

NEWSLETTER

First Quarter 2011



**CENTER
FOR
THE BOOK**
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Center for the Book's networks of state centers and reading promotion partners extend the reach of the national center far beyond the programs it sponsors in the Washington area. The national center in the Library of Congress has established this newsletter to serve as a forum for all Center for the Book activities. We want to tell you what we are doing in Washington and around the country to support our mission of promoting books, reading, libraries and literacy.

And we want to hear about all the innovative ways you call attention to the importance of reading. Your updates can serve as year-round "idea exchanges" that augment our two in-person Idea Exchange meetings, held at the Library of Congress.

Please send your submissions to glam@loc.gov.

Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts:

Center for the Book Partnership Network Meets in Washington

By Guy Lamolinara

There is never any shortage of ideas and enthusiasm when the reading promotion partners of the Center for the Book gather at the Library of Congress for their annual meeting. And this year's March 17 gathering was no exception.

"These meetings are great opportunities to learn what other partners are doing to promote reading and also to learn about what the Center for the Book is doing," said John Y. Cole, director of the Center. In fact, said Cole, "You are going to learn about a project that has its roots at one of these meetings, our Read It LOUD! project."



Center for the Book Director John Y. Cole opened the meeting: "These meetings are great opportunities to learn what other partners are doing to promote reading and also to learn about what the Center for the Book is doing."

Following introductions by the more than 50 attendees, the "special hour" that Cole had promised began with inspirational remarks from Wally Amos, chairman of the Read It LOUD! Foundation, who has devoted much of his life to promoting the importance of reading nationwide.

"You know Wally not only from his cookie companies but also as someone who cares deeply about

reading aloud," said Cole, who then ceded the platform to Amos.

"This gathering is where Read It LOUD! got its start," said Amos. "Our goal is simply to create an incredible awareness for the benefits, the importance and the rewards of parents reading aloud to their children for at least 10 minutes a day. ... We are going to market reading the way businesses market their products. ... The end result is getting rid of the problem of adult illiteracy."

As he so often does, Amos demonstrated the power of his goal by himself reading to the audience, from Shane Derolf's "The Crayon Box That Talked," whose message of celebrating one's differences while appreciating and accepting the differences in others is familiar to anyone who has heard Amos speak before. "This is a crowning achievement for me," he said. "I am reading aloud in the Library of Congress. This is huge! There is nowhere else for me to go now," he joked.

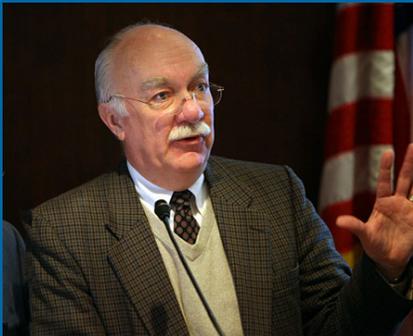


Librarian of Congress James H. Billington asked attendees to "please continue what you are doing" for reading and literacy.

(Story continues on next page)



Wally Amos: “Our goal is simply to create an incredible awareness for the benefits ... of parents reading to their children.”



Tom Ruppanner spoke about the “active digital network” that will support Read It LOUD!

Carlos Collazo, the founder and CEO of MARSYS, an international IT company based in San Francisco and one of the major supporters of Read It LOUD!, next described the novel approach to be used in promoting the project: employing the same tools his clients use to market their businesses using MARSYS’s digital network. He said he wanted to talk about his “motivation” for becoming involved in the project.

“I am from Cuba, and my family came to this country when I was not even 2 years old. ... We were raised to contribute to society, and at the core of this was reading. ... That stuck with me, and being a parent has focused this for me. ...

“And when I met [Read It LOUD! president] Tom Ruppanner seeking financial support, I thought, ‘How do we align the interests of the business world with this goal? How do we make it an incentive for them to support and fund this?’ ... Answer: By using the same digital platform that these companies use to reach their customers.”



Carlos Collazo: I was “raised to contribute to society, and at the core of this was reading.”

“Congratulations on your program,” said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, who then joined the meeting. Dr. Billington’s inspirational remarks included his less-than-heartwarming experience with e-books (“I couldn’t just curl up in bed or in a comfortable chair with my little electronic companion”) as well as his love for what poet John Keats described as “silence and slow time” in his “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (“We are such a noisy society. Always talking. ... I like to say that mute conversation with an author who represents a time and a place different from our own is the best conversation you can have next to the conversation you can have with an adult who is reading to you.”).

He concluded by thanking the partners for attending and he urged them to “please continue to do what you are doing” for reading and literacy.

Read It LOUD! President Tom Ruppanner spoke about the “active digital network” that will power the project’s “digital endpoints.” These endpoints include a kiosk at an airport that checks in passengers, a vending machine that has an LCD screen or an electronic billboard – all these technologies and more will be used to communicate the project’s message.



Robin Adelson: “It’s all about cultivating a true love of reading.”

Other Center for the Book partners that are involved in the Read It LOUD! project also made remarks. Karen Ristau, president of the National Catholic Educational

(Partners Meeting, from page 2)

Association, said that the program would be pitched to the more than 200,000 educators represented by her organization.

Likewise, Robin Adelson, executive director of the Children's Book Council, noted her organization's support for the program. "We are honored and privileged and so delighted to be a part of this," she said. "What it means is giving people we represent [book publishers] something that they can take with them. ... It's all about cultivating a true love of reading."

Laura Bailet, executive director of Nemours BrightStart!, spoke next about her organization, which "provides leadership and resources on children's health issues." One of the primary issues that Nemours is concerned with is "reading failure," she said. "Read It LOUD! gives us an opportunity to go directly to parents. ... A lot of children get off to a rocky start with reading, but we also know that if we identify the problems early on, that we can help them. We want to share our expertise with the entire Read It LOUD! community."

First Book, whose business is to provide free books to disadvantaged children, was represented by Chandler Arnold, executive vice president. "We want to connect the people here to our resources ... in order to distribute free books to kids."

Rahim Islam Jr. of Universal Companies of Philadelphia described the community outreach projects his organization is involved in, including Read It LOUD!. Many of Universal's programs focus on education and reading as "the key to a bright future."

Last, Mike Groza, CEO of Read It LOUD!, implored the attendees to become partners in the program as part of the "Read It LOUD! network. ... This is not just a two-year project but a project for the millennium."

The remainder of the day was taken up by brief presentations from the other Center for the Book partners. Their remarks inspire their fellow attendees to work together to achieve goals. Certainly, some new partnerships were formed that day, partnerships that will be discussed at next year's meeting.

(Story continues on next page)



Laura Bailet: "We want to share our expertise with the entire Read It LOUD! community."



Rahim Islam Jr.: Reading is "the key to a bright future."



Mike Groza: "This is not just a two-year project but a project for the millennium."



Chandler Arnold: "We want to connect the people here to our resources."



Karen Ristau will pitch Read It LOUD! to the more than 200,000 educators represented by her organization.



Many new partnerships were formed during breaks between sessions.



Letters About Literature Reading-Writing Program Winners Announced

Six Libraries to Receive \$10,000 Grants from Target

Letters About Literature, a national reading and writing program that asks young people in grades 4 through 12 to write to an author (living or dead) about how his or her book affected their lives, has announced its 2011 winners.

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

Approximately 70,000 young readers from across the country participated in this year's Letters About Literature initiative, a reading promotion program of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, presented in partnership with Target. The number of participants equaled last year's record total.

This year's winners come from all parts of the country and wrote to authors as diverse as Eric Hunter, author of "Into the Wild"; J.M. Barrie, author of "Peter Pan"; Sylvia Plath, author of "The Bell Jar"; and Daniel Defoe, author of "Robinson Crusoe."

The top letters in each competition level for each state were chosen. Then, two National winners were chosen from each of the three competition levels: Level 1 (grades 4-6), Level 2 (grades 7-8) and Level 3 (grades 9-12). National winners each designate a favorite library that he or she wishes to receive a \$10,000 grant from Target. The students each receive a \$500 Target GiftCard.

The four National Honors recipients from each competition level designate a library to receive a \$1,000 Target grant; the students each receive a \$50 Target GiftCard.

(Letters About Literature, from previous page)

Target sponsors Letters About Literature as part of its commitment to supporting education and early childhood reading. Target recognizes the integral role that reading plays in shaping a child's future, because reading is the foundation for lifelong learning and success. Since opening its doors, Target has given 5 percent of its income to organizations that support education, social services and the arts.

On the state level, the program is sponsored by affiliate State Centers for the Book. State and national judges include published authors, editors, publishers, librarians and teachers.

National Winners

Level 1 (Grades 4-6):

- Taylor Mathews, 6th grade, Southwest Middle School, Searcy, Ark. Taylor wrote to Erin Hunter, author of "Into the Wild."
- Maryam Salah, 6th grade, Al-Hamra Academy, Shrewsbury, Mass. Maryam wrote to Jerry Spinelli, author of "Maniac Magee."

Level 2 (Grades 7-8):

- Christian Lusardi, 8th grade, Scotts Ridge Middle School, Ridgefield, Conn. Christian wrote to George Selden, author of "The Cricket in Times Square."
- Audrey Wood, 7th grade, North Branch School, Afton, Va. Audrey wrote to J.M. Barrie, author of "Peter Pan."

Level 3 (Grades 9-12):

- Akash Kar, 11th grade, Saratoga High School, Saratoga, Calif. Akash wrote to Jhumpa Lahiri, author of "The Namesake."
- Ashli Bynum, Forest Hills Northern High School, Ada, Mich. Ashli wrote to Marge Piercy, author of "Barbie Doll."

National Honor Winners

Level 1 (Grades 4-6):

- Conrad Oberhaus, 5th grade, Lincolnshire, Ill.
- Nicholas Behrens, 6th grade, Falcon Heights, Minn.
- Tristan Tudor, 6th grade, Seeley Lake, Mont.
- Hanna Lee, 6th grade, Plano, Texas

Level 2 (Grades 7-8):

- Heather Wiggins, 8th grade, Kalamazoo, Mich.
- Solomon Polansky, 8th grade, Minnetonka, Minn.
- Janet Snow, 8th grade, Elkin, N.C.
- Abby Bateman, 7th grade, Snoqualmie, Wash.

Level 3 (Grades 9-12):

- Ashlee BeGell, 9th grade, Mesa, Ariz.
- Fabilola Urdaneta, 11th grade, Key Biscayne, Fla.

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(Letters About Literature, from previous page)

- Daeun Kim, 11th grade, Norwood, N.J.
- Neal Digre, 11th grade, Brookings, S.D.

The complete National winning letters are available in the “News” section at www.lettersaboutliterature.org.

For information about the program and a list of previous winners, visit www.read.gov/contests/. For further details, contact the national program director at cgourley@verizon.net.



Empire State Book Festival Recognizes Letters About Literature Winners

The second annual Empire State Book Festival and Gala was held April 1-2 and brought hundreds of writers and more than 2,000 attendees to Albany. The event kicked off with a gala that featured New York state writers being inducted into the Writers Hall of Fame. Poet John Ashbery and author Paula Fox were inducted in this year’s ceremony. In addition, 12 students from around the state were recognized for their participation in Letters About Literature, which the New York Center for the Book oversees for the state.



Letters About Literature winner Michael Ferdinand, grade 6, met poet John Ashbery.



Children’s book author and illustrator James Ransome was a special guest.



State winners (from left): Alexandra Kung, 8th grade, and Alexandra Saali, 11th grade, flank Ferdinand.



Looking for Letters About Literature Photos

If you have any photos from your Letters About Literature award ceremonies that you would like to share with your fellow Center for the Book Newsletter readers, please send them to Guy Lamolinara at glam@loc.gov. We will use as many as we can in upcoming issues.

Social Studies and Me!

And the Vermont Center for the Book's Mother Goose Programs

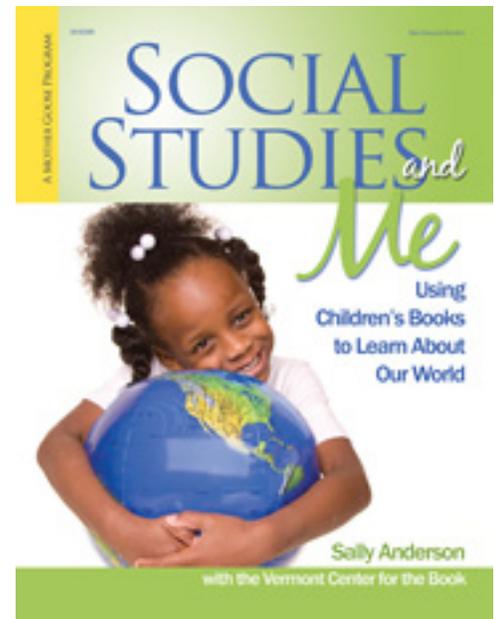
By Guy Lamolinara

Vermont Center for the Book Executive Director Sally Anderson has just written a new resource book that supports children's curiosity by using picture books to bring social studies to life. "Social Studies and Me! Using Children's Books to Learn About Our World" has been published by Gryphon House.

"Social Studies and Me!" can be used as a classroom curriculum guide for pre-K through Kindergarten educators to integrate social studies-based activities into their existing curriculum, or as a curriculum unto itself. It is also being marketed to homeschoolers, who are increasingly seeking broader-based curricula.

Anderson and the Vermont Center first worked with early childhood educators on a National Science Foundation-funded project called Mother Goose Cares About Math and Science several years ago. "Thanks to that grant, which we piloted in Philadelphia and in Vermont, we developed a math and science course/program for early-childhood educators, which contained picture books and hands-on materials for use in the classroom," said Anderson.

By routinely working with educators and librarians, the Vermont Center has developed its highly regarded Mother Goose Programs. "While we were working with these educators, they said they needed a social studies curriculum similar to 'Mother Goose Cares About Math and Science,'" said Anderson. "No such curriculum was available at the time. So, based on this work and one of our family programs ['Growing with Mother Goose'], we developed 'Mother Goose Cares About Social Studies,' the basis for 'Social Studies and Me!'"



(Continued on next page)

The Vermont Center for the Book disseminates a wide variety of its Mother Goose Programs to increase children's knowledge, school readiness, success and self-esteem by building the knowledge, skills and confidence of parents, librarians and educators. These professional development programs provide adults with picture books, guides, materials and training, transforming reading with children into multidimensional and powerful learning experiences.

The new publication was conceived and written specifically for educators working with pre-K through kindergarten children, and all its activities are based on the National Council for Social Studies standards and aligned with state and Head Start Standards/Outcomes.

"All of the hands-on activities in the book are standards based, with each activity containing specific references to social studies and language/literacy standards," said Anderson.

The recommended picture books and activities can be used to learn about, discuss and do hands-on activities centered around these social studies concepts: Personal Identity, Families, Friends, Community and the Greater World.

Hundreds of children's books were used in developing "Social Studies and Me!" How were the books selected? "We receive review copies from all picture book publishers. Therefore, with such a large pool to choose from, we're able to select picture books based on overall excellence. We read the books ourselves," said Anderson, who is herself a librarian. "We read the reviews and note which books have received awards and other accolades." In addition, books are selected based on:

Are there diverse characters? (gender, culture, setting, family structure, etc.)

Is the book developmentally appropriate?

Will the book work as a read-aloud in a group setting?

Is it engaging?

Does it have a good story? True facts? Or both?

The Vermont Center for the Book (www.mothergooseprograms.org/aboutus.php) began as small nonprofit founded by Anderson in 1985 as the Vermont Reading Project and it grew into a national organization whose programs and products for librarians, educators and families are now used in more than 30 states.

"Picture books and stories bring social studies to life," said Anderson. "They help children learn how to use social studies skills and knowledge to address their own real-life dilemmas. As children are reading and discussing books, they also develop important language and literacy skills."

Next year, Gryphon House plans to publish more three books based on Vermont Center for the Book educator and family guides, on these topics: math and science for early childhood educators, math for families (at-home) and science for families (at-home).



YRC Hosts RIF and Adventure Theater

By Jane Gilchrist

The Young Readers Center (YRC) joined with Reading Is Fundamental and the Adventure Theater on Feb. 26 to host a Saturday morning of stories, performance and song. Well-known author Gloria Pinkney was on hand to read “Mirandy and Brother Wind,” a story written by Patricia C. McKissack and illustrated by Gloria’s husband, Jerry Pinkney. This story describes a high-spirited young girl’s attempts to catch the wind and make him her dance partner because she hopes to win first prize in the junior cakewalk.

What could top a great read-a-loud? The arrival of Mirandy herself! The lead character in Adventure Theater’s world premiere of a musical based on the book entertained everyone in attendance with songs from the musical and taught everyone to do the cakewalk. Michael J. Bobbitt adapted the story and John L. Cornelius provided the music and lyrics for the production directed by Jennifer Nelson. It was mounted in early February at the Adventure Theater in Glen Echo, Md., for a three-week run and moved to the Atlas Performing Arts Center, on H Street N.E. in Washington for a four-week run.

Reading Is Fundamental is a longtime Center for the Book reading promotion partner and the Center is looking forward to working with its new partner, Adventure Theater.

Jane Gilchrist is coordinator of the Young Readers Center, which is administered by the Center for the Book.



National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature Visits Dominican University

By Guy Lamolinara



From left: Susan Roman, Dean of the Dominican University Graduate School of Library and Information Science; Katherine Paterson; and Donna Carroll, President of Dominican University.

National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature Katherine Paterson recently paid a visit to the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Dominican University in River Forest, Ill., just outside Chicago, where she spoke about her platform, Read for Your Life! But being the great writer (and speaker) that she is, Paterson’s talk was much more than a dry disquisition on the importance of reading. An address from Paterson is an inspirational, funny, sad, educational and very personal account of why she is so passionate about reading and how her books reflect her passions about life.

Every spring, the library school there hosts a lecture, and this year responsibilities were given to the Butler Children’s Literature Center, a collaborative project of the library school, the School of Education and the Rebecca Crown Library.

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(Dominican University, continued from previous page)



*Lynne Butler Adams of the
Butler Family Foundation with
Katherine Paterson.*

“At the Butler Center we are dedicated to celebrating literature for young people, motivating librarians, teachers and families to share books and stories with young people and perpetuating the joys of reading across generations,” said Thom Barthelmess, curator of the Butler Children’s Literature Center

As Ambassador for Young People’s Literature, Paterson has much to say on these issues, not to mention a remarkably powerful and affecting way of saying it, “and so she seemed like a terrific choice for the lecture,” Barthelmess said. Jon Scieszka spoke at the Butler Center’s dedication during his term as ambassador in 2009-2010. “We are especially proud and pleased to have had both of the ambassadors speak to our community. We hope to continue the trend,” he added.

Paterson’s April 6 talk “was a beautiful tapestry of personal stories woven together with precision and care to communicate a deeper sense of the very real power that books and stories have and the critical importance of sharing them with young people.” The stories included experiences from her own childhood in China, her time as a young woman in Japan and her history as a celebrated and much-honored author for young people whose books have been read by millions of people of all ages. She spoke to a standing-room-only crowd and she transfixed the entire room for the duration. “Her work resonates so deeply with so many people, and it was wonderful to witness the remarkably broad range of people who came together in shared appreciation,” Barthelmess said. After her talk she entertained questions, and then signed books for a long line of fans.

“I experienced firsthand both the enduring resonance of Katherine’s literary efforts and the inestimable value of stories in general. Her presence was a real gift, to all of us,” Barthelmess concluded.



Center for the Book Director John Y. Cole attended the inaugural reception of the American Writers Museum on Feb. 3 in Washington. The museum, whose mission is to establish the first national museum in the United States dedicated to engaging the public in celebrating American writers and exploring their influence, is a reading-promotion partner of the Center for the Book. Cole and Tree Swenson, president and executive director of the Academy of American Poets (also a Center for the Book partner), met up during the reception.



Recent Center for the Book Author Events

Authors often use the extraordinary collections of the Library of Congress in their research, and, nearly as often, they appear in the Center for the Book's Books & Beyond series to discuss and sign their works.

A few recent events include Douglas Waller and his "Wild Bill Donovan: The Spymaster Who Created the OSS and Modern American Espionage" on Feb. 24; Maya Jasanoff, who discussed "Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World" on March 24; Kristie Miller, who talked about her new book, "Ellen and Edith: Woodrow Wilson's First Ladies," on March 30; and David Stern of the University of Pennsylvania and Katrin Kogman-Apel of Ben Gurion University in Israel, who presented on the new facsimile edition of the Washington Haggadah on March 23. After the Bible, the Passover haggadah is the most widely read classic Jewish text, and few editions are as exquisite as the Washington Haggadah in the Library of Congress.

Waller, Jasonoff and Miller will appear in this year's National Book Festival on Sept. 24-25.

All Books & Beyond events are recorded for later webcasting and available at the Center for the Book website at www.read.gov/cfb/. There is also a Books & Beyond Book Club on Facebook at www.facebook.com/booksandbeyond. And, more than 500 webcasts from prior National Book Festivals, whose author programs are coordinated by the Center for the Book, can be viewed at www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/index.php (type "National Book Festival" in search box).



Maya Jasanoff (above) and Kristie Miller (below) spoke during recent Books & Beyond programs about their research at the Library of Congress and the books that resulted from that work.



David Stern (above right) of the University of Pennsylvania spoke about the Library's Washington Haggadah which was on display during the program (above).

Stern and co-editor Katrin Kogman-Apel (right) signed copies of the facsimile edition of the Washington Haggadah.



MASTERPIECE

40 YEARS

MASTERPIECE celebrates 40 years of bringing high-quality adaptations of classic works to PBS on Sunday nights. For the occasion, they have revamped a full library of book-to-film discussion guides from the archive. Find them at www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/bookclub/index.html.

The guides are from WGBH, the PBS affiliate based in Boston, which is a Center for the Book partner.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

May 23 (Monday), Noon, Montpelier Room, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Vivian Ann Davidson Hewitt will discuss and sign her new autobiography, "The One and Only: Vivian Ann Davidson Hewitt."

JUNE 2 (Thursday), Noon, Dining Room A, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Joshua Kendall will discuss and sign his new book, "The Forgotten Founding Father: Noah Webster's Obsession, and the Creation of an American Culture" (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2011).

JUNE 3 (Friday), Noon, Mumford Room, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Verna Posever Curtis (Prints & Photographs Division), along with four specialists from Library special collections, Barbara Bair (Manuscript Division), Todd Harvey (American Folklife Center), Mark Horowitz (Music Division) and Reme Grefalda (Asian Division) will discuss and sign their new book, "Photographic Memory: The Album in the Age of Photography" (Aperture Foundation). Co-sponsored with the Prints and Photographs Division and the Publishing Office.

SEPT. 24 & 25 (Saturday & Sunday) National Mall

National Book Festival

SEPT. 28 (Wednesday), Noon, Pickford Theater, Madison Building

Books & Beyond program. Charles King will discuss and sign his new book, "Odessa: Genius and Death in a City of Dreams" (W.W. Norton, 2011). Co-sponsored with the European Division.

OCT. 3 (Monday), 11:00 a.m., Coolidge Auditorium, Jefferson Building

"Ballet for Martha" performance and book discussion and signing.

OCT. 21 (Friday), 5:30-7 p.m., Montpelier Room, Madison Building

National Collegiate Book Collection Awards Ceremony. Co-sponsored with the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America.



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