

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Rita Arola  
Branch Out 2005  
August 10 & 11, 2005**

Branch Out 2005 was held in Duluth, MN on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of August. The first day of the conference I attended MOTSE, Minnesota Opportunities for Technical Services Excellence. In the morning presentation I learned about the Library of Congress subject headings, resources used for subject headings, and other headings such as, subheading, free-floating heading, and geographic heading. The afternoon presentation for MOTSE covered the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC). The main information that I learned was how to find the DDC for library items. This includes using the DDC tables, reading the scope notes, and how numbers can be simplified or expanded depending on how your patrons use the library.

The second day of the conference I attended three sessions: ELM: Your Virtual Library; Basic Book Mending; Care & Feeding of Book Clubs. Since I have not worked long in a library setting, the ELM session gave me a wonderful resource to use and recommend to our Middle School students. Basic Book Mending session showed excellent techniques in mending books. Mending books is an essential tool to prolong the life of books. The session on book clubs was informational, by hearing what other libraries do to promote and maintain book clubs.

Branch Out 2005 was a wonderful opportunity to learn.

Rita Arola  
Library Media Assistant  
Detroit Lakes Middle School  
Detroit Lakes, MN  
August 20, 2005

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Brook Berg  
Branch Out 2005  
August 10 & 11, 2005**

Rita Arola and myself attended Branch Out 2005 – Reach for the Sky Library Conference at U of M –Duluth on August 10 and 11<sup>th</sup>. ALA, with MLA and NDLA taking organization responsibilities, holds this small conference annually. Each year the location changes always being held in either North Dakota or Minnesota. The conference targets all librarians and library assistants across all library boundaries with school media, academic, public and special libraries represented.

The first day, we attended the MOTSE day long clinic on Cataloging and subject headings taught by the head cataloger at St. Kate's. Library of Congress was the focus of the morning activities while Dewey occupied the afternoon. It was interesting to hear from the academic and some of the special libraries that use LC and gain a modicum of understanding of the system. Dewey, in the afternoon was especially valuable for Rita because she is new to libraries and it was designed to introduce the system as well as cutter numbers.

The second day I went to a morning break out called Stress Management at your Fingertips by Joy Keachie, an educational stress management consultant. The technique is based on the principals of Applied Kinesiology and was fascinating. Her hand outs were excellent and I have already shared the information with several of our staff at DL Middle School.

In the afternoon I attended a workshop about Book Clubs put on by one of the local bookstores in the city and mainly discussed different types of clubs and suggested ways and foci of them in general.

My goals for this workshop were

1. To build greater levels of camaraderie with my staff.
2. Review new or updated subject heading information.
3. Network with multitype library staff. And
4. To introduce my staff to others who have positions similar to hers.

The conference far exceeded my expectations. Thank you for making it financially possible for us to both go to the conference.

Brook Berg

12/13/2006

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Gay Galles**  
**MEMO Summer Leadership Conference**  
**July 20 & 21, 2005**

Joyce Valenza, media specialist in a Pennsylvania High School, was the keynote speaker on the second day of the conference. Her efforts at her school have resulted in a school-wide information literacy program where all teachers have high expectations for student use of quality information resources and well thought out thesis statements as a basis for research.

She shared her model of a virtual library through a website that contains links to a huge variety of resources for students including subscription databases, assignment pathfinders, and assignment guides such as citation style sheets. A virtual library website can extend the influence of the school media center to students at any time and in any place.

Her emphasis on searching and evaluation skills that need to be explicitly taught in order for students to be successful users of information was especially helpful to me as I plan staff development activities in my district for the coming year.

My thanks to Northern Lights for supporting my attendance at this conference.

Gay Galles

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Mary L Garlie**  
**MEMO Summer Leadership Workshop**  
**July 20 – 22, 2005**

July 20-22, 2005 – MEMO Summer Leadership Workshop – Earle Brown Conference Center in Brooklyn Center... what an amazing three days! Serving as a member of the MEMO leadership team (Executive Board) helps me to be a better media specialist; the contacts and networking opportunities with others throughout the state are some of my best professional development.

Two days of the workshop were devoted to business meetings for this organization. During that period of time, Laurie Conzemius and I moved from MEMO Co-presidents-Elect to MEMO Co-Presidents; our professional duties and responsibilities have now dramatically changed and the challenge is on!

On the third day, Joyce Valenza, media specialist and technology leader from Pennsylvania, took 108 attendees on a whirlwind tour of some of the things we can do to improve student learning by affecting the way students access and use information through our media centers. She touched on such things as creating an effective media center web site that links to the resources learners will need, teaching teachers and students how to ask the right questions, alternative projects, and search-tips for the Web. Thank heavens she gave us the links to her presentations online so we can revisit her presentation and use the resources she has so generously shared with us! The September issue of MEMORandum will include those links so they are available to MEMO members who could not attend her presentation.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate fully in this professional development opportunity!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Cheryl Kellen  
Nuts and Bolts II Workshop  
November 17, 2005**

I appreciated the opportunity to attend the Nuts & Bolts II Workshop held in Detroit Lakes on Thursday, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>. I gained many new ideas that I can implement in my media center. The first session gave me information about people and publications that I can access to help in my job. I found the 2<sup>nd</sup> session was especially beneficial to me in my role as a media specialist in an elementary setting, by showing me ways that I can be a partner in the teaching of reading. The 3<sup>rd</sup> session explored ways that I could collaborate with other staff to promote my job and abilities.

I loved getting the binder full of hands-on forms and information that I can access through the CD-Rom. I especially like the idea for a library newsletter, and plan to implement that next fall.

Thanks again for the opportunity to attend this workshop.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

## **Brook Berg MEMO Fall Conference October 13-15, 2005**

This year, the MEMO Fall Conference was held in Mankato, MN at the Midwest Wireless Center.

The three-day conference was packed with meaty, 2.5 hours sessions and really outstanding keynote speakers.

David Warlick blew me away. I learned so much during the 30 minutes or so that he spoke. His presentation on the future was inspiring and eye opening.

Jeff McQuillan information on Reading Scores and testing was interesting and gave us a truer picture of what the test scores across the country actually are saying – without the media hype or spin. Over all an encouraging message.

But my favorite speaker was Roland Smith. His combination of fascinating stories and humorous anecdotes was riveting. If you are from a district or school considering an author visit, I highly recommend him.

Thursday afternoon and early evening was a MEMO board meeting and President's dinner.

Friday morning I went to a session on Grant Writing. It was facilitated by James Wrolewski and Mary Mesickomer and focused on the grants that they administer. It was interesting, but a little over my head as I am a neophyte at grant writing.

Friday afternoon I sat in with Ruth Solie and Barb Misselt's session called "Joining a Regional Shared Catalog: Options? Reasons? Costs?"

The session was an opportunity to answer questions about the North Star Project and to encourage other regional multitypes to consider whether this type of consortium would be advantageous to their school patrons.

It was interesting to hear about what the other multi-types are considering.

Saturday I split between

Leslie Yoder's session on 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy and Shelly Jilek's session called "Your Media Center – Your Choice"

In the afternoon, I signed books.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Laura Martin**  
**Nuts & Bolts of Library Management II**  
**November 17, 2005**

This was another learning opportunity with something for everyone. Mary Garlie, Park Rapids Media Specialist, presented the many ways we can build our web of support from within the district to professional organizations, listserves, and conferences. Connie Jones, Concordia College, discussed many ways of communicating and collaborating with teachers. Chris McArthur, Waubun-Ogema-White Earth Media Specialist, stressed the importance of communicating with everyone about our library program and keeping everyone informed about what we are doing. She showed us the features we can use within Destiny to help us communicate with our students, teachers, administration and school board.

The most beneficial presentation for me was the Readers' Advisory for Students. As part of her presentation, Gay Galles of the Moorhead Public Schools displayed a variety of up-to-date sources for book selection. Because of limited funds, our junior high and high school students have used the bookmobile for recreational reading of current fiction. Now that the school is no longer served by the bookmobile, the junior high/high school fiction section needs major building. I will be adding a wide variety because I have need for fiction for reluctant readers as well as titles for our college in high school English class. Our seventh and eighth grade students take an Accelerated Reading class for a semester each year so I have a need for titles with AP quizzes. Then with Destiny, as demonstrated by Chris, I will be able to provide visual search lists such as "Quick Reads," "Hot New Titles," and "College Reading."

I also came away inspired to "take the time" to better communicate with administration and school board – to keep them informed of my progress in implementing the Destiny program. They need to see its value to everyone from the library staff to the community members. They need to know that it is an on-going project as there will always be new books and other materials to add to the collection, reading lists to up-date, teacher resource pages and library home page to create and maintain, etc.

Thanks again for the NLLN scholarship to attend this workshop.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Pamela Westby  
Digital Imaging  
August to December, 2005**

I want to thank you for the continuing education scholarships towards the tuition of two Information and Library Science courses I took this fall: Web Development and Digital Imaging. I am grateful for the financial help while pursuing a master's degree in Information and Library Science.

## Summary for Scholarship 1: Web Development:

This course covered the basics of good web development using Dreamweaver Mx. I created my first website using a template, Cascading Style Sheets, named anchors, and tables with over 50 linked pages. I included outside links, email links, a navigation bar, subject related games, an image map and an online survey form. Online tutorials included an introduction to Java Script and PHP. I learned how to import text, insert and manipulate images and create ordered/unordered lists. Weekly lessons covered website evaluation and basic web terminology, the advantages of using web safe colors, making access accommodations for the hearing and sight impaired, and the use of TCP/IP.

## Summary for Scholarship 2: Digital Imaging:

What do the acronyms RGB, CMYK, dpi and RYB mean? How do I go about selecting a digital camera and scanner? What pixel size is best to use on my web page? What are the strengths and weaknesses of digital vs. traditional photography? When should I save my photos as JPEG, GIF, TIFF, or PNG? What elements should be considered when planning for the archiving and storage of photos? These topics and others were covered in this course. As a final project, I worked with two other students from across the nation (one from Nevada and one from Texas) to develop an image project proposal. I had my doubts that we could accomplish the final project requirements using only online communications, but we met weekly in chat sessions to brainstorm, plan and discuss. The end product is a website of over 40 digital images, assigning 12 metadata descriptors to the photos.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Carol Van Arsdale  
MEMO Conference  
January 29-30, 2006**

I found MEMO's midwinter conference to be useful and enjoyable. The highlight for me was Doug Johnson's presentation on plagiarism. His humor made the time go fast, and his information on plagiarism and how to combat it was insightful and increased my knowledge in an area I did not know much about. I plan to distribute his handout "Cheating and how to avoid it" to staff members and make it available in the media center. Gay Galles introduced folksonomies, wikis, and other things that I had never heard of before. Afterwards it felt that I was more familiar with new technologies. Leann Hess presented several ideas that I will use in my elementary classes. Vicki Palmquist introduced many Minnesota authors and their books some of which I will order.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Chris McArthur**  
**MEMO Mid-Winter**  
**January 29-30, 2006**

I really enjoy MEMO Mid-Winter because it is so easy for me to get to the Holiday Inn in Alexandria – it's right off the interstate! The rooms are nice, the food is good, the facility is a genuine get away, complete with the smell of chlorine.

Doug Johnson's talk regarding "improved" student assignments resonated with me. Now that I am in the classroom once again, I decided to put his information to use. Next week I will be starting a project for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Fair and the students will be using a Project designed around Doug's "Research Question Rubric." I have already involved the School Guidance Counselor, and two English teachers. They are all very excited about the rigor of the project. – Thanks Doug!

Listening to Gay speak about generational differences and the skills needed to bridge those differences brought some clarity to all those times I've wanted to throw up my hands and give up. I *get it!* Now I plan to carve out some time to read a few of the books she referenced. It would be great to gain some understanding of other generations, the generation you teach, and the generation of new colleagues. I am also using some of Gay's suggestions for working with the Millennial generation in the project I mentioned above. – Thanks Gay!

Of course I didn't win any door prizes, but I did come home with eight new books for our school libraries. Venders, their new books and new products are an important part of the conference. Now I need to get busy and pull a book order together.

MEMO Mid-Winter was very enjoyable and informative. Thank you for providing the funding which made my participation possible.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Nancy Sundby  
MEMO Midwinter Conference  
January 29-30, 2006**

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the MEMO Midwinter Conference in Alexandria, MN.

It was filled with so much information, its hard to know where to begin.

On Sunday I attended the North Star Library Consortium Destiny Users Group Meeting with Ruth Solie; heard Vicki Palmquist, from the Children's Literature Network, present Minnesota authors; Lee Ann Hess's presentation on how she uses children's books in her skills classes; and heard Ted Stenhouse speak about his books.

On Monday I attended Session I with Doug Johnson's presentation on plagiarism in our schools and Session II with Gay Galles's presentation on generations and the Technologies of the Millennials.

It was all excellent. Ted Stenhouse's discussion of racism in his books really made me think about the everyday thoughts we have, not what is said out loud, but thoughts deep down. A real eye-opener.

Vicki Palmquist and Lee Ann Hess gave me things to use with my students. The list of Minnesota authors from Vicki Palmquist will be a great help in developing a Minnesota collection. Doug Johnson had a great presentation. I just wish I could remember his Iowa joke. He gave us many good ideas and suggestions to help with the problem of plagarism with our students. The ideas are ones that I can bring to my staff when we are planning our animal units, the explorers unit, the Native American unit, etc.

Gay Galles certainly has the knowledge of what is out there for us in investigate. It is overwhelming for me at times. I liked all the resources she gave us to check out to learn more about the technologies that are available to our students.

I look forward to next year's MEMO Midwinter Conference.

# Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006

**Alison Edgerton  
PLA Conference  
March 21-25, 2006**

With the financial assistance provided by a NLLN scholarship, I was able to attend my first Public Library Association (PLA) conference in Boston in March 2006. The PLA sessions and even exhibits were all relevant to my work since the focus is all on public rather than academic or school libraries. With over 11,000 librarians attending, it was the largest conference in PLA history.

The exhibits filled two floors of the large convention center. I spent most of my exhibit time on the second floor where the technology vendors had booths. I saw demonstrations and visited with vendors and compared products, all of which helped me to envision how we at Kitchigami might utilize technology or new services.

The explosion of information and services available to everyone on the Internet has created a public eager to help themselves. Therefore, patron-activated services such as self-check, self-return and self-registration are a big trend in the circulation services. Incredibly complex library materials vendor software which helps library staff to manage acquisitions procedures and enhanced partnerships between vendors and library service providers (e.g. Baker and Taylor and OCLC) are the main trends in technical services. Both of these are not new trends, just more opportunities and variations and complexity. They allow libraries to provide faster service to library customers, a key goal in the modern customer-service oriented library.

Customer-service was a focus of every informational session I attended as well. Centralized and automated system services and processes can free branch staff time to allow more and better customer service. The modern library must be an inviting physical space and friendly gathering place even as we offer more automated and electronic services.

I also heard some excellent speakers. Linda Ellerbee, the opening session speaker, was funny, irreverent and inspiring as she described her path from an unemployed, uneducated, single mother to the creator of an award-winning children's television news show. She shared her five things to remember about change as well as "the secret to life is enjoying the passage of time." I liked that. Elie Wiesel, survivor of the Holocaust and author of Night, was also inspiring though in a more serious vein.

Of course, I also enjoyed walking and dining in Boston, a visit to the impressive Boston Public Library, and an evening at a grand old theater.

I thank Northern Lights Library Network for awarding me the scholarship money to attend PLA in Boston. I highly recommend the PLA conference for public librarians of all levels and departments, both public service and technical services as well as management. The next full PLA conference is in Minneapolis in March 2008, so mark your calendars!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Kathryn Carlson  
Spotlight On Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

The conference did exactly what I sought for it to do: fed my soul! Dr. Stephen Krashen's presentation was packed with old things you have heard before but delivered with new ways of understanding and new ways to move forward. We are a big AR school. Krashen's pitch for allowing students to read what they want for a significant period of time has prompted me to seek information from comic book companies to see if we could acquire large numbers of many varieties for their keeping. This is just one area of his "ideas" I'd like to run with soon.

Friday evening was slower paced for me. I shared the experience of having a small space dedicated for a public library in the K-12 library I worked in in Wisconsin prior to my move to Minnesota. The award book presentation is always a celebration.

The authors who presented on Saturday were totally entertaining and inspirational. Their wide range of story ideas makes it fun to come back to work with a new inspiring pitch for reading.

The conference on the whole was excellent.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Pam Kruger**  
**Spotlight On Books**  
**March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I attended the Spotlight on Books conference March 31-April 1, 2006. For me, it was a very worthwhile conference. The keynote speaker, Dr. Stephen Krashen, did an exceptional job presenting a lot of research data that I would like to present to the elementary teachers I work with. He also reinforced our idea that extended reading plays a very important part in the comprehension part of reading. That was very reinforcing to me as a teacher. His information on phonics was also valuable for us as teachers to compare what we are teaching and what is best for the kids to learn. I am reading his book that was purchased at the conference.

The first mini session I attended was “Music and Books: Engaging Young Readers.” The presenter was very enthusiastic about her work with music and books. I came away from her session with a handout of great ideas to use and some music that goes with certain books. I can’t wait to try the music and movement when I do my read-a-loud book. It certainly does add another dimension to the reading of the book.

The second mini session I attended was “The Power of Book Clubs.” I received some basic information so that I can try starting a book club at school. This information got me excited to try a book club with the upper elementary kids. I have a list of books to use and several websites that will be helpful in creating a book club.

On Saturday morning every author I heard was an excellent speaker. It gave me insight into their writing. That was really an exciting time for me. I also jotted down some notes so I can use them for author talks that I do in my classroom. How wonderful to meet these authors and hear their stories.

I had the opportunity to talk with many teachers and librarians. That was just as important as going to sessions. It’s great to network and find out what other schools and libraries are doing. It helps us find new things to use and reinforces that we are all doing some worthwhile things for kids.

I think this conference was outstanding. I appreciate the scholarship that I received that enabled me to attend. Thank you so much for the wonderful experience.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Kristen Blom  
Spotlight On Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

The entire conference has positively influenced me in different ways. However, I was influenced the most by Dr. Stephen Krashen's studies on the powerful effect of free, voluntary reading. Unfortunately with all of the demands and requirements of classroom teachers, I have actually felt guilty for letting the children have "free" reading time. Now, I can enjoy guilt-free reading with my students. Since listening to Dr. Krashen's presentation, I have also added several professional books to my summer reading list.

The evening sessions were also very interesting. I have never thought of playing music while reading a story. Joanna Cortwright was gracious enough to give us each a handout full of other excellent ideas on how to creatively use picture books. I am excited to share this information with other teachers.

The author presentations were all delightful. I was moved by the stories that each author had to share. This day was especially powerful in "charging my batteries." Since the conference, I feel refreshed and I am surprised that I am even more excited about children's literature.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Connie Jones  
Spotlight On Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

It was interesting hearing Stephen Krashen talk on Friday afternoon because Louie and I had just spent the drive over to Grand Rapids talking about how he “does” reading in his classroom. In fact, he spoke to my Children’s Literature class Thursday night, explaining how he uses his classroom library as a tool to teach every subject area. Krashen validated everything we’d speculated about. His talk was not only entertaining, but full of information I can share with college students. I’m sharing his “88 Generalizations about Free Voluntary Reading” with my students in class tonight.

I had not been very familiar with any of the three authors for Saturday morning. All of their talks gave me things to share with students. Gerald Morris’s talking about the censors who only approve of supernatural beings who happen to be angels will be invaluable when we discuss censors in the school and how to deal with them. Lise Lunge-Larsen so impressed us that we are trying to work out a date to bring her to Concordia College and the Moorhead Public Schools sometime next year. The talk she gave to us would be great for pre-service teachers and parents to hear and we’re trying to figure out how to add that to a schedule. I particularly liked her comments about “pre-imagined” stories and how important it is for us to give our children and students the opportunity to imagine themselves. David LaRochelle’s talk is another one that I will be able to share with students when we address censorship. His experience with letters opposing his picture book and not his book dealing with homosexuality will provide lots to talk about in Children’s Lit. class. I also loved his comments about having supportive people surrounding him. Having his own “male chorus” around him allowed him to take risks with his writing and his artwork.

Thanks again, for such a great conferene. I thought it was one of the best!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Heidi Timm  
Spotlight On Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I had a great time at Spotlight! I am getting better at names and faces so it was easier to mingle. I think I sat with different people at every break.

I enjoyed the authors this year. Gerald Morris was a great storyteller- I keep seeing him swing his axe at Sir Gawain. Having his children there was a bonus- getting a child's view of their dad's books was neat.

Lise Lunge-Larsen was a gem! She was a vibrant speaker- she would be a good one to have come back to show us how it's done!

I liked David LaRochelle's speech- everything he said came from the heart. I liked that he brought his 178 rejection letters.

Friday afternoon's speaker, Stephen Krashen, was interesting. He had many good things to say that validated our work as librarians; but it was hard to follow his notes that he handed out- they were like snippets of a conversation, if you didn't know what he was talking about, then the notes didn't make any sense.

I heard the collective gasp when he said do not reward kids for reading- as a mom, I am met with the complaint, "What do I get if I do this?" So, it was nice to hear that it might deter kids from reading if we are always holding that carrot in front of them.

I am a firm believer in reading just for the fun of it- which made college really hard, but that's another story!

Again, thanks for the opportunity to let me come, I had a great time and look forward to next year!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Chris McArthur  
Spotlight On Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

Keep me up to date on new authors. Lise Lunge-Larsen was interesting in the way she described the “398.2’s” and their importance. Spoke with D. Winder and she recommended the Morris books. His talk on Religion and Fiction was enlightening – he needs to get out more. Of the 3, David LaRoche was my favorite – his 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade paper! \$40,000. Prize/ 60 critical letters – wow!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Sandy Larson  
Spotlight On Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I attended the Spotlight on Books conference last week on Friday and Saturday, March 31 and April 1, 2006. My goal was to bring in more activities and “love of books” into my curriculum as a media specialist at Baxter Elementary in the Brainerd district. My job has taken a turn in past years, and is now overly involved with technology. It was really wonderful to hear Steven Krashen, Lise Lunge-Larsen, Jerry Morris and David LaRochelle talk about their experiences with reading and writing books. I especially loved what Dr. Krashen had to say about how to increase the reading level in students: it is not so much to teach reading skills in isolation, but rather, to provide 15 minutes of SSR time DAILY! Wow! What a simple, novel idea! Now my project is going to be to instill this SSR idea as an all-school task. I realize it may take some fixes with the schedule and prep times, but if I can pull my administrator on board, I feel that it will be successful! I invite any other schools to participate too!

Thank you very much for reimbursing me for the registration and lodging fees. Because of this, I was able to attend the conference.

Thank you very much!

# Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006

## Brook Berg Spotlight On Books March 31 & April 1, 2006

This year's Spotlight On Books Conference really was one of the best ever. I know, I say that every year and every year it is true! The intimate setting of Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge Resort gives attendees the chance to interact with speakers and authors in a way that is simply not possible at any other conference I know of.

Dr. Stephen Krashen, an international reading expert, who presented a three hour-long discussion titled "The Power of Reading" was so interesting and Krashen is so humorous that the time flew by. I could have spent another three hours listening to his discourse on Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) and Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), and the impact it makes on test scores. His book "The Power of Reading" was available in the Spotlight Bookstore and was in demand by the conference participants.

Since our sixth grade is going to begin a separate Reading Class next year, I am anxious to share what I learned with the Language Arts Department. Some of his data blew me away!

Friday evening attendees had the choice of two sessions

1. Music and Books: Engaging Young Readers
2. Great Minds Think Alike: Reaching Readers Through Collaboration, then later
3. Winning Kids Over with Books: The Best of 2005
4. The Power of Book Clubs

I chose numbers 2 and 4. Great Minds was a panel discussion of public librarians talking about ideas to collaborate with public school library media specialists. Dotz Johnson represented the LARL and Detroit Lakes. I got a couple of new ideas to try for next year. The last session of the evening was a preview of the Best Books of 2005 and included the newest award winners. These sessions are always valuable since I haven't the time to read every book myself.

Saturday is always a fun day because three authors/illustrators talk to us about their books, their craft, and their experiences. Then in the afternoon, partake in an informal panel discussion where we, the attendees ask questions and guide the session. It is like peeking through a window into their lives. Always fascinating.

# Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006

## Tami Skinner Spotlight On Books March 31 & April 1, 2006

This year's Spotlight on Books was to no surprise another great year of speakers and topics. Dr. Stephen Krashen spoke on the power of reading and really challenged us to take on the issue of kids without access to books. It is always exciting to hand over a brand new book to your avid reader or visit with the regular library user about what they are reading now but we have to keep in mind and continually work to reach out to the kids who don't have access to books. Discussion centered around low income families but rural families are also at a disadvantage when it comes to access to libraries as one audience member pointed out. What Dr. Krashen really got across was the need for children to read not only as much as possible but also to read what they want to read. Reading levels rise and enjoyment of reading rises when kids are allowed silent reading time.

Of benefit for anyone planning their summer reading program was the mini workshop on music and books. Joanna Cortright, Consultant for the Perpich Center for Arts Education had the audience up and moving to really prove the point that books can become an event.

The author day was full of laughs as we were entertained by the humor in the personal stories they told. Wrapped up in all that fun though were thought-provoking topics that even prompted attendees to request a copy of Gerald Morris's lecture on faith and literature. Gerald, who writes Arthurian tales, spoke about his struggle with having a foot in both areas – faith and literature. He found himself keeping his work a secret from his Baptist community where he worked as a minister. What he shared with us was his assertion, "In fact, neither art nor faith is about their content. The goal of any valid art, and valid faith, is to give form to a perceived reality beyond the world in which we live."

Like Gerald, the other two authors had in common what many authors face, the fact that someone or some group may protest their book.

Lise Lunge-Larsen, self-proclaimed defender of folktales, has to go up against those who believe traditional folklore is too frightening. Some believe it is also too one-sided prompting the writing of many "from the perspective of ..." folktales. Her belief and her mission is to continue to require imagination in childhood. Keep the "Once upon a times..." that allow children to suspend belief and put themselves in a magical world which is most natural to them. As Lise said, her concern is that children are growing up with the fractured fairy tales and never hearing the originals. A valid concern especially after hearing Lise explain how children are mesmerized by the stories and can put themselves right into the worlds they hear about.

The final author, David LaRochelle had a book he published then prepared himself for the backlash. His book, about a how a high school boy who struggles with his sexuality and takes a dog to prom seems like the book to prompt groups to complain. In fact, it was his picture book about a boy who wants a dog and instead gets a dragon for a pet that brought angry letters to his mailbox. Does the book sound harmless? It is harmless, not at all "dogist," a delightful story as a matter of fact.

Once again, Spotlight was a success, thanks so much to NLLN for the scholarship that made it possible for me to go.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Peg Werner  
PLA National Conference  
March 21 – 25, 2006**

I attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual PLA National Conference in Boston, March 21 – 25, 2006. It was the second time I've attended this conference and the first time in 10 years. Linda Ellerbee opened the conference with an inspiring message of embracing the changing technological world and moving libraries forward. I also attended excellent sessions on Leaders as Readers, Challenging the Status Quo and Customer Service among many others. The libraries within Viking Library System had a number of requests to do research with the various vendors and this provided an excellent opportunity for some one-on-one consulting. All in all it was a wonderful opportunity to regroup and recharge.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Karen Zwirtz  
Spotlight on Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I so much appreciate being able to attend the conference in Grand Rapids this year. I would be unable to attend without the scholarship. Thank you very much.

Some of the things I took back from this experience were:

I enjoyed the keynote speaker on Friday, Dr. Stephen Krashen. I wish he would have provided more ideas on how to implement summer reading programs for teens and children without using incentives. I agree with his assessment of not doing it but am unable to think of ways to get the kids to read lots without them. I will think about it in the coming year but it is too late to come up with anything for this summer. I would be interested in hearing from others next year if they came up with anything. One thing I would like to try this summer with the kids and teens is to offer library tours to get the kids familiar and comfortable with the library so that they will take the time to come in and browse. Another thing he mentioned is getting books into the low income/poverty kids' hands. I began doing that last year at the suggestion of last year's Spotlight speaker. I have been putting books at the hospital's waiting room, the battered women's shelter, the food shelf and the laundromats. It has been a great success and I will continue to do it this year.

I got to visit with our famous author Brook Berg and buy her newest book at the book sale.

I enjoyed hearing about how different libraries collaborate with others in their communities and Patty Nunn did an excellent job on her book talks. I have a nice list of books to read this summer! Finally, the food and the meeting room facilities were excellent. I hope to be able to attend again next year and stay for both days! Thanks again!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Becky Walpole  
Spotlight on Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

Thank you so much for allowing me to attend the Spotlight on Books conference.

Stephen Krashen's presentation on the power of reading was helpful and heartfelt. It was nice to have all the statistics to back his ideas, and although I have not yet had a chance to look at all of the websites that he recommended, the ones I have visited were helpful. It would have been nice if he would have given a few more strategies for helping staff/parents seeing the good in sustained silent reading, but talk afterward with colleagues helped flesh that out.

I attended the Music and Books mini-workshop with Joanna Cortright. WOW! She has such a passion for what she does, and made combining movement and books and music look so easy. The handouts she provided were very detailed and will be a great resource. I'm planning on putting together a Summer Reading Program event using her recommendations because it goes so well with Catch the Beat. I think our readers will enjoy it.

I also went to the Power of book Clubs mini-workshop with Joni Kreuser and Adam Engdale. I've been thinking about book groups for our elementary readers, and this was very helpful. They brought up things I hadn't thought of. The book lists that they provided will be a good starting point. Now all I have to do is find a good guy to lead the group's group...!

Even on a cloudy, rainy day Sugar Lake Lodge is a beautiful place to be. The food was wonderful, the rooms comfortable and the company friendly and fun. Thank you so much for the scholarship. What a wonderful event!

# Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006

## Kathlyn Steinmetz Spotlight on Books March 31 & April 1, 2006

Spotlight on Books is a workshop that always peaks my curiosity. It began as one that was enjoyable to attend because you could actually have lunch with a wonderful author or illustrator. It was also intriguing to find out who the speakers would be, because they had so much worthwhile information for me as a reading teacher. This year is no exception. Stephen Krashen's message on "The Power of Reading" gave solid research on how free voluntary reading is the most powerful tool for building comprehension, vocabulary, and understanding complex grammar. The other speakers, David LaRochelle, Gerald Morris, and Lise Lunge-Larsen complemented the theme with their topics.

Stephen Krashen quoted the National Reading Panel and the other researchers in the field of reading to demonstrate the importance of reading and how the number of libraries open in an area directly impacted the reading scores of the students in that area. In schools, the new phrase is "the importance of teaching content reading strategies" for helping students comprehend material. Yes, these are important, to the point that they often became the focus of a reading curriculum. I often tell my students it's like any other skill. I can teach you the best way to lace up your boots, how to shift your weight, what to do to avoid trees, how to regain balance to stay skiing, and how to go faster. However, one needs to ski to become good. Skiing is like reading, if you don't find a good book and actually read, all these strategies are not going to help very much. In skiing you take the next lift up to the top of the hill; in reading, you go to the library.

David LaRochelle spoke on the value of having someone encourage us. I believe this complements Krashen's theme, because motivation to read often comes from the bonding a student has with parents, grandparents, or that special someone who values and encourages reading and its worth in life.

Gerald Morris spoke about his Arthurian legends and his philosophy of Art vs. Religion. He stated, "True means something more than just 'real'." Reading these novels will surely give young readers an insight into their own values and perception of social moral issues. As a teacher, I also like it when books have a double layer and touch on history or legends. It reinforces schemata.

Folklore, story-telling, and fairy tales often seem appropriate for elementary students, but Lise Lunge-Larsen opened the door to me so I realized their importance for high school students, also. Think about how these stories can allow kids to escape, but even more importantly, how they allow kids to understand metaphors. Also, with the ability to imagine, which is necessary when reading a fairy tale, children and older students can imagine, create, dream, envision, and conceive ideas and images. This is what illustrators, scientists, and inventors have done to make America the powerful nation that it has become. Would we have had the technological or industrial revolutions without the ability to imagine, create, dream, or envision these inventions? I think not.

What will become of our future? As Krashen and the other authors promote, reading has power in that it gives readers the ability to comprehend, build vocabulary, and understand complex grammar. As a reading teacher, I believe we must support the use of libraries and encourage reading wherever and whenever we are able to do so. I appreciate the opportunity to attend Spotlight on Books and look forward to next year with intrigue.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

## **Kathy Crissler Spotlight on Books March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I was delighted to be able to attend the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Spotlight on Books conference, March 31 – April 1, 2006 at Ruttger’s Sugar Lake Lodge Resort. The keynote speaker was Dr. Stephen Krashen who talked about his book, “The Power of Reading.” He emphasized the importance of silent reading and how it helps improve not only reading but spelling and writing skills as well. The most important thing for reading success is access to books and peace and quiet. He also talked about the Accelerated Reading program, (reading management program), which my school has. The students read books, take quizzes, and earn points. Dr. Krashen explained how earning points from passing quizzes is an extrinsic reward for something (reading) which is an intrinsic reward and how by rewarding a behavior can extinguish it (the joy of reading). I have been connected with Accelerated Reading for only 8 months and have noticed there is a tremendous amount of reading, but the question is if you took all the reading incentives away would the amount of reading stay the same? Dr. Krashen explained that a proper study hasn’t been done to see if AR really works. A big problem with the AR program is that the students can only read books that have an AR quiz and as a librarian I can only order books that have an AR quiz. Because of this fact students won’t or rarely read outside books unless it has an AR quiz – which I find very limiting and constrained and takes all the spontaneity out of reading. I did have a parent e-mail me the other day and told me that her son is reading the Bible, and she knew of other students that were also reading it and asked if there were AR quizzes for it. I happily found that there are 60 AR quizzes – one for most of the books of the Bible (NIV version) but that it would be \$161.+, which we probably can’t afford but then she said maybe she could find a community group to purchase them which would be great!

I also really enjoyed all the other activities connected to Spotlight on Books. It is great fun and very enlightening to talk to authors such as Gerald Morris who opened up everyone’s world by saying that you can be religious and read fantasy – they go hand in hand! Hurray! I myself don’t have a problem but hopefully we can help those who are scared of the Harry Potter genre!

One of my highlights was meeting Brook Berg, who was one of the visiting area authors and who was also one of my predecessors at my school – it was really interesting comparing notes! I also did some networking as I’m looking for a job!

Last but far from least, I collected lots of lists of books for ordering for next year.

Thank you so much for the scholarship!

# Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006

**Joanne Kallhoff**  
**Spotlight on Books**  
**March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I have only attended this conference once previously and that was several years ago. I think the conference was much improved since the last time I attended. The facilities and food were wonderful, as were the sessions, making for a wonderful experience.

I enjoyed Dr. Krashen's talk on the "Power of Reading." I plan to continue to work to implement silent reading in the classroom at the jr. high and high school levels in my schools. I immediately bought his book and also plan to research some of his articles.

I attended the "Great Minds Think Alike" and "Winning Kids Over with Books." I appreciated Patty Nunn discussing the award winners and being able to look at the books. Even though I have many of them, there were a few that I hadn't had a chance to see or read yet. I would have liked to have seen the "Power of Book Clubs" presentation so I hope that one can be offered again. I would like to offer book clubs at our school.

It was also beneficial to be able to talk with other media people and discover what's working for them and what they are doing in their schools.

The authors on Saturday were absolutely wonderful. I left energized after their discussions. I immediately wanted to go back and do book talks with my students and get them as excited about reading as I was! I had not heard of Gerald Morris but I picked up a few of his books (loved his talk!) and started reading one the next day. I think *Squire Tales* will be a hit with both boys & girls at school!

I also loved Lise Lunge-Larsen's books and picked up a couple of hers. Her talk was also stimulating and I would love to have her speak at our elementary. I thought David LaRochelle's talk was great, too. I think kids would love to listen to him.

Overall, the conference was a great time and I feel I learned so much and now I have a lot to do at school!

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Louie Lauer**  
**Spotlight on Books**  
**March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I recently attended the Spotlight on Books Conference, an event that always reestablishes why I became a teacher. The highlights of the event was an inspiring and self-affirming lecture by Dr. Stephen Krashen on the power of reading. His thesis was that if we want students to read we must present them with opportunities and materials to read. As I leaf through my curriculum, I am continually astounded by the amount of time that is spent in non-reading activities. Although in context they can be valuable, often a rich context is not provided. This has been an issue that I have been at odds with since I began teaching. My question has always been how much can I infuse my own knowledge of best practice, with what I am expected to teach.

The collective feeling at our table when Dr. Krashen began was a sigh of relief. The looks we gave each other said "He is saying everything we believe about reading instruction." I cannot tell you how invigorating that has been for my teaching! I return to my classroom emboldened to continue the work I have already started and encouraged to add more of the same.

I also was quite impressed with the regional authors that we hosted as keynote speakers on Saturday morning. They represented deeply passionate and talented writers that would share valuable messages with our children. As a member of a committee that is seeking authors to present to our students, I was given new ideas and reminded that some of our best authors are right in our back yard.

Thank you for this opportunity to be inspired, and energized to continue in my profession.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Eileen Smeby  
Spotlight on Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

Wow! Another great Spotlight on Books conference! We heard many interesting and inspiring speakers; and the networking with colleagues was invaluable.

Dr. Stephen Krashen presented a vast variety of research case studies on the express value of sustained silent reading and the importance of providing children with well run and well stocked libraries. He recommends that schools spend equal dollar amounts on books for their libraries as they do for technology, as children who have access to books, grow and gain greatly in their reading skills and test scores. Dr. Krashen stated that “Free voluntary reading is the most powerful tool we have in schools” when it comes to teaching children reading, writing, spelling and grammar.

Gerald Morris, author of a series of Arthurian legends, is a great storyteller and held the audience rapt with his tales and expertise on faith and literary art. His books should entice boys to read who normally do not read books.

Lise Lunge-Larsen, a Norwegian folklorist and professional storyteller of folk and fairy tales, did a very fascinating and entertaining presentation on the value of children hearing and reading folk and fairy tales. “Imagination is the most valuable and most renewable resource we have!” She encouraged everyone to tell stories to their children, as she spoke of how important it is for children’s mental growth to read folk and fairy tales.

David LaRochelle, author, illustrator, pumpkin carver, puzzle and maze creator, and contest winner, also had a terrific presentation and feels he is “the luckiest man in the world to be a writer of children’s books!”

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Diane Germolus  
Spotlight on Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

I enjoyed the Spotlight on Books conference so much. I can now use the information to recommend literature not only to students and teachers, but also those in my book club. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to visit media colleagues concerning materials other schools are using. It was supportive to know that other libraries are also having difficulties with students reading. I look forward to next year's conference.

# **Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**

**Julie Sanders  
Spotlight on Books  
March 31 & April 1, 2006**

Start to finish attending Spotlight on Books in 2006 was an enriching experience – both personally and professionally. I think the presentation Stephen Krashen gave was the most important. His information on FVR (Free Voluntary Reading) gave me another viewpoint on our school's participation in Reading First Program. I have shared his studies and his views on the National Reading Panel with my colleagues. I now have FVR in my classroom almost every day. There's more informal book talk and more students who seem excited about their reading. Although it is too early to see gains in their reading scores, I am pleased with my students' initial reactions.

Spotlight has been useful in other ways. After attending the Best Books of 2005 mini-session I gave my school's media specialist a list of titles I thought would be good additions to our library. I retold David LaRochelle's backward tale to reinforce a discussion of cause and effect. My students liked the idea that they were hearing a book that hasn't been published. I'm thinking about the possibility of working with the music teacher next year to use some of Joanna Cortright's book and music pairings. Lise Lunge-Larsen's discussion of folk tales was thought provoking, and I have started a collection of folk tales to read to my class. I always leave Spotlight with more ideas than I have time.

**Continuing Education Recipient Reports for 2005/2006**