

Springfield Council News

The Springfield Council has had an exciting year. Dynamic speakers have been the centerpiece of each program. Membership has continued to grow with the local membership surpassing 275. This membership has been supported by Houghton Mifflin providing each member a copy of Zathura and Curious George.

The speaker for the first dinner meeting of year was Dr. Mary Ellen Vogt, immediate past president of the International Reading Association. In her introduction Dr. Vogt challenged us to continue to grow as an organization. Her presentation was "Improving Comprehension: Teaching Reading as a Thinking Process". Participants were asked to consider cognitive and meta-cognitive reading strategies they utilize. Through audience participation Dr. Vogt supported a better understanding need for emphasis on comprehension in our classrooms. The meeting at the St. John's Cancer Center was standing room only with over 250. The speaker was provided by Houghton Mifflin.

The second dinner meeting featured Dr. Peter Afflerbach who was sponsored by Scott Foresman. The topic of his presentation was "Using Reading Assessment to Help Student Achieve." Dr. Afflerbach reminded us of the need for teacher observation and classroom assessment as tools for meaningful assessment of student learning. He encouraged us to examine our role in assessment. This meeting included participation by teachers, administrators, university faculty and pre-service teachers.

In February the third dinner meeting included an emphasis on the use of informational text. Dr. Judith Irvin's topic "Connecting Readers to Informational Text" challenged the audience to take greater care in using non-fiction. Her humor and audience participation supported the audience in a deeper understanding of the role of non-fiction at all grade levels. Dr. Irvin was sponsored by Holt. The meeting room was filled with teachers and pre-service teachers from pre-school to college level.

The final dinner meeting will be held in April. It will include the installation of new officers and a presentation by Cindy Clausen of Booksource. The focus of the presentation will be "Hot Titles in Children's and Adolescent Literature We Need To Know."

The Springfield Council of the International Reading Association is seeking to have continued growth both professionally and in membership. Involvement of teachers and pres-service teachers at all levels is encouraged and sought.

*Submitted by
Karen J. Scott, President*