



MRAC Newsletter

Literacy for All Conference on October 8, 2011

The Mid-Rivers Area Council is proud to be a co-sponsor of the Literacy for All Conference "School-wide Literacy, Charged for Change" scheduled for October 8, 2011. This full-day professional development opportunity is also sponsored by the St. Louis Suburban Council of IRA and the Harris-Stowe State University. The mini conference will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. Willy Wood, an educational consultant and professional development organizer, will be the keynote speaker. His presentation entitled "You Can't Read What You

Don't Know: The Crucial Role of Background Knowledge in Reading Success (or Failure)" is set to begin at 8 a.m. Nine morning and afternoon workshop sessions dealing with subjects ranging from comprehension strategies to motivational strategies for middle and high school students will be available during the mini conference. There will be information available to help struggling readers from Pre-K through high school. All conferees will have the opportunity to select a morning and an afternoon session as well as attend the keynote session.

Each participant will receive a Certificate of Participation and a Resource Handbook with materials from all of the sessions. This conference is a great opportunity to network and share ideas with others who are interested in literacy. Breakfast and lunch will also be provided at the conference. The cost is \$25.00 per person.



Share ideas through reading and writing.

Mid-Rivers Area Council of IRA

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Visit MSC-IRA's new website.
- ☺ Like MSC-IRA on Facebook!
- ☺ First MRAC meeting on September 29
- ☺ Literacy for All Conference on October 8
- ☺ Save the dates for MO Early Learning Conference: November 3-4,

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MRAC receives Show-Me Award for second consecutive year.

The officers of MRAC are happy to announce that our local council has received the Show-Me Award for the second consecutive year. This award is given by the Missouri State Council of IRA to local

councils who exhibit a lasting commitment to the spread of literacy and the goals of the state council. The council's involvement in the book give-away at the St. Charles County Oktoberfest is indicative of

our commitment to promoting literacy in our area. Our participation in the Write to Learn Conference and the Missouri Early Learning Conference is another way we work to promote literacy in Missouri.

MSC-IRA Facebook Page and Newsletter

Why should you visit the MSC-IRA Facebook page? Reason One is to read the tips, reading strategies, and pointers that you will find there. Reason Two is to comment on these tips and strategies. Reason Three is to "like" the MSC-IRA Facebook Page. More than 100 people have already "liked" our Facebook Page. Please visit www.facebook.com/mscira and tell us what you think.

We would also like to suggest that you read the latest MSC-IRA electronic newsletter. Here you will find suggestions from Jeanne Sharbuno, former certified K-12 teacher and

current personal success coach, about how to decrease your stress levels. At the beginning of a new school year, this is the kind of information we can all use!

You will also find a short video about increasing achievement by increasing background knowledge. This ten-minute video might cause you to rethink the role background knowledge plays in reading



We are passionate about reading.

comprehension.

You will find links to great books such as *Igniting the Passion* by Stephen Layne and *Creating Strategic Readers* by Valerie Ellery.

New Mid-Rivers Area Council Officers for 2011-2012

The MRAC officers for 2011-2012 are: Cindy Buehler, President; Nicole Costello, Secretary; Mary Piazza, President-elect; Jan Dineen, Treasurer; and Lorene Reid, Membership Chairperson. Joan Schlichter will serve as Historian.

President Cindy Buehler is a teacher in the St. Louis Public Schools. She has also taught in the Francis Howell

and Jennings school districts. Mary Piazza has recently retired from the Hazelwood School District and was the 2011 recipient of the MSC-IRA Literacy Award. Secretary Nicole Costello is a reading specialist in the City of St. Charles district and our Treasurer, Jan Dineen, recently retired from the City of St. Charles district. Membership Chairperson

Lorene Reid is a school psychologist in the Fort Zumwalt district as well as an adjunct assistant professor at UM-St. Louis.

Joan Schlichter is a reading specialist in the City of St. Charles district.

Missouri Early Learning Conference

Please save the dates November 3 and 4, for this great professional development opportunity. The Missouri State Council of IRA is proud to be a co-sponsor of this conference. Formerly known as the Primary Conference, the



Missouri Early Learning Conference

Missouri Early Learning Conference will be held at the Tan-Tar-A Resort. The cost for one day is \$159 and \$259 for the two-day conference. The featured speakers include Valerie Ellery, Katie Wood Ray, Audrey Penn, Lau-

ren Reynolds, and Mike Artell. In addition, break-out sessions dealing with subjects such as Common Core State Standards and research-based reading interventions are scheduled for both Thursday and Friday, November 3 and 4. Go to www.muconf.missouri.edu/moearlylearning/info.html for more information.

MRAC Meetings for 2011-2012

The local council has planned the following meetings for the MRAC members in 2011-2012: September 29, December 1, and a date to be determined in April 2012. The first meeting is set for September 29 at the Middendorf-Kredell branch of the St. Charles Public Library in O'Fallon, Missouri. This branch is located at 2750 Highway K. Linda Nowak will be our speaker. Linda is a veteran teacher of 29 years who writes for middle and senior high students to encourage them to experience the outdoors through her books. Her books appeal to teenagers since they

often feature female teenage protagonists. You can get more information about Linda and her books by visiting her website at lindawrites.net.

The second meeting is set for December 1 at Main Street Books in downtown St. Charles. Vicki Erwin, the owner of Main Street Books, will present book reviews of new books for both children and adults. At this meeting, Lorene



Let's share our successes.

Reid will also facilitate a short presentation about comprehension strategies. Members are invited to bring comprehension strategies that have worked for their students. If strategies are emailed to Lorene at lorenereid@sbcglobal.net prior to the meeting, she will provide a handout for meeting attendees.

Comprehension websites will also be shared.

Time to Renew your Membership in MRAC and MSC-IRA

It is time once again to renew your membership in the Mid-Rivers Area Council. Dues are \$15 and also include membership in the state council. As part of your membership benefits, you will receive e-mail blasts from the Missouri State Council of IRA, the MSC-IRA newsletter, and news about what is happening with literacy at the local level and the international level.

You will also receive a copy of the Missouri Reader.

Many of you have expressed interest in joining the International Reading Association. You may do so by visiting the IRA website (www.reading.org) and going to the membership link. You will find the information you need to join IRA there. If you would like more information about membership

in the international group, contact one of the council officers. All of them are members of IRA and can talk with you about the benefits of membership in that group.

Be sure to renew your membership in your local and state councils.

Results of Membership Survey 2011

The results of the 2011 Membership Survey are in and the MRAC officers are using the results to plan 2011-2012 meetings. For example, the September 29 meeting is being held at the Middendorf-Kredell library because members expressed an interest in changing the meeting site periodically. In addition, the topic of comprehension strategies set for the

December 1 meeting was the number one topic of interest that members included in the 2011 survey. Members expressed an interest in sharing comprehension strategies and discussing ways to increase reading comprehension among our



Let's work together.

students. Another topic that will be discussed at a later date will be favorite websites for students and teachers. Please feel free to contact any of the MRAC officers to discuss your preferences and suggestions.

