Most of the articles in this issue honor the extraordinary work that state Center for the Book affiliates and partners do each year to further interest in books, reading, libraries and literacy. Several of you have sent us news about your recent activities and we are publishing them here for all our readers. As always, we welcome your submissions of news and articles.

Reading Promotion Partner Network

In addition to the network of affiliated state centers, the Center for the Book has organized a nationwide network of reading promotion partners – other organizations dedicated to advocating books, reading and literacy. These partners also meet annually at the Library of Congress to hear what other organizations are doing and to discover new ways to collaborate. There are currently more than 80 organizations in this network.

An Ambassadorial Report

By Katherine Paterson

Katherine Paterson has just concluded the first of two years as the nation’s second National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature. Publishers Weekly asked her to describe her first year in the role.

Yes, to answer the obvious question. I was absolutely thrilled when Robin Adelson [executive director of the Children’s Book Council, a Center for the Book partner that co-sponsors the program] called asking me if I would consider being nominated as the second National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature. But there were problems attached. The first problem was not to tell anyone. I don’t mean don’t tell anyone until after the press conference this morning, I mean don’t tell anyone until January 5th, 2010. That was months away, but I was good. I didn’t tell anyone — well, I did tell my husband and my children when the Librarian of Congress made the appointment in the fall—but that doesn’t really count as telling, surely.

The second problem was following the inimitable, irrepressible, ebullient (one runs out of adjectives) Jon Scieszka in this exalted position. Jon is perhaps the funniest person I know. Audiences fall off their chairs laughing when he speaks. I ought to know, having done so myself. After I speak, people have been known to brag about how much they cried. So you see, I had no illusions that fanfares would be composed in my honor. I comforted myself with the thought that if the committee had wanted even a pale imitation of Jon, they would never have nominated me.

My family, especially my grandchildren, were a great help. Husband John, all four children and four of the grandchildren journeyed to Washington last January 5th to listen to the speeches, pose with the official ambassadorial cookie in hand, and cheer me on. I couldn’t wish for a better fan club. It was a wonderful occasion, brightened by Jon [Scieszka]’s valedictory speech and closely followed by two joint appearances with the marvelous Ambassador Emeritus during which nobody cried.

(Story continues on next page)
On the road again… National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature Katherine Paterson has traveled the country with her message “Read for Your Life!” She traveled to Broward County, Fla., making an appearance at the Virginia Shuman Young Elementary School and Florida Center for the Book on Dec. 8-9; she also participated in the Annual Educators Evening at the Eric Carle Museum in Amherst, Mass., on Nov. 10, where she addressed about 100 educators about her role as National Ambassador. Michael Rosen, a fellow writer for young people, who was Britain’s Children’s Laureate in 2007-2009, was also a guest speaker. For more information about the National Ambassador program, visit www.read.gov/cfb/ambassador/.

And then I was off, seeking to represent to the nation the rich world of young people’s books. I had been warned about the interviews, and there were plenty of those, but this time I had a happy surprise. When I first encountered the press 30-plus years ago, most reporters had never heard of me. That didn’t bother me—hardly anyone outside my narrow circle of acquaintances had. But not only did the average reporter make sure I was aware of the fact that I was unknown, he (and it was nearly always a he) made sure I realized that he had much more important work to do than to interview an unknown children’s writer and that he was annoyed to have gotten the assignment. In 2010, I was being interviewed by wonderful colleagues for the trade magazines, and even the young newspaper reporters behaved differently. It became apparent that many of them had read my books when they were children and still remembered them. Age and a long career do have their compensations.

Other compensations included being a part of the Children’s Book Week Gala in New York and being roasted by no less than Mo Willems himself. Another huge plus was being able to take part in the Library of Congress’s marvelous National Book Festival. The special delight there was the session where I and other contributors performed the final episode of “The Exquisite Corpse Adventure” [www.read.gov] as Readers’ Theater. This joint project of the Library of Congress Center for the Book and the National Children’s Book and Literacy Alliance launched in 2009 with a hilarious opening chapter by the first Ambassador, and it was my responsibility as the successor to write the final chapter.

Being roasted (and also toasted) by my friends has been another delight of the year. When I missed a gathering I regularly attend, someone asked my friend Grace Greene where I was. “She’s in Washington being made a national embarrassment, oh, I mean, a natural embarrassment” -- a pair of Freudian slips that has been repeated with delight throughout central Vermont. I needed this humility check after I saw myself as a Horn Book cover girl and read the gracious words inside.

A happy synchronicity of 2010 was the choice of my latest book, “The Day of the Pelican,” as the Vermont Reads book for the year. In October, John Cole and Guy Lamolinara from the Library of Congress flew up from Washington to help celebrate the culminating event of the Vermont Reads year
and the choice of a Vermonter as the national ambassador.

I have yet to meet the adoring kindergartners that Jon [Scieszka] promised me would greet me with salaams. I haven’t, in fact, spoken in any kindergarten classes since my youngest grandchild graduated to first grade. My school audiences have been, like most of my readers, upper elementary students who ask earnest questions like: “Do you have trouble constructing a character development path?” To which I reply: “A what?” never having heard of such before. After a number of similar questions about writing technique that their teachers have assured them are used by all professional writers, I am forced to confess that whatever it is that real writers do, I don’t.

But my knowledgeable interrogators are patient with me. They delight in showing me how they have responded to the books they have read. In December, in Fort Lauderdale, I saw scenes from “The Great Gilly Hopkins” turned into colorful dioramas with modeling clay characters and pictures and descriptions of highly imaginative personal Terabithias. In the end my audiences forgive me for not knowing all about writing and we talk together about books and what they mean to us, which is what my job is all about, isn’t it?

So although I know that everyone who brings young people and books together is truly an ambassador for young people’s literature, it is a great privilege to carry around a title that reminds the rest of America of the important work we all are doing. I’m truly looking forward to another year of representing us in this varied and valuable work.

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Young Readers Center Featured on FOX TV

The Young Readers Center – the Library of Congress’s first room specifically for children – is headed by Jane Gilchrist, a librarian with expertise in the field of young people’s literature. She recently gave an interview to FOX Television about the center and the programs it offers.

During the interview, Gilchrist spoke about how, despite the fact that children spend a lot of time online, it is “not that hard” to get kids excited about books. “Books do have a future,” she added.

Gilchrist also spoke about the Library’s work with the Ad Council, which is promoting the Read.gov website of the Center for the Book with ads featuring Disney’s recent animated film, “Tangled,” a retelling of the Rapunzel fairy tale.

The complete interview is at http://tinyurl.com/653kbp2.
Center for the Book Welcomes New Partners

Five organizations have recently joined the Center for the Book network of more than 80 partners that share the mission of the center to promote books, reading, literacy and libraries. The list of partners can be found at www.read.gov/cfb/partners.php.

The new partners are:

**American Women Writers National Museum.** To feature the talent of America’s great women writers, the American Women Writers National Museum is expected to open in Washington, D.C., in January 2012. The intent is to recognize women journalists, poets, historians, playwrights, screenwriters and authors. Interactive displays, rotating exhibits, films, plays, readings, speakers and rental space are planned. For more information visit www.americanwomenwritersnationalmuseum.org.

**American Writers Museum.** Today there are museums that focus on art and history, science and technology, nature and natural history, race and ethnicity, and even the wondrous experiences of childhood. Although there are many wonderful museums dedicated to a particular writer, there is no museum that is dedicated to America’s writers as a whole. No museum exists that invites us all to experience firsthand the power of literature in reflecting and shaping the essence of the American experience. Today, the American Writers Museum Foundation is addressing this profound omission through its commitment to developing a new and vital national institution — The American Writers Museum. Visit www.americanwritersmuseum.org.

**AWP: The Association of Writers and Writing Programs.** AWP is a national, nonprofit literary organization for teachers and writers. Founded in 1967, AWP is dedicated to serving writers, teachers and writing programs. Its core services include publication of “The Writer’s Chronicle,” the AWP Job List and the “AWP Official Guide to Creative Writing Programs.” AWP also sponsors an annual conference, held in Washington, D.C., this year. For more information visit www.awpwriter.org.

**Iowa City: UNESCO City of Literature.** The City of Literature works to advance its mission of celebrating and supporting literature on a local, regional, national and international level, connecting readers and writers through the power of story. Through programs like the Iowa Book Festival’s Day in the City of Literature, families, businesses and community organizations have been encouraged to discover Iowa as a

(Story continues on next page)
place that invites citizens -- both locally and globally -- to discover and share the state’s many literary resources and opportunities. For more information, visit www.cityofliteratureusa.org/.

Nemours BrightStart! Since 2005, Nemours BrightStart! has pioneered universal, individualized reading readiness screening linked with educational instruction services in more than 120 child care centers and preschools throughout Duval County, Fla. Although BrightStart! continues to develop and test new programs in Florida, it is now taking steps to help make this proven approach available in virtually any community. For more information visit www.nemours.org/service/preventive/brightstart.html.

Where’s Scrooge?
What Happened when a Read.gov Billboard Appeared in Little Rock, Ark.

By Crystal Long

As I was heading home from work on Nov. 29, 2010, the most delightful sight greeted me as I drove over the bridge on Third Street, just across from the state capitol building—a Read.gov billboard featuring the Bah! Humbug! man himself—Ebenezer Scrooge.

Seeing a Read.gov billboard in Little Rock was delightful simply because I, personally, have never seen one in this city during the time that I have lived here. Its location was perfect—next to a popular local restaurant and directly across from the state capitol. With all of the traffic coming into town to view the lights decorating the capitol building for the holidays, the location of this billboard was prime holiday advertising real estate.

A few days later, during lunch away from the office, a co-worker and I stopped to photograph the billboard. After cropping the image, I loaded it to the Arkansas Center for the Book’s Facebook page for our “fans” to enjoy and discuss. The reference librarians here at the Arkansas State Library write a reference blog and blogged about the billboard and the website it advertised, and they uploaded the image of the billboard to the blog. Shortly after that, I asked the Arkansas State Library’s webmaster if the photograph could be added to our homepage’s rotating banner for the holiday season. With our state librarian’s approval, our webmaster superimposed the location information onto the image and loaded it into the rotating banner on the State Library’s homepage, where it lived from Dec. 10, 2010,
2011 New York State Writers Hall of Fame Inductees Announced

*Nine Authors to Be Inducted*

On Friday, April 1, the New York Center for the Book will induct nine authors into the New York State Writers Hall of Fame. This group will include seven writers who are deceased and two living whose writings have made a lasting contribution to literature. The list:

John Ashbery (1927) was born in Rochester, N.Y. This American poet has published more than 20 volumes of poetry and won nearly every major American award for poetry, including a Pulitzer Prize in 1976 for his collection “Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror.”

Willa Cather (1873-1947) is a Pulitzer Prize-winning American author who achieved recognition for her novels of frontier life on the Great Plains, such as “O Pioneers!,” “My Ántonia” and “The Song of the Lark.” In 1923 she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for “One of Ours” (1922), a novel set during World War I. Cather lived in New York for most of her adult life and writing career.

Julia DeBurgos (1914-1953) is considered by many as the greatest poet to have been born in Puerto Rico. She spent her life between New York and Puerto Rico. On Sept. 14, 2010, the U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp in her honor.

Ralph Ellison (1914-1994) is best known for his novel “Invisible Man,” which won the National Book Award in 1953.

Paula Fox (1923) was born in New York City and writes for both adults and children. Her novel “The Slave Dancer” (1973) received the Newbery Medal in 1974; and in 1978, she was awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Medal.

Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965) attended the New School in New York City. She was a playwright who is best known for “A Raisin in the Sun.”

Madeleine L’Engle (1918-2007) was born in New York City and is best known until Jan. 3, 2011.

Our webmaster, also a librarian, felt inspired and posted the image and location of the billboard to two of our library associations’ listservs. We also alerted the State Library staff to its existence. In spreading the word, other people became involved and notified us that two other Read.gov billboards featuring Scrooge could be found in the area and one was located in Benton, a city approximately 30 minutes away from Little Rock. For a few days, we played a holiday version of “Where’s Waldo?” and enjoyed every minute of it!

Who would have thought that a billboard could raise such excitement?! Thank you, Library of Congress and the Ad Council for the billboards! We have enjoyed them this December, more than we can say!

Crystal Long is coordinator of the Arkansas Center for the Book at the Arkansas State Library.

(Continued on next page)
for her young adult fiction, particularly the Newbery Medal-winning “A Wrinkle in Time” and its sequels “A Wind in the Door,” “A Swiftly Tilting Planet,” “Many Waters” and “An Acceptable Time.”

Herman Melville (1819-1891) was born in New York City. He was a novelist, short story writer, essayist and poet who is best known for his novel “Moby-Dick” and the novella “Billy Budd.”

Dorothy Parker (1893-1967) was a founding member of the Algonquin Roundtable who was a poet and satirist best known for her wit and her eye for urban foibles.

John Ashbery and Paula Fox are scheduled to attend the event. In 2008 Ashbery’s “Collected Poems 1956–1987” was published as part of the Library of America series. He was the first living poet to receive that honor. Fox turns 88 in April, and her new book, “News from the World” (W.W. Norton), will be published that month. The 2011 inductees will join the 12 writers inducted last year, including Robert Caro, Mary Gordon, Edna St. Vincent Millay and Walt Whitman.

The induction ceremony for the New York State Writers Hall of Fame will be the focus of the Empire State Book Festival Gala scheduled for 6-10 p.m. on Friday, April 1, at the State Room in Albany. The ticketed event is open to the public. The gala will kick off the state’s second annual Empire State Book Festival, which will bring together authors, illustrators, librarians, storytellers, publishers and booklovers to celebrate the literary heritage of the state. It is free and open to the public and will be held on Saturday, April 2, from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in Meeting Rooms 1-7 at the Empire State Plaza, where readings, author signings and special presentations will be held.

The nominees into the NYS Writers Hall of Fame were chosen by a selection committee composed of Harold Augenbraum, executive director of the National Book Foundation; Barbara Genco, retired librarian from Brooklyn Public Library and editor of Collection Management at Media Source; Brian Kenney, editorial director for Library Journal and School Library Journal; Kathleen Masterson, director of the New York State Council on the Arts Literary Program; Bertha Rogers, executive director of Bright Hill Press and creator of the New York State Literary website and map; Rocco Staino, chairman of the Empire State Book Festival; and Hong Yao, associate coordinator for Collection Development at Queens Library.

Plans are under way to house The NYS Writers Hall of Fame at the New York State Library in Albany.

The New York Center for the Book is part of the Library of Congress Center for the Book and is housed at the New York Library Association. For additional information on the Empire State Book Festival and Writers Hall of Fame visit www.empirestatebookfestival.org or contact Rocco Staino at rocco.staino@gmail.com or Michael Borges at director@nyla.org.
More than 2.4 Million Books to Be Printed and Distributed to Afghan Children

*Center for the Book Partner Receives Grant for Its Effort*

Hoopoe Books, a Center for the Book reading promotion partner, has received a grant from the U.S. Embassy Kabul Public Affairs Section of the State Department to print and distribute 2.46 million books in six Hoopoe titles: 1.73 million books will be in Dari-Pashto bilingual editions and 736,000 will be in English. The grant will also support 115,000 self-explanatory teacher’s guides that will be distributed for use with each title and 65,000 audio versions of the six stories in cassette or CD.

In addition, the grant will enable Hoopoe to provide teacher training for more than 200 teachers and the creation and distribution of three 30-minute call-in radio programs, each airing two stories for local radio stations.

Of the more than 12 million school-age children in Afghanistan, very few of them have ever seen an illustrated storybook in their own main languages, let alone owned one. The grant will also make a difference in the way children learn once their teachers use these traditional Afghan tales in the classroom. Currently, literacy classes tend to focus entirely on rote memorization, whereas Hoopoe’s focus is on developing literary and thinking skills.

This opportunity came about when several of the 13 U.S. Provincial Restoration Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan were distributing Hoopoe books to street children and schools. Their effort was supported by a grant from a private foundation that matched funds mostly donated by the families and friends of the PRT staff.

The Afghan children, their families and teachers all loved the books. As a result, a number of the PRTs contacted the U.S. Cultural Affairs Office in Kabul about procuring a larger quantity of Hoopoe books for distribution in their respective areas. The Cultural Affairs Office followed up by contacting Hoopoe last August, and after learning about the full scope of Hoopoe’s activities in Afghanistan, it suggested that Hoopoe take a look at the opportunities for grant funding available to support a national-level program, as opposed to focusing just on a few provinces. Hoopoe’s grant application was approved.

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South Carolina State Library Announces New Web Site – ReadSC.org

The South Carolina State Library has just announced a new member to its family of web sites, [ReadSC.org](http://www.readsc.org). The web site supports the State Library’s South Carolina Center for the Book, which is the South Carolina affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book. The Center is a cooperative project of the South Carolina State Library, the University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science, and the Humanities CouncilSC. The Center is located at 1430 Senate, Columbia, S.C., in the State Library’s Center for the Book & Talking Book Services Reading Room.

(Story continues on next page)
The South Carolina Center for the Book celebrates South Carolina’s rich literary heritage and brings public attention to the importance of books, writers and reading. The center co-sponsors literary events, such as the Speaker @ the Center program, which coordinates monthly author talks in partnership with the University of South Carolina Press. The center also coordinates the Letters About Literature student writing contest. To enter, students in grades 4-12 write a personal letter to an author, living or dead, from any genre – fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic -- explaining how that author’s work changed the students’ thinking about the world or themselves. There are three competition levels: Level I for children in grades 4 through 6; Level II for grades 7 and 8 and Level III, grades 9-12.

The center also hosts an annual award ceremony celebrating writing, teaching and literary arts advocacy. The South Carolina Center for the Book Awards were formerly a single award known as the Palmetto Book Award. In 2008 the Palmetto Book Award expanded the award to honor excellence in three categories:

- Writing: South Carolina writer of any genre whose work has been published in the last year
- Teaching: South Carolina teacher of the literary or language arts (at any level or type of school)
- Advocacy: South Carolina person or organization that works to promote the literary arts and to foster a creative atmosphere in the state

In 2010 the State Library joined the awards by creating the South Carolina State Library Partnership and Collaboration Award.

For more information about the South Carolina Center for the Book, visit ReadSC.org.

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Book Festival Participant Ree Drummond Blogs About Her Experiences

National Book Festival presenter Ree Drummond has blogged about her experience at the 2010 festival, how much she enjoyed being at the Oklahoma table in the Pavilion of the States and how she even helped stamp kids’ maps while she was at the table. Some excerpts from her posting:

“After a month of unbelievable craziness on the ranch, in my brain, inside Charlie’s mouth and on the floor of my laundry room, my trip this weekend to Washington, D.C., positively sneaked up on me. I had been invited a few months ago to appear at the National Book Festival this weekend, but summer and all its cattle and attempted gardening and angst took over, and before I knew it Marlboro Man [her husband] was handing me my suitcase yesterday and saying, “Tell Laura Bush I said hi.” …

“Ten years ago Laura Bush founded this incredible event, whose magnitude I’m not sure I grasped until I hopped out of a cab at the entrance on the National Mall this morning. Tents everywhere. People everywhere. Washington Monument on one side. Capitol Building on the other. …

(Story continues on next page)
Ree Drummond meets one of her many fans at the Oklahoma table in the Pavilion of the States during the 2010 National Book Festival.

“Kids started coming by our table [in the Pavilion of the States]. They were holding maps, which they were taking from table to table in an effort to get each state’s stamp. …

“I kicked myself under the table for not having the kids with me. They would have had a field day.

“I was pleased to be able to provide [a] little guy his 50th stamp.

“Way to go, Henry!

“I slapped him some skin, gave him the ol’ fist pump. …

“The National Book Festival. Boy, would I recommend it. It was an honor to have been there, and I hope to come back next year, if only as an attendee.

“I shall bring my punks. They need to get their 50 stamps!”

The complete blogpost is at http://thepioneerwoman.com/blog/2010/09/what-an-experience/.

National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections Invites You to Participate

The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) is a cooperative cataloging program partnered by the Library of Congress and eligible U.S. archival and manuscript repositories that has been in existence for more than 50 years. This free program provides and promotes bibliographic access to the nation’s documentary heritage, thus celebrating the diversity of American life as well as providing an excellent tool for genealogical and historical research. If you have access to the Internet, you and your researchers worldwide have free access to the entire OCLC archival and mixed collections file through the NUCMC Web site at www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc.

Participating repositories, such as local historical societies, museums, public libraries or town clerk’s offices, provide NUCMC with information (main entry, title, date range, size, scope, etc.) describing their archival and manuscript holdings. NUCMC staff at the Library of Congress then use these data to create MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging) bibliographic records describing the repository’s
holdings in OCLC WorldCat.

The standardized bibliographic records created and distributed via this international database are sometimes the first broad exposure for a repository’s collections, often generating wider usage and public awareness that in turn speak persuasively for increased support from funders and administrators for hidden collections.

As it begins its second half-century, NUCMC extends an invitation to all eligible repositories to participate in its ongoing mission. To be eligible, a repository must:

1) be located in the United States or its territories; 2) must regularly admit researchers; and 3) must lack the capability of entering its own manuscript cataloging into OCLC.

For further questions and additional information, contact: Library of Congress, Cooperative and Instructional Programs Division, NUCMC, 101 Independence Ave. S.E., Washington, DC 20540-4230; www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc; e-mail: nucmc@loc.gov; telephone: (202) 707-7954; fax: (202) 252-2082.

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Calendar of Events

MARCH 8 (Tuesday), 1:30 pm, West Dining Room, Madison Building


MARCH 23 (Wednesday), noon, Mumford Room, Madison Building


MARCH 24 (Thursday), noon, Mumford Room, Madison Building


MARCH 30 (Wednesday), noon, Montpelier Room, Madison Building


Continued on next page
APRIL 13 (Wednesday) noon, Montpelier Room, Madison Building

APRIL 15 (Friday), noon, Montpelier Room, Madison Building
Books & Beyond program. Meryl Secrest will discuss and sign her new biography, “Modigliani: A Life” (Knopf Doubleday, 2011). Co-sponsored with the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution.

MAY 11 (Wednesday), noon, Pickford Theater, Madison Building

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