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Fergus Falls Public Library
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Spotlight on Books 2010
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I look forward to the Spotlight on Books Conference every year! It is such a fun and uplifting conference. I love the opportunity to chat and swap ideas with so many like-minded librarians and others who love children and children's literature. Regrettably, due to a sick child, I was only able to attend breakfast, the Lightning Round with Regional authors and the presentation by Dara Dokas on Saturday. However, even those few hours I spent at Spotlight were invaluable ones.

In the morning, while enjoying an excellent breakfast, I was able to chat with a number of old friends and even made a couple of new ones. During the chats, I gleaned ideas on how to improve my Summer Reading Program school visits, how to successfully coordinate a series of author visits, and discovered a new contact to help me in planning a Kitchen Science program for kids this summer. And that was just breakfast!

The Lightning Round introduced me to new regional authors, including one I am related to! I am already working on having at least two of the authors who presented during the Round come and present in Fergus Falls. The Lightning Round with Regional Authors is really a win-win for the new authors and librarians looking to introduce readers to new local talent at an affordable price.

Dara Dokas's presentation was just a delight. She is an excellent speaker and I would love to have her visit Fergus Falls. I wrote down a number of her excellent quotes and was motivated, once again, to explore my own desire to write for children. I also learned about the McKnight Award offered by the Loft Literary Center. We often have aspiring authors ask for ideas on how to get their work published and how to fund the publishing process; now I can alert them to another award that may help them pursue their dream.

Thank you, once again, to Northern Lights for the opportunity to attend Spotlight on Books. Even though I was unable to attend all the presentations, I still walked away from the conference inspired and renewed.

Erin
Smith