and though a few of us may be on our way to do different things, the teacher-librarian role as an integral part of the project continues to evolve.

The city centre teacher-librarians are Anne McClement, Eastwood School; Heather Parliament, John A. McDougall School; Diane Normand and Angela Gunn, Norwood School; Hilda Mah, Parkdale School; and Joanne Cameron, McCauley School.

Colin Inglis is the current coordinator and Sandra Woitas was the initial coordinator of the City Centre Education Project. Sandra is now on secondment with Alberta Education.

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Role of the Teacher-Librarian

Reprinted from the Learning Resources Council Handbook. Minor changes have been made to spelling and punctuation to fit ATA style.

Foreword

If a school library were to have a teacher-librarian who taught children and youth the skills necessary to be effective users of information in all its forms, a powerful mechanism would be in place for enabling Canadian children and youth to be literate citizens, lifelong learners and contributing adults in a learning society. (Asselin, Branch and Oberg 2003, 5)

THE PRESENCE OF A QUALIFIED TEACHER-LIBRARIAN IN SCHOOL IS critical to the success of literate learners. The leadership and direction required are best offered by a teacher-librarian with successful classroom teaching experience and related university coursework. The teacher-librarian has a leadership role in ensuring the integration of information skills and strategies into curriculum by collaborating with administrative staff, teachers, students and parents. This collaboration creates a school instructional program that increases learning opportunities and strengthens learning for students.

Historical Perspectives

Prior to 1985, libraries were repositories of print and nonprint resources. Story time, reference and circulation, as well as library skills often taught in isolation from the curriculum, were the services available in Alberta schools. The librarian's main focus was acquiring, organizing and administering the library's resources. Although there were exceptions, the major portion of the librarian's unscheduled time allocation was devoted to the routines associated with managing the school library.

The publication of Alberta Education's *Focus on Learning* in 1985 marked a major change in how school libraries were viewed. It became widely recognized that learners would benefit if teacher-librarians worked with teachers and principals to ensure that information skills and strategies were integrated into the curriculum. In this way, libraries became an integral part of school instructional programs.

As provincial budget cuts introduced in the early 1990s began to affect schools and school districts in Alberta, decisions around school staffing had an impact on the role of the teacher-librarian and the efficacy of the school library.

By 1998 there were only 252 teacher-librarians with assigned library time of .5 or greater, as compared with 550 in 1978, in Alberta schools. By 2000, according to an informal survey, there were only 106 teacher-librarians left (Barranoik and Branch 2002).

In 2002, the government of Alberta established the Commission on Learning to look into various issues in education and make recommendations for improvement.

Teacher-librarians made presentations to the Commission about the deterioration in school libraries, staffing and programs at meetings across the province. See Appendix A for their statement on provincial standards for school libraries, staffing and programs. Although the government has accepted the Learning Commission's recommendation for improvements to libraries, no action has been taken to date regarding implementation.

Improved Learning for Students

Research has shown that a properly staffed library with rich resources can make a measurable difference in student achievement. School library factors alone accounted for increased learning in many studies referenced by Haycock (2003) in his report *The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries: The Case for Reform and Re-Investment*. For example, in a review of four statewide studies of teacher-librarians' impact on student performance, Lance (2002) found increases of between

2 per cent and 9 per cent in student test scores. Scores on academic, paper-and-pencil tests do not tell the whole story, however. Haycock (2003) also cites many studies involving professional judgment and research methodologies that show that students' achievement of the broader and deeper learning outcomes, as listed in Alberta's *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* (Alberta Learning 2004/05, 2), is enhanced.

The professional educator plays a critical role in providing learning opportunities and assessing student progress in such areas as creative thinking, problem solving and the desire for lifelong learning. For example, Alberta Learning's (2004) *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning* encourages schools to provide opportunities for students to develop skills they will need all their lives, learn to cope with problems that may not have clear solutions, deal with changes and challenges to understandings, and shape their search for solutions, now and in the future (Alberta Learning 2004, 3). This resource, developed in collaboration with university experts and teacher-librarians, outlines opportunities for learning that effectively address the broad goals of education.

The success of this approach in teaching and learning depends on teacher-librarians, classroom teachers and principals working together during all phases of program implementation, assessment and reporting.

Similarly, the information and communication technology (ICT) outcomes prescribed by Alberta Education are infused into all subjects and are best implemented in collaborative processes. In order to determine if students are fully competent in using information technologies and if they can demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making, as stated in the *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* (Alberta Learning 2004/05, 2), professional educators must go beyond provincial testing in core subjects. Alberta Learning acknowledges the value of teacher judgment and the opportunity to learn during the assessment process in its 2003 *Classroom Assessment Tool Kit*, written in support of the ICT program of studies.

The requirements for effective school libraries with regards to staffing, collections and facilities are outlined by Asselin, Branch and Oberg (2003) in *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*. The library is best integrated into the school instructional program. The authors go on to state, "The school library program is developed through the collaborative efforts of a school's educational team—the teachers, the teacher-librarian, and the principal" (p. 7).

By fully supporting an effective research model such as *Focus on Inquiry* (Alberta Learning 2004) and by implementing the recommendations in *Achieving*

Information Literacy (Asselin, Branch and Oberg 2003), Alberta could once again be a leader in the field of school libraries. That is when Albertans will be assured that students are achieving the deep, long-term learning outcomes so important in the 21st century.

The Role of the Teacher-Librarian

The school library is an integral part of the school's learning community. Therefore, the school library program should be viewed as an instructional program. The teacher-librarian has a key leadership role in this regard. "As members of the school instructional team, teacher-librarians provide leadership in information literacy and work collaboratively with classroom teachers to ensure that literacy skills are integrated effectively into the instructional program" (Asselin, Branch and Oberg 2003, 7).

The teacher-librarian has an expanded role within each of the following components of the school library program.

Leadership

As leaders in the school community, teacher-librarians must do the following:

- Apply their knowledge of curriculum and its implementation in their daily work
- Work with teachers in developing students' information literacy skills and lifelong reading and learning habits
- Keep abreast of new developments in curriculum, instruction and technological advances
- Participate in professional organizations and serve on advisory and decision-making bodies at school, district, provincial and national levels
- Share research findings at various levels
- Provide inservice to teachers in the area of inquiry-based learning
- Collaborate with teachers to incorporate technological resources into teaching
- Show leadership in needs assessment and goal setting, consultation and program planning
- Demonstrate skills in digital technologies
- Demonstrate leadership in resource evaluation and selection

Collaboration

Collaborative planning is the process by which the teacher-librarian and teachers work together to develop an instructional program that ensures that information

literacy outcomes are integrated into student learning experiences in a developmental and sequential manner.

Within this component the teacher-librarian must take a leadership role in articulating the benefits and the process of cooperative planning to the school staff. To the planning process the teacher-librarian will bring an understanding of the

- linkage of skills and learning strategies with planning processes,
- needs and abilities of the learners within the school library program,
- school library program objectives,
- selection and use of resources appropriate to the unit being planned,
- information literacy skills students need to learn and practise and
- outcomes of all curricular areas.

Instruction

Students must acquire skills and strategies that will help them find, interpret, synthesize and apply information to meet their needs. The teaching of these crucial skills, so that students can meet the future with confidence and hope, is the responsibility of all members of a school's instructional staff. The school library, with its human, material and technological resources, has a significant role to play in this cooperative endeavour.

Within this component the teacher-librarian must take a leadership role in ensuring that cooperatively planned units encompass all phases of the research process. As outlined in *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning* (Alberta Learning 2004), these are as follows:

- Planning
- Retrieval
- Processing
- Creating
- Sharing
- Evaluation
- Reflecting on the process

The teacher-librarian's knowledge of and expertise in this process enables the sharing of the teaching of specific lessons within the units. As well, the teacher-librarian has the responsibility to ensure that the inquiry process is taught as a comprehensive process, systematically and developmentally, to all students in the school.

The teacher-librarian must identify appropriate learning outcomes for the school library program, and with the help of grade-level teachers, build these outcomes into a developmental continuum that

delineates in writing how these learning outcomes will be addressed at the school level.

Management

The management component incorporates those fundamental routines that contribute to the achievement of the goals of the school and result in the effective operation of the library. Within this component the teacher-librarian is responsible for

- arranging and scheduling the facility,
- supervising clerical and other personnel,
- managing a budget to provide resources that reflect quality at an economical price,
- networking with other libraries,
- maintaining an up-to-date automated catalogue of the resources and
- maintaining a library website.

Although the teacher-librarian is responsible for establishing and overseeing routines associated with the management component, these routines should be performed by clerical personnel and volunteers. In this way the teacher-librarian is available to work within the program's primary components—instruction and collaboration.

To be successful in the various roles described above, a teacher-librarian must have certain well-developed qualities. Desired teacher-librarian competencies are outlined in Appendix B.

Conclusion

We are at a time when our children and youth must begin to see themselves as lifelong learners in order to succeed in our knowledge-based society. The school must continue to fulfill its critical role in helping students become successful citizens. It is vital that teacher-librarians participate fully as part of the school community in ensuring that students have the skills and strategies they need for the 21st century. The role of the teacher-librarian, when fulfilled as described in this paper, will enable schools to meet this challenge.

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Appendix A

Standards for School Libraries, Staffing and Programs*

Provincial standards for school libraries, staffing and programs need to be revisited since they were last written in the 1980s. Alberta Learning should work with the Learning Resources Council to draft and implement an effective framework for school libraries. These standards should include the following:

Qualifications

Provincial academic standards need to be set for teacher-librarians with availability through continuing education and postsecondary course work. Incentives should be provided to experienced teachers to upgrade their learning. Due to dramatic funding cuts there has been little motivation for teachers to access this training and therefore there is a shortage of qualified teacher-librarians in the province.

Time Allotment

Every school should have equitable access to the expertise of a qualified teacher-librarian. Every district should have a full-time district teacher-librarian consultant to maintain and support staff, programs and collections. Staffing time percentage should be based on student population (that is, under 150 student population, teacher-librarian would float between two schools).

Facilities

Facility standards for school libraries should be updated (last standards are almost 20 years old: Alberta Learning's *Focus on Research* 1985). Facility updating should include computer hardware, software and cabling needs to be kept on the cutting edge to support new information technologies and information-seeking skills development. Physical plans should incorporate many of

the new collaborative models for learning used in postsecondary education and business institutions. These include collaborative learning break-out rooms and multi-media production labs to enable virtual learning as required.

Programs

School libraries must be a learning lab for students and teachers. Programs should be collaboratively planned under the leadership of qualified teacher-librarians with flexible timetabling. School library programs need to be valued as the vehicle for implementing the infusion of the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) curriculum. The outcome of effective school library programs will be the creation of "information literate communities."

Collections

School library collections for meeting the needs of the 21st century learner must include physical and virtual collections. Standards should require the leadership of a qualified teacher-librarian in the evaluation and selection of these diverse resources. Size of collection should be standardized for all new school libraries and existing school libraries should be maintained through a yearly budget that allocates average dollars per student (to be determined in an agreed upon formula set by Alberta Education in consultation with the Learning Resources Council).

* Recommendations Barranoik and Branch (2002)

Appendix B

Teacher-Librarian Competencies*

This list of competencies outlines the qualities that are important for an effective teacher-librarian. These competencies were prepared by the Association of Teacher-Librarianship in Canada (now the Canadian Association for School Libraries).

Professional Competencies

The teacher-librarian

- places a priority on staff relationships and leadership in the implementation of change;
- provides leadership in collaborative program planning and teaching to ensure both physical and intellectual access to information and commitment to voluntary reading;
- knows curriculum programs mandated by the province, district and school;

- understands students and their social, emotional and intellectual needs;
- has expert knowledge in evaluating learning resources in different formats and media, both onsite and remote, to support the instructional program;
- develops and promotes the effective use of informational and imaginative resources in all formats through cooperative professional activities;
- provides appropriate information, resources or instruction to satisfy the needs of individuals and groups;
- uses appropriate information technology to acquire, organize and disseminate information; and
- manages library programs, services and staff to support the stated educational goals of the school.

- seeks out challenges and sees new opportunities both inside and outside the library,
- sees the big picture,
- looks for partnerships and alliances,
- creates an environment of mutual respect and trust,
- has effective communications skills,
- works well with others in a team,
- provides leadership,
- plans, prioritizes and focuses on what is critical,
- is committed to lifelong learning and
- is flexible and positive in a time of continuing change.

The competent teacher librarian is committed to

- the principles outlined in the Student's Bill of Information Rights,
- implementing curriculum with colleagues,
- initiating collaboratively planned and taught programs to integrate information literacy in the context of the curriculum and
- the effective use of information technologies.

*Taken from Haycock (2003)

Personal Competencies

The teacher-librarian

- is committed to program excellence,

Glimmers of Hope

Three Steps to Saving Our School Libraries

by Dianne Harke

Dianne Harke, teacher-librarian, Victoria School of Performing and Visual Arts, sent the following letter to the Edmonton Journal, January 27, 2004.

KUDOS TO THE *EDMONTON JOURNAL* FOR ENCOURAGING THE provincial government to eliminate the public library fees charged in every town and city in Alberta except Banff (“Free reading in Hole’s honour,” Editorial, January 15, 2004).

May I, on behalf of Alberta’s students, propose another related, and long overdue, “investment opportunity” for our provincial government?

Alberta’s school libraries are (to use the words of Dr. Ken Haycock, author of a recent study titled “The Crisis in Canada’s School Libraries”) “undernourished and undervalued.” In 1978 there were 550 teacher-librarians working halftime or more in Alberta’s schools. By 2000 that number had atrophied to a shockingly low 106.

The advent of the Internet, the inappropriate application of decentralized budgeting models and the underfunding of public education have all played a part in this alarming decline.

Ironically, the erosion in school libraries has been paralleled by an increased emphasis on standardized testing.

What can we do to raise students’ test scores? Well, here is a startling revelation. Dr. Haycock, who surveyed U.S. research dating back as far as 40 years, provides ample evidence that standardized test scores are 10 to 20 per cent higher in schools with a well-stocked and adequately staffed library.

American school library advocates like Laura Bush are leading the way in the revitalization of school libraries. It is time for Alberta to do the same! The steps our provincial government needs to take are simple:

Step 1: Instruct the minister of education to restructure Alberta Learning so there is someone with the expertise and authority to assess the state of school libraries and ensure that improvements are made. Alberta Learning has technology well covered, but not school library programs. We have a minister of gaming in Alberta; surely school libraries are as crucial as casinos!

Step 2: Provide increased funding to education so that school boards and schools are able to support strong school library programs with adequate staffing and budgets.

Step 3: Encourage school boards to provide centralized budget control for essential services like school library and counselling programs.

Yes, as the *Journal* editors reminded us, reading and access to books are a basic necessity. What better place to start with the basics than in Alberta’s schools!

Response from Minister of Education Gene Zwozdesky

On February 22, 2005, Gene Zwozdesky assured us that “careful consideration is being given to this recommendation as part of the business planning process.”

Teacher-Librarians in the Grande Prairie Public Schools

by *Debi Ruhl*

Debi Ruhl is on staff with the Daily Herald-Tribune. Reprinted with permission from the Daily Herald-Tribune, Grande Prairie, February 16, 2005. Minor changes have been made to spelling and punctuation to fit ATA style.

During times of education cutbacks across the province, Marg Ridgeway stands in front of a shelf of books in the Hillside Community School library and knows she's one of the lucky ones.

As the school's teacher-librarian, Ridgeway and her Grande Prairie Public School District counterparts are only a few of the teachers left in the province dedicated to their school libraries, helping students and teachers alike to make literary decisions each day.

"We're really thankful that even during difficult times, our positions were not cut completely. It's very difficult to reinstate a position so while our time may have been cut back, it was never (eliminated)," said Ridgeway, also a vice-principal at Hillside. "There is so much information out there that our students need to become critical users of the library. Our libraries are alive and well used all the time. I'm happy our district has not only supported teacher librarians, but the library program itself."

According to researchers from the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education, Grande Prairie public is the only jurisdiction in the province with trained teacher-librarians in every school—10 in total—who split their time between classroom work and acting as a resource in the library.

Joyce Bainbridge, professor and associate dean at the U of A, says the decision to keep teacher-librarians not only helps teachers plan curriculum, but it exposes students to books they might otherwise pass by.

"There have been a lot of financial decisions in other districts. It's easy to cut the library position. We were very impressed with superintendent Lorne Radbourne's feeling that teacher-librarians are important instructional leaders. He sees their role as being very important but most school districts wouldn't have made that decision," she said from her Edmonton office.

"A lot of teachers know American and British literature through the big publishing companies like Scholastic, but they don't know much about Canadian books, which are mainly independent."

"The role of the teacher-librarian is to work collaboratively with teachers when they plan units so they can show them some good resources. They may not be full-time in the library but they are there. Grande Prairie (teacher-librarians) have a really good network to talk about programs of study and resources to help teachers. They're really well informed."

Based on that, Bainbridge and her colleagues decided to use Grande Prairie schools as the basis of a research project on Canadian literature in elementary schools. With a focus on teachers in Grades 2 and 5, the research team has spent the last several months conducting surveys and interviews about the teacher librarians' knowledge and use of Canadian literature.

"We're really interested in children's literature and that is very much connected to teacher-librarians in schools," Bainbridge said. "Teacher-librarians choose really good literature and they know what the good books are. The overall attitude is really positive toward Canadian books. The quality of responses we received are different than a similar study we did four or five years ago. The teachers are more aware of the school library and the resources available to them."

Although a lot of kids have shifted their focus to television and video games, Ridgeway says there is more demand than ever for good books for students.

"The print word is still really popular with kids. They get to know authors better. We're able to order books tailored to the school for curriculum as well as what is of interest to the students," she said. "Canadian literature is so important for students because it gives them access to stories about their own place and culture and they can learn about history and places in other parts of Canada as well."

The results of the university's study will be used in academic circles to inform teachers and teacher-librarians about the findings and it will also help the U of A look at its own teacher education program to see if changes are necessary.

"Perhaps (mandatory courses in Canadian literature) is one of the things we should be doing," Bainbridge said.

"Hopefully this study will affect practice and will make people think about the books teachers use in their classrooms."

Toronto School Board Hires Teacher-Librarians

by Stephen Abram

Stephen Abram, president of the Canadian Library Association and past president of the Ontario Library Association, wrote this letter to the editor February 24, 2005. Reprinted with permission of the author. Minor changes have been made to spelling and punctuation to fit ATA style.

It should not come as a shock that the TDSB has decided to add more librarians to our schools. It's not so much a bold move as an intelligent one based on 40 years of research that has shown that boards with properly stocked, professionally managed school libraries have the following impacts on student achievement:

Standardized testing scores are 10–20 per cent higher than those which don't have libraries. Higher spending on school libraries correlates to increased reading scores. Increased student visits to the library correlates with higher test scores. Student achievement is higher in schools where the library is open all day and

the teacher-librarian is on duty full-time. At the high school level, school library programs and qualified teacher-librarians are linked to student success in postsecondary education. Teacher-librarians and libraries play a critical role in providing enrichment to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds by providing access to books that may not otherwise be available to them.

Improvements are even more dramatic when teacher-librarians play a leadership role by collaborating with classroom colleagues, teaching information literacy skills and participating in technology management within the school. The relationship between library resource levels and increased achievement is not explained away by other school variables (for example, per student spending, teacher-pupil ratios) or community conditions (for example, poverty, demographics).

All of this research is summarized in the Haycock Report at www.peopleforeducation.com/librarycoalition/Report03.pdf. No other investment has been shown to deliver such consistently dramatic results. The TDSB is showing real leadership in Canada to make these budgetary investments. We live in an information society. When schools don't invest in libraries, it says a lot about how they are preparing learners for their future in Canada's knowledge-based economy. Kudos to trustee Atkinson and the TDSB trustees who voted for this measure.

International Collaboration: Japanese School Library Association Comes to Canada

by Fern Reirson

Fern Reirson is the president of the Greater Edmonton Regional.

ON JANUARY 4–6, 2005, THE GREATER EDMONTON Regional Learning Resource Council (GERLRC) welcomed 25 delegates from the Japan School Library Association. They were here on a fact-finding mission about the role and practices of teacher-librarians in Western Canada and the United States. Since 1998, the Japanese government has mandated that every school in Japan is to have a teacher-librarian. As a result, there are currently 20,000 teacher-librarians in Japanese schools. It was with this humbling thought in mind, that our guests visited Alberta Education, Edmonton Public Library (Whitemud Crossing branch), University of

In 2000, Alberta had 106 teacher-librarians (Haycock 2003).

Statistics Canada (2005) states that Alberta schools had an average of 0.07 teacher-librarian staff in 2003/04.

Alberta and six public and separate schools in Edmonton.

The Japanese teacher-librarians group asked the teacher-librarian and/or staff of each hosting school to fill out a report form identifying the features of their school library media programs. Questions centred on the physical layout of the school/library, staffing, budgeting, examples of resource-based learning, technology integration and cooperation between other schools and libraries. During their visits to hosting

schools, other questions arose. The role of a teacher-librarian in cooperative planning and teaching with colleagues was of great interest. What did it mean to team teach? Who was the lead teacher in such scenarios? They keenly questioned us about examples of student work or projects, student use of technology and the library, timetabling of the library media centre, the role of a teacher-librarian in Alberta, flexible scheduling, a typical teacher-librarian's timetable and the management



Entire delegation with Jackson Heights School library/leadership staff.

of the library facility. They were shown examples of inquiry-based learning using Alberta Education's new *Focus on Inquiry* model. Observation of students working on inquiry-based learning using technology provided our visitors with the most engaging experiences. We look forward to hearing their insights about the Alberta school libraries.

A dinner was hosted by GERLRC allowing our guests to mix with teacher-librarians from Edmonton area schools and political leaders. Minister of Education Gene Zwozdesky brought greetings from the province. School trustee chairs Svend Hansen (Edmonton Public) and Debbie Engel (Edmonton Catholic) brought greetings on behalf of their boards and hosting schools. President-elect Irene Masciuch came from Calgary to bring greetings from the LRC. There was an exchange of gifts, as well as a musical presentation by the Japanese School Library Association. Each Japanese delegate received the book *Kidmonton: True Stories of River City Kids* by Linda Goyette as a reminder of their visit.

The excitement of seeing and learning first-hand about how school library media programs run in Alberta was evident on the faces of our Japanese colleagues, through their countless camera clicks and their thoughtful, probing questions. Can we imagine a delegation of Canadian teacher-librarians going to Japan to see the impact that the presence of a teacher-librarian makes to every school in that country?

Professor Reiko Sekiguchi from Otsuma University sent the following letter on behalf of the Japan School Library Association, January 16, 2005:

Hi! We members of Japanese Teacher-Librarians Tour Group came back to Japan and have begun our routine work which began on January 11 in most of our schools. Every time we came back to our bus after visiting your school, school district, local and university libraries and the ministry, I heard members say excitedly, "Wonderful; it was lucky that I could join this tour." (So many had wanted to join the tour, but the seats were limited.) The schedule was so well packed. We have seen everything we wanted to see. We came back packed with so much information, though exhausted. I am very proud that I was involved in planning this tour. To those who have organized the daily schedule of the district, I thank you very much. To those who allowed us to visit and stay in your school or class, and have prepared a lot for us, I thank you very much. I express many many thanks on behalf of all the participants and the Japanese School Library Association to all who have spent so much time and energy for us in different ways and have shown the essence of your activities.

Each member had a study topic of observation and is now busy, recalling what he or she has learned from you, writing it down and organizing it. I expect that we will be able to create a very good report, from which each school in Japan that could not send a representative to this tour, can also share the information and find a model for their school library activities.

Thank you very much again.



We were entertained with Japanese musical renditions at our supper.

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A Message from Alberta Milk

by Pamela Drinnan

ALBERTA MILK OFFERS innovative nutrition resources that are linked to the Alberta health and life skills curriculum. Below is a list of resources that will help teachers incorporate health curriculum messages into healthy everyday practices for students:



- Snacks: Hints for Parents and Kids
- Calcium Calculator
- Active Living Food Guide Slides
- Food Picture Cards and activities
- Chocolate Milk
- Bone Zone
- Sailing the 7Cs Through the Week
- Just Add Milk recipe books
- Thirst for Nutrition—nutrient comparison of popular beverages
- Build a Better Body from the Inside Out
- 10 Great Reasons to Choose Milk Products
- Nutrition File™ Fact Sheets series (10 fact sheets in the series)

We also have a series of colourful, eye-catching posters to display in your schools and fashionable bookmarks for high school students that feature our Never Stop. Milk. growth poems and milk messages. For more information or to order these resources, contact Alberta Milk at (780) 453-5942, toll-free at 1-800-252-7530, e-mail Debbie at daugustyn@albertamilk.com, or visit www.neverstopmilk.ca.

Visit www.albertamilk.com/nutritioneducation/realitycheck.aspx to see the Reality Check series, which features a PowerPoint presentation, background details and handouts on the health of Alberta youth and what we can do to improve their health.

The moo2you.ca website features interactive, student-centred and curriculum-based resources dedicated to agriculture and the real practices involved in getting products from the farm to your table.

Alberta Milk's registered nutritionists write and distribute Nutrition File for Health Educators, a free quarterly research newsletter that provides the latest nutrition research on current topics of interest. This year, watch for the special two-part school nutrition series. To receive the Nutrition File newsletter, please call (780) 453-5942 or 1-800-252-7530, ext. 318, or e-mail sroy@albertamilk.com.



Elementary School Milk Program

Alberta Milk offers an exciting, incentive-based elementary school milk program, Club Moo. This program encourages students to drink milk every day for lunch. Whether students buy their milk at school, bring it from home in their lunches or drink it for lunch at home, it all counts.

Junior/Senior High School Milk Program

Scratch for Moo 'n' More is a new program for junior high and high schools. Each time students buy milk, they can scratch a card to win prizes. For more information on any of the school milk programs or to sign your school up, contact Joanne Barwise, school milk coordinator, at (780) 453-4942 or toll-free at 1-800-252-7530, ext. 324.

Alberta Milk would like to share some interesting milk facts:

1. Three a Day. Milk.
Three glasses of milk a day will give your body calcium and bone-building nutrients.
2. Milk is a nutrition powerhouse.
It contains 15 essential nutrients plus energy.
3. Milk is the most convenient source of calcium in the Canadian diet.
Did you know you would need to eat 2½ cups of broccoli to get the same amount of calcium that is in a glass of milk?
4. Milk is an important source of vitamin D.
Vitamin D helps our bodies absorb calcium and new research shows that vitamin D may have a role in prevention of certain chronic disease.
5. Health Canada recognizes the importance of milk and milk products.
Milk provides a key set of nutrients as part of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.
6. Milk is a package of bone-building nutrients in one convenient and delicious drink.
7. Chocolate milk contains the same nutrients as white milk.
And chocolate milk has the same amount of sugar as unsweetened orange juice.
8. Teens have a one-time window of opportunity to build their bones.
By age 16, 95 per cent of the adult skeleton has been built.
9. One in four Alberta women over 50 has osteoporosis.
The incidence is expected to rise to one in two if we do not take action now. Drinking three glasses of milk per day is one defence against this disease.
10. Drinking milk can help to maintain a healthy body weight.

This exciting research has shown positive effects in adults, teens and children.
If you have a dairy nutrition question, contact a registered nutritionist at Alberta Milk at (780) 453-5942, toll-free at 1-800-252-7530, visit www.albertamilk.com or e-mail us at nutrition@albertamilk.com.

School Libraries and Teacher-Librarians 2003/04

by Statistics Canada

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada, "The Daily,"
Catalogue 11-001, May 4, 2005. Minor changes have been
made to spelling and punctuation to fit ATA style.

JUST ABOUT EVERY ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL IN Canada had a library in the academic year 2003/04. However, budgets for collections were small and few schools had full-time teacher-librarians, according to a new study.

The study is based on data from the Information and Communications Technologies in Schools Survey, which collected information from elementary and secondary school principals in all provinces and territories. The survey examined whether a library exists, the number of employees by type of position, annual expenses for the collection and sources of funding.

The vast majority of schools, 93.3 per cent, had libraries, but the median expenditure on the physical collection, including books and magazines, was \$2,000 (half of the values are above and half are below this figure). Given current costs, this would cover the purchase of one encyclopedia series.

The relatively low median expenditures may limit the ability of school libraries to maintain collections that meet student needs in an information-based environment.

Despite a body of international evidence that shows teacher-librarians help improve student achievement, few schools in Canada had a full-time teacher-librarian on staff. On average, each school had 0.25 full-time teacher-librarians.

When spending on the physical collection and on library staffing is compared among the provinces, different patterns emerge.

Alberta and Saskatchewan led the provinces in mean per student library spending. Spending in British Columbia and Manitoba was also above the national average while expenditures in Ontario and Quebec fell below the average.

Prince Edward Island had full-time teacher-librarians in just over one-third of its schools, the highest proportion among provinces. In contrast, 2.0 per cent of schools in Quebec and 3.6 per cent of schools in Alberta had full-time teacher-librarians.

The study found there were more library technicians per school than teacher-librarians. Library technicians typically have a two-year community college diploma, but do not have teaching experience and are paid less than teacher-librarians.

Spending for Libraries Varies by Province

In total, schools with libraries spent \$56.2 million on collections development in 2003/04. Collection development includes acquiring books, magazines and audiovisual and electronic materials.

Median expenditures ranged from \$3,600 in Saskatchewan and \$3,000 in Alberta to \$1,000 in Newfoundland and Labrador and \$1,400 in Nova Scotia.

The study indicated a fairly wide gap in school expenditures on electronic materials (such as CD-ROMs or online subscriptions). Overall, schools reported mean expenditures of \$513 in this category in 2003/04.

However, when one considers the median, school expenditures for electronic materials were very small, ranging from zero to \$100 in all provinces. This indicates most schools spent little or no money for such materials.

Sources of library funding also varied from school to school.

Fewer than 30 per cent of school principals indicated the library received funds from sources other than the school, the school board or district, or the province. The majority of these sources were fundraising activities, including book fairs and donations.

The survey did not collect data on the value of funds by source.

Few Teacher-Librarians in Schools

On average, each school had 0.25 teacher-librarians in 2003/04. However, there was much provincial variation. Prince Edward Island had the highest level of teacher-librarians, 0.56, compared with 0.03 in Quebec and 0.07 in Nova Scotia and Alberta.

Libraries were also staffed to varying degrees by library technicians, teachers who were not librarians, professional librarians and clerical staff. In addition, many principals reported that volunteers operated the library, either solely or with other school staff.

Staffing levels varied significantly between elementary and secondary schools. The levels of teacher-librarians, library technicians and total staff in secondary schools were all roughly twice as high as in elementary schools, a reflection of the larger average student population.

Across Canada, there were a slightly higher average number of library technicians (0.26) than teacher-librarians. Again, staffing varied from province to province.

The provinces with some of the lowest average numbers of teacher-librarians per school had the highest number of library technicians. These included Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

Other studies have indicated that with recent budget pressures in education ministries in many provinces, teacher-librarian positions may have been substituted by lower-paid library technicians as a cost-cutting measure.

The use of volunteers in some schools may have prevented a reduction in library hours or the permanent closure of the library. However, they cannot perform the same range of duties as a teacher-librarian or library technician.

Teacher-Librarians' Influence Extends Through School

When schools have teacher-librarians, their influence extends throughout the school and therefore into the students' education, the study found.

Schools with teacher-librarians were more likely than those without to incorporate specialized technology applications into teaching practices. Such applications included spreadsheets, databases, software applications supporting creative works and software for special needs and desktop publishing.

Schools with at least one teacher-librarian devoted to the school library were roughly three times more likely than those with less than one full-time teacher-librarian to have links to the library on the school's informal website.

When compared with schools which had only a part-time teacher-librarian, principals reported that in schools with at least one full-time teacher-librarian, the teacher-librarian was more likely to play an important or very important role in developing or contributing to the school website.

Mean and Median Annual Expenses Per School for Library Collection Development, by Type and Province/Territory, 2003/04

	Mean			Median		
	Physical Collection	Audiovisual	Electronic	Physical Collection	Audiovisual	Electronic
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,606	465	565	1,000	200	100
Prince Edward Island	2,250	463	226*	2,000	200	0*
Nova Scotia	1,762	162	199*	1,400	0	0*
New Brunswick	2,281	173	92	1,789	0	0
Quebec	2,649	518	493	1,680	100	100
Ontario	3,363	486	582	2,000	200	0
Manitoba	3,360	530	435	2,500	300	100
Saskatchewan	4,560	766	450	3,600	500	50
Alberta	4,708	845	630	3,000	500	50
British Columbia	4,010	561	477	2,700	200	0
Yukon	5,978	0	F	3,915	0	F
Northwest Territories	3,261	741*	446*	1,600	F	0*
Nunavut	1,609**	573**	245**	700**	500**	F
Canada	3,414	547	513	2,000	200	0
F	Coefficient of variation greater than 33 per cent; data are too unreliable to publish.					
*	Coefficient of variation between 16.6 per cent and 25 per cent; data are less reliable.					
**	Coefficient of variation greater than 25 per cent and less than or equal to 33 per cent; data are less reliable.					

Sources of Funding for the Library, by Province and Territory, 2003/04

	Provincial/Territorial	School Board	School	Other
Newfoundland and Labrador	28.2	66.7	77.8	18.7
Prince Edward Island	40.0	73.4	66.2	34.4
Nova Scotia	22.5	74.1	66.1	23.9
New Brunswick	63.7	45.5	28.3	22.4
Quebec	29.0	53.2	65.9	20.4
Ontario	17.4	62.2	70.8	37.8
Manitoba	38.4	74.4	55.2	25.1
Saskatchewan	23.3	86.7	43.9	12.8
Alberta	32.8	50.5	70.7	28.5
British Columbia	31.5	58.9	66.6	31.0
Yukon	100.0	F	F	F
Northwest Territories	16.7	F	F	F
Nunavut	53.8	F	F	F
Canada	26.7	60.5	65.7	29.0
F	Coefficient of variation greater than 33 per cent; data are too unreliable to publish.			
*	Coefficient of variation between 16.6 per cent and 25 per cent; data are less reliable.			
**	Coefficient of variation greater than 25 per cent and less than or equal to 33 per cent; data are less reliable.			

Average Library Staff Per School, by Province/Territory, 2003/04

	Teacher-librarian	Teacher-non-librarian	Professional librarian	Library technician	Clerical staff	Other
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.27	0.09*	F	F	0.03**	0.03**
Prince Edward Island	0.56	F	F	F	F	F
Nova Scotia	0.07	0.01**	0.04	0.42	0.06	F
New Brunswick	0.08	0.03*	0.05	0.27	0.12	0.11
Quebec	0.03*	0.12*	0.07	0.2	0.15	0.07*
Ontario	0.39	0.03**	0.02	0.24	0.11	0.03
Manitoba	0.17	0.03**	0.04*	0.41	0.26	0.06**
Saskatchewan	0.24	F	F	0.44	0.18	0.07*
Alberta	0.07	0.05	0.04	0.47	0.22	0.1
British Columbia	0.48	0.03*	F	0.1	0.22	0.04**
Yukon	0.35	F	F	F	F	F
Northwest Territories	F	F	F	0.26*	F	F
Nunavut	F	F	F	F	F	F
Canada	0.25	0.05	0.03	0.26	0.15	0.05
F	Coefficient of variation greater than 33 per cent; data are too unreliable to publish.					
*	Coefficient of variation between 16.6 per cent and 25 per cent; data are less reliable.					
**	Coefficient of variation greater than 25 per cent and less than or equal to 33 per cent; data are less reliable.					

National School Library Day

by Pat Ropchan

Pat Ropchan is a teacher-librarian at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School in Okotoks, Alberta.

Author Visit and Photo Contest

TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY DAY ON OCTOBER 25, the library at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School in Okotoks sponsored an author visit and displayed photographs from our first annual photo contest.

Last June, parents, teachers and students were invited to participate in a photo contest celebrating reading. Prizes (Chapters gift cards) would be awarded in four categories: parents; teachers and staff; elementary students; and junior/senior high students.

Entrants were asked to enter a photo of themselves reading in a cozy, comfortable, interesting or unique (yet tasteful) place. Photographs could be of any size and printed on photo paper or plain printer paper. Names and grades were noted on the back of each photo.

Impartial judges were chosen and prizes were awarded at the school assembly. The winning student entry was posted on our private online parent page.

School-Wide Book Talk

This activity was based on a project by Kathy Farrell, as presented at the 2003 Alberta Library Conference in Jasper and written in *Inspiring Readers*.

In early September, in each junior high English language arts

class, teachers recruited three to five volunteers to participate in a schoolwide book talk. Volunteers spent time with the teacher-librarian talking about their book choices and about the criteria for a good book talk. Titles had to be chosen with the audience (grade level) in mind. The students worked on their talks on their own time.

Criteria for a Good Book Talk

A book talk is a way of sharing your enjoyment and understanding of a book with other people and convincing them to read the book too.

Tips

- Think about your audience (interests, reading levels).
- Never talk about a book you haven't read.
- Never talk about a book you didn't like.
- Have the book with you to show (and leave for display).
- Be enthusiastic.
- Practise your book talk.
- Keep your book talk short (no more than three minutes).
- Never reveal the ending.



Judges listening as students discuss their book.

Students' Displays



- Try not to read more than one sentence from your book (could get boring).
- You can, but aren't restricted to tell about
 - the author,
 - the characters,
 - one scene, or
 - the setting or mood.

The week of the book talk, these students presented to their own homeroom English classes and had the opportunity for feedback and practice.

The event was scheduled for last period on National School Library Day. Speakers stayed in the same venue, while classes, in their grade level, travelled from one space to the next. Since "book talkers" had already presented to their own classes, each student needed to present three more times.

Groups moved every 15 minutes between the junior high classrooms and the library. At the end of the day, books were returned to the library for display. Volunteers earned house points for participating in the event.

The activity had its glitches but everyone, teachers and students, agreed that it was worth doing again. This will be a biannual event.

Lit Fair

Linda Ruetz, teacher-librarian at Southview Elementary School in Medicine Hat, has put a new twist on the old science fair idea. In her school, students demonstrate their understanding and love of literature in a lit fair.

The gymnasium is filled with rows and rows of imaginative displays created by students of all ages. Judges, drawn from trustees, public librarians, teacher-librarians and other dignitaries, listen as students excitedly and eagerly discuss their favourite book. This is a great experience for adults and children alike, and demonstrates the importance of books and reading in a child's education.



Linda Ruetz, teacher-librarian.

Literature and the New Social Studies Program of Studies

This article was previously published in Issues, Events & Ideas, July 2005, a publication of the Early Childhood Education Council.

IN SEPTEMBER 2005, THE FIRST WAVE OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR the new social studies program of studies for Kindergarten to Grade 3 will take place. There are many dynamic and exciting changes to look forward to, including greater emphasis on such concepts as identity and citizenship. In support of this transition is a vast array of literature resources. These supplementary materials range from picture books to novels. Some of my personal favourites—and ones that I consider essential for any teacher—are the following:

- *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton (Houghton Mifflin 1978). This story is about changes that occur over time, and it can be used for Grades 1 and 2.
- *Sherman Crunchley* by Laura Numeroff (Penguin Putnam 2003). This is a cute story about being yourself. This book can be used for Kindergarten and Grade 1.
- *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi (Knopf 2001). This picture book is about a young Korean girl who, upon arriving in America, wants to change her name to one that is easier to pronounce. This book can be used for Kindergarten and Grade 1.
- *Nadia's Hands* by Karen English (Boyd's Mills 1999). This book is a touching story about a young Pakistani girl who is afraid to be involved in a cultural celebration with her family because others will notice that she is different. This book is best used for Grade 1.
- *Something Beautiful* by Sharon Dennis Wyeth (Doubleday 1998). This book is an excellent introduction to quality of life and how children can contribute to make their community a beautiful place. This book can be used for Grade 2.
- *Judy Moody Saves the World!* by Megan McDonald (Candlewick 2002). This book is about a girl who

realizes that one person can make a difference. It is an ideal novel for young readers (Grade 3).

—Audra Garnett

Alphabet Books

The following are alphabet books that support Albertan and Canadian perspectives:

- *ABC of Canada* by Kim Bellefontaine (Kids Can Press 2002)
- *M is for Maple: A Canadian Alphabet* by Mike Ulmer (Thomson Gale 2004)
- *A Big City ABC* by Allan Moak (Tundra Books 2002)
- *"C" is for Canada* by Vicki Erwin (GHB Publishers 2000)
- *C Is for Chinook: An Alberta Alphabet* by Dawn Welykochy (Sleeping Bear Press 2004)
- *Eh? to Zed: A Canadian Abecedarium* by Kevin Major (Red Deer Press 2003)
- *A Prairie Alphabet* by Jo Bannatyne-Cugnet (Tundra Books 1994)

Also, any book by David Bouchard is perfect for the new curriculum. Search the Internet to get a list of his great books, including *If You're Not from the Prairie* (Aladdin 1998), *Qu'Appelle* (Raincoast 2002) and *The Elders Are Watching* (Raincoast 2004).

More Print Resources

The following books work well with topics in the new curriculum:

Kindergarten

I Belong

- *Guess What?* by Mem Fox (Gulliver 1990)
- *Are You My Mother?* by P. D. Eastman (Random House 2005)
- *A Seal in the Family* by Maria Coffey (Annick 1999)
- *Everything that Shines* by David Weale (Goose Lane 2001)

I Am Unique

- *Aaron's Hair* by Robert Munsch (Cartwheel 2002)
- *Morris Goes to School* by Bernard Wiseman (Scholastic 1970)
- *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox (Harcourt 1997)
- *Suki's Kimono* by Chieri Uegaki (Kids Can 2003)
- *Here Are My Hands* by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault (Henry Holt 1987)

Grade 1

Moving Forward with the Past: My Family, My History and My Community

- *Something from Nothing* by Phoebe Gilman (Scholastic 1993)
- *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley (Carolrhoda 1991)
- *Share the Sky* by Ting-Xing Ye (Annick 1999)
- *Grandfather Counts* by Andrea Cheng (Lee & Low 2003)
- *Mina's Spring of Colors* by Rachina Gilmore (Fitzhenry & Whiteside 2000)
- *Grandmother's Dreamcatcher* by Becky McCain (Albert Whitman 2001)
- *The Family Tree Detective: Cracking the Case of Your Family's Story* by Ann Douglas (Owl 1999)
- *Where Did You Get Your Moccasins?* by Bernelda Wheeler (Peguis 1995)

Grade 2

Canada's Dynamic Communities: Acadian

- *Home for Christmas* by Deirdre Kessler (Pottersfield 1989)
- *Claire's Gift* by Maxine Trottier (North Winds 1999)
- *Emma's Story* by Deborah Hodge (Tundra 2003)
- *The Girl on Evangeline Beach* by Anne Carter (Fitzhenry & Whiteside 2001)
- *Acadian Legends, Folktales and Songs from Prince Edward Island* by Georges Arsenault (Goose Lane 2002)

Grade 3

- *Welcome to the Ukraine* by Katharine Brown (Gareth Stevens 2003)
- *The Mitten: A Ukrainian Folktale* by Jan Brett (Scholastic 1990)
- *Chaska and the Golden Doll* by Ellen Alexander (Arcade 1994)
- *The Enchanted Anklet: A Cinderella Story from India* by Lisa Mehta (Lilmur 1985)
- *India* by Joanne Mattern (Bridgestone 2003)

- *Crafts of Many Cultures* by Aurelia Gomez (Scholastic 1999)
- *The Foolish Men of Agra and Other Tales of Mogul India* by Rina Singh (Key Porter 1998)
- *The Peacock's Pride* by Melissa Kajpust (Disney 1997)
- *The Rumor: A Jataka Tale from India* by Jan Thornhill (Maple Tree 2005)
- *Peru: The Lands* by Bobbie Kalman (Sagebrush 2003)
- *Peru: The People and the Culture* by Bobbie Kalman (Crabtree 1994)
- *Llama and the Great Flood: A Folktale from Peru* by Ellen Alexander (T. Y. Crowell 1989)
- *She-Calf and Other Quechua Folk Tales* by Johnny Payne (University of New Mexico 2000)
- *Tunisia (Cultures of the World)* by Roslind Varghese Brown (Benchmark 1998)

Websites

- 2Learn.ca—www.2learn.ca. This website contains some social studies ideas, and you can choose between K–3.
- The Alberta Social Studies Council— www.socialstudies.ab.ca. This website contains links to curriculum ideas.
- Family Matters—www.galileo.org/schools/brentwood. This website showcases work done by Alberta Grade 1 students for Topic C. This website is a great example of how technology can be integrated into this unit.
- People in Our World—www.psd70.ab.ca/brookwood/staff/wnero/world. This website can be used for Grade 2.
- Communities Across Canada—www.lethsd.ab.ca/mmh/grade2/commcanada.htm. A group of classes around the world e-mailed each other to describe their basic needs and how they are met. The results are shown on the website.
- www.worsleyschool.net/socialarts/socialartsss.html. This website presents information to students about different communities across Canada. The vocabulary is easy and there are many great pictures of a variety of communities. There are links to other websites with social studies ideas.
- Notable Trade Books for Social Studies— www.socialstudies.org/resources/notable. This website is part of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).
- Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site—www.carolhurst.com/subjects/curriculum.html
- Children's Picture Book Database—www.lib.muohio.edu/pictbks

Awards

Laurence G. Wiedrick Award Acceptance Speech

by Lois Barranoik

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE LEARNING RESOURCES COUNCIL (LRC) for this award. I am honoured to have received it and am looking forward to purchasing a piece of Canadian art with the monetary gift. Whenever I view

my purchase, I will think of all the friends and colleagues I have met through the LRC. It will invigorate me to continue to advocate for school library programs delivered by qualified teacher-librarians! Thanks again.



Lois Barranoik (centre) receiving the 2005 Laurence G. Wiedrick Award from April Tilson (left) and Linda Shantz-Keresztes (right).

Historic Data for LRC

by Kaye Steward

KAYE STEWARD COMPILED THE INFORMATION BELOW FROM PREVIOUS ATA PUBLICATIONS AND LRC RECORDS FOR CELEBRATION '85, LRC'S 10TH anniversary, and then added to it sporadically in subsequent years. To provide additional names, especially for the Laurence G. Wiedrick Award from 1998 to 2004 and the Provincial Award of Merit, or to correct any errors you might find, please contact Kaye Steward at 4603 142 Street NW, Edmonton T6H 4A7; e-mail kstewardk@shaw.ca or phone (780) 435-7896.

School Library Council Presidents

Term	Name	Home address that year
1964/65	Helen McFadden	Lacombe
1965/66	Laurence G. Wiedrick	Edmonton
1966/67	William R. Duke	Calgary
1967/68	Alison Vaness	Calgary
1968/69	Alma Webster	Edmonton
1969/70	J. Paul Marshall	Edson
1970/71	Kay Pratt	Medicine Hat
1971/72	Kay Snow	Calgary
1972/73	Lorne MacRae	Calgary
1973/74	Mary McIntosh	Calgary
1974/75	Doreen Armstrong	Edmonton
1975—dissolved; merged with Audio-Visual Council to form new Learning Resources Council		

Audio-Visual Council Presidents

Term	Name	Home address that year
1968/69	R. S. Woolsey	Morinville (Provisional Executive)
1969/70	Martin Adamson	Edmonton
1970/71	Ron Hodges	Edmonton
1971/72	Richard Bell	Calgary
1972/73	John Stoeber	Calgary
1973/74	Hans Kratz	Sherwood Park
1974/75	Carol Selte	Vermilion
1975—dissolved; merged with School Library Council to form new Learning Resources Council		

Learning Resources Council Presidents

Term	Name	Home address that year
1975/76	Glen Manyluk	Lethbridge
1976/77	Lorne MacRae	Calgary
1977/78	Ron Hodges	Edmonton
1978/79	Tom Colbens	Edmonton
1979/80	Ray Schmidt	Sherwood Park
1980/81	Barry Finkelman	Calgary
1981/82	Sheila Pritchard	Edmonton
1982/83	Bev Anderson	Calgary
1983/84	Dianne Oberg	Edmonton
1984/85	Barry Eshpeter	Calgary
1985/86	Eunice Easton	Grande Prairie
1986/87	Tony Zeglen	Fort McMurray
1987/88	Teddy Moline	Sherwood Park
1988/89	Jan Dobbins	Calgary
1989/90	Gerry McGuire	Edmonton
1990/91	Ed Somerville	Red Deer
1991/92	Rickey Dabbs	Calgary
1992/93	Diane Antoniuk	Edmonton
1993/94	Bob Draginda	Edmonton
1994/95	Linda Davis	Calgary
1995/96	Linda Craig	Edmonton
1996/97	Anne Letain	Coaldale
1997/98	Phyllis Molyneux	Edmonton
1998/99	Nigel Pottle	Calgary
1999/2000	Grace MacDougall	Medicine Hat
2000/01	Kathy Thomson Farrell	Edmonton
2001/02	April Tilson	Calgary
2002/03	Lois Barranoik	Edmonton
2003/04	Linda Shantz-Keresztes	Calgary
2004/05	Rhonda Hunter	Medicine Hat
2005/06		

LRC Award of Excellence Winners

(Renamed Laurence G. Wiedrick Award in 1982/83 to honour the contribution of Laurie Wiedrick to school libraries)

Year	Name	Home address at time of award
1976	Rolf Seidel	(Not sure. Widow living in Bluffton, Alberta, in 1995)
1977	Kay Snow	Calgary
1978	Blanche Friderichsen	Edmonton
1979	Lillian Wight	Edmonton
1980	Lorne MacRae	Calgary
1981	Carol Hauser	Calgary
1982	Wayne Blair	Edmonton
1983	Tom Colbens	Edmonton
1984	John Wright	Edmonton
1985	Martin Adamson	Edmonton
1986	Bev Anderson	Calgary
1987	Dianne Oberg	Edmonton
1988	Dr. Bernard Keeler	Edmonton
1989	Sylvia Landry	Edmonton/Beaumont
1990	Judy Gray and Barry Eshpeter (joint)	Calgary
1991	Kaye Steward	St. Albert
1992	Ray Schmidt	Sherwood Park
1993	Teddy Moline	Sherwood Park
1994	Eunice Easton	Edmonton
1995	Adrienne Betty	Calgary
1996	Dorothea Cutts	Calgary
1997	Eugene Kulmatycki	Red Deer
1998	Linda Davis	Calgary
1999	Phyllis Molyneux	Edmonton
2000	Anne Letain	Lethbridge
2001		
2002		
2003		
2004		
2005	Lois Barranoik	Edmonton

LRC Award of Merit

(Not sure when this award was first given)

“The Learning Resources Council (ATA) also presents an Award of Merit. This award, which may be given annually by either the regionals of the LRC or by the provincial executive, recognizes outstanding achievement by a teacher-librarian, school media administrator, educational administrator, other school library supporter or media educator. Nominees need not be members of LRC.”

1980		
1981		
1982		
1983		
1984		
1985	Eugene Kulmatycki	Red Deer
1986		
1987	Dr. Bernard Keeler	Edmonton
1988		
1989		
1990		
1991		
1992		
1993		
1994		
1995	Linda Korsbrek	Calgary
1996	Grace MacDougall, Medicine Hat Marilyn Dale, Edmonton	
1996 Regional Awards of Merit	Dan Moulton, Calgary Karen Denis, Greater Edmonton Antigone Koliass, Calgary Lynda Smith, Calgary Betty-Lou Ayers, Greater Edmonton Joan Suchotzly, Central Alberta Sheila Pritchard, Edmonton	
1997	Edmonton Regional Awards of Merit: Emily Westwood, Marie Ann McLean, Linda Collier, and Dawn Kerr, Dianne Dunse	
1998		
1999		
2000		
2001	Denele Somshor Walsh	ATA Edmonton
2002	Merle Harris	Edmonton
2003	The Honourable Lois E. Hole, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta	Edmonton
2004		
2005		
2006		

Special Certificates of Recognition

Given at Celebration '85, the 10th anniversary of the Learning Resources Council (and the 20th year of an ATA specialist council for school libraries).

As part of the program of Celebration '85, special certificates were presented to

1. presidents of the School Library Council, 1964/65 through 1974/75;
2. Audio-Visual Council, (1968/69 through 1974/75) and
3. the Learning Resources Council (1975/76 through 1985/86).

In addition, the following presentations were made for some significant and special areas of service—some representative of a group of people and some to individuals for a unique contribution:

Annabelle Bourgoin—for the establishment of the Resource Bank of Speakers, which banked our most valuable resource—our people—and created a very successful professional development initiative for a specialist council.

Glen Manyluk—for practising “midwifery without a license”—representing all those with vision, who were responsible for the birth of the new Learning Resources Council. Glen was the first president of the new council.

Ron Hodges and Ray Schmidt—representing those members, tired and “re-tired,” who should receive long-service awards. Ron served a total of seven years on the executive, first on the Audio-Visual Council and, after a bit of a break, also on the Learning Resources Council. Ray served seven years consecutively on the executive (actually eleven years if we include the extra four years he was a member of the editorial board of the LRC journal.

Mary-Jo Williams—representing all the ATA staff advisors—but especially for her long service as the ATA staff advisor to both the School Library and Audio-Visual Councils. No one was happier to see the two councils join than Mary-Jo. She had been doing double-duty for eight years!

Hans Kratz—representing all members of the past council executives. Hans was selected for this “executive endurance” award because he was the only executive member in the records who had served for the entire life of a council; from inception to merger, he was on the executive of the Audio-Visual Council.

Eugene Kulmatycki—was chosen to represent those who bridged the disciplines and was instrumental in developing the concept of the Learning Resources Council in its current form. Eugene served on the executives of all three councils and provided outstanding leadership at the regional level in Central Alberta.

Philomena Hauck—a true believer in the library as the centre of the school, Phil’s contribution through the University of Calgary and her well-documented paper on the history of school libraries, certainly warranted her inclusion among those receiving special recognition.

Darrold Quartly—representing the dedication and financial expertise required to keep a council afloat. In his long years as treasurer, Darrold has been the LRC weatherman, forecasting tough times and planning strategies for riding out the storms, as well as guiding us into calm waters so we could continue to move forward.

Blanche Friderichsen and Wayne Blair—received their long overdue certificates as previous winners of the Award of Excellence. Both outstanding Alberta Education staff members and strong school library supporters had been named winners earlier (Blanche in 1978 and Wayne in 1882) but had never received the formal certificate that accompanies the Award of Excellence, so that matter was rectified at Celebration '85.

Focus on Inquiry Wins International Recognition

by Dianne Oberg

Dianne Oberg is a professor in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

THE ALBERTA EDUCATION PUBLICATION *FOCUS ON INQUIRY: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning* has been awarded the 2005 ProQuest Learning and Information e-library Commendation. The award was presented in Hong Kong in July 2005, at the annual conference of the International Association of School Librarianship. Jennifer Branch and Dianne Oberg accepted the award at the conference in Hong Kong on behalf of the Alberta team involved in developing the document. The award included certificates of commendation for the team and a US\$500 prize, which will be used by for the development and enhancement of the program offerings of the University of Alberta's Teacher-Librarianship by Distance Learning program.

The ProQuest Information and Learning e-library Commendation, funded through the generosity of ProQuest Information and Learning, recognizes an individual or team for designing and implementing a model of library service that can be replicated elsewhere. In keeping with ProQuest

Information and Learning's focus on access and adding value to information, the award panel looked for project applications that illustrate innovation in collecting, organizing and distributing value-added information within and beyond the school community.

The award panel commented that

the strong research base for the development of *Focus on Inquiry* and the verification of its content make the publication outstanding. The panel was also impressed with the overall acknowledgement of the cognitive/affective domain within information literacy which is often omitted in published material. This provides a sound model for adoption by others.

The development of the *Focus on Inquiry* document truly was a team effort. The *Focus on Inquiry* team included educators from the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta and from the



province's ministry of education, Alberta Education (formerly Alberta Learning):

From the University of Alberta

Jennifer Branch, associate professor
Dianne Oberg, professor

From Alberta Education

Greg Bishop, assistant director, Learning and Teaching Resources Branch
Teddy Moline, education manager (former)
Raja Panwar, director, Learning and Teaching Resources Branch
Gina Vivone-Vernon, coordinator, Curriculum and Resources Implementation, School Improvement Branch

These educators took the lead in developing the document, but their work was supported, facilitated and enhanced by many school library professionals throughout Alberta. The *Focus on Inquiry* team also acknowledges the help of Gerald Brown, library media consultant from Winnipeg and a long-time IASL member, who suggested that *Focus on Inquiry* be nominated for the ProQuest award, and three people who wrote letters of support for the nomination: Fern Reirson, president, Greater Edmonton LRC; Rhonda Hunter, president, LRC; and Marlene Asselin, president, Canadian Association for School Libraries.

The *Focus on Inquiry* document was developed by researchers and practitioners in Alberta's school library community to guide the work of teachers and librarians in developing students' information literacies,

specifically in relation to the process of inquiry or "inquiry-based learning." The new document takes into account process models of library instruction that have been developed in many parts of the world over the past three decades. *Focus on Inquiry* attempts to address teachers' and librarians' learning needs in the area of inquiry-based learning in ways that are both theoretically and practically sound.

Focus on Inquiry was predated by an instructional document titled *Focus on Research* (Alberta Education 1990) and a policy document, *Focus on Learning* (Alberta Education 1984). More information about the development and use of the *Focus on Inquiry* document is available in a number of publications, including

Branch, J. 2004. "Understanding and Assessing Inquiry-Based Learning." In *Reality Bites: Information Literacy for Independent Learning*, ed. S. LaMarca and M. Manning, 99–113. Carlton, Australia: School Library Association of Victoria.

Branch, J., and D. Oberg. 2004. "Inquiry for Everyone: An Updating of *Focus on Research*." *Teacher-Librarian Today* 10, no. 1: 19–21.

Oberg, D. 2004. "Promoting Information Literacies: A Focus on Inquiry." Conference Proceedings of the 70th IFLA General Council and Conference, Section of School Libraries and Resource Centers, Buenos Aires, Argentina. www.ifla.org/IV/ifla70/papers/088e-Oberg.pdf, 14 pp. (accessed September 7, 2005). Also available in translation (Spanish and French).

Notes.....

LRC Name Change

We need your help! The LRC is looking for a new name that easily identifies who we are and what we do and that is not easily confused with another organization's name. Please submit suggestions to Irene Masciuch at irmasciuch@cbe.ab.ca. Thank you.

LRC's Website

- Who serves on the LRC executive?
- What is in the news about teacher-librarianship?
- Where is information about the role of the teacher-librarian?
- When is the next major conference for teacher-librarians in Alberta?
- How can we find out who may have received an award 20 years ago?

Find everything you need to know on our website.

- Are you looking for past TLTs?
- Do you want a copy of the handbook?
- Do you want to spread the word about the work your regional is doing?

www.learningresources.ab.ca

Good Books, Not So Good Books

by *Teddy Moline*

No doubt, reading is the key to student achievement. Researchers have been compiling data for decades on the close connection between a child's reading ability and academic success. Therefore, teachers encourage students at all grade levels to read as much as possible in various formats. We use the school library program not only as an integral part of classroom studies but also to provide students with strategies for selecting free reading materials—a very useful lifelong skill. However, we have all run across those uninterested, reluctant non-readers who choose not to free read and find book selection something to be avoided at all costs. A two-part article in the *School Library Journal* (Beers 1996) described a great idea for hooking some of these aliterates that I wish I had thought of years ago!

First, the article reminded teachers of how intimidating and overwhelming it can be for non-readers

to walk into a school library full of resources. After all, if you are struggling to put words together to make meaning and have been targeted as a reluctant or weak reader, the automatic response to being surrounded by shelves and shelves of books is self-defence. And the perfect self-defence for these students (typically Grades 4–12) when brought to the school library to select a free reading book is to scoff at reading, to announce that “there's nothing good here” or they “don't have time,” or to find other avenues of activity such as lounging or wandering about. (I share this reaction whenever I try to shop in a huge box store or department store—the amount of product is overwhelming, I can't find anything and head to an alternative smaller location as quickly as possible!) Teachers and teacher-librarians provide book talks (when there is time!) and usually spend considerable time assisting these uninterested, reluctant non-readers in selecting reading materials, but often question whether there is any real payoff. It seems as though the selected resources are either discarded at the end of the school library session, returned without having been read or misplaced.

So, what's the idea? Simple, really. Take a box, label it “Good Books,” drop about 30 terrific books into it, place it next to the circulation desk in the school library, and wait for the students' reaction. Beers (1996) mentions that students were surprised that a good book was that easy to find and glommed onto them immediately. During the following visit, the teacher-librarian put out another box of about 30 books labelled “More Good Books.” Whenever a student returned a book complaining that it was not good, the teacher-librarian placed it in another box labelled “Not Good Books.” The interesting part of this experience is that not only did some of the aliterates start to read, but they soon found that what was a good book for one, was not a good book for another, which led to some interesting discussions. Both teachers and teacher-librarians were delighted with the student response. Sounds like it's worth a try!

Reference

Beers, G. K. 1996. “No Time, No Interest, No Way! The 3 Voices of Aliteracy.” *School Library Journal* 42 (February): 31–33.

Guidelines for Contributors.....

Teacher-Librarian Today is published to

- enhance the competencies of learning resources professionals;
- increase knowledge, understanding and awareness of the role of learning resources programs in education; and
- stimulate thinking, to explore new ideas, to offer various viewpoints and to share information about learning resources and school library programs.

Articles from all educators are welcome. Teacher-librarians are especially invited to write about aspects of teacher-librarianship and school library programs that interest them and to share ideas with colleagues. Submissions are requested that will stimulate personal reflection, theoretical consideration and practical application. Articles that present differing perspectives; innovative, cooperatively planned and taught programs; trends and issues in teacher-librarianship; research findings; or reviews or evaluations of learning resources in all media are appreciated. From time to time, the editors may identify specific themes or topics for special issues and invite submissions on these topics.

Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail with an accompanying hard copy mailed to the editor. A cover page should include the contributor's name, professional position, degree(s) held, address and telephone and fax numbers. A recent photograph and related biographical information are also requested.

Manuscripts may be up to 3,500 words long. References to literature made in the text of the

submission should appear in full in a list at the end of the article. Literature not cited in the text but providing background material or further reading should be listed similarly.

Photographs, line drawings, diagrams and other graphics are welcome. To ensure quality reproduction, photographs should be clear and have good contrast. A caption and photo credit should accompany each photograph, and people in photographs should be clearly identified on a separate sheet of paper submitted with the photograph. (Note: do not write on the back of a photograph or attach information to it in any way that could mark its surface.) The contributor is responsible for obtaining releases for the use of photographs. Only original drawings should be submitted, and the source of the drawings must be credited. Disks and photographs will be returned. Contributors whose manuscripts are accepted will receive two copies of *Teacher-Librarian Today* containing the published article.

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