



KASL News

Vol. 5 No. 2

December 2007

The Golden Compass, Gossip Girl, and AASL in Reno

Cindy Pfeiffer, KASL President-Elect

The AASL Conference could not have come at a better time for me professionally. For several years I have been wrestling with the issue of how to find the right balance of books that have high appeal for reluctant middle school eighth graders, and at the same time make choices that are sensitive and appropriate in a library which serves sixth graders. (Seventh graders are just lost during the whole year anyhow.) When I began at the middle level, I used the professional reviews as a guide, restricted my selections to those books which were recommended for grades 5-7 or 6-8, and built a nice collection. However, when our reading committee implemented

sixty minutes of daily reading practice time, it quickly became apparent that the collection sorely lacked books that appealed to the eighth grade. Reading comprehension is directly related to interest. The solution was to add books which were recommended for grades 8+. The problem is that these books enter into mature territory in language, themes, and subjects. I personally read as many of these titles as I can, trying to make sure that I can defend my book selection choices. I also read the high school books that don't make it into my collection, and the most fascinating one to me is the Gossip Girl series. I find this series irresistible, and I have almost finished the newest It Girl. I also find nothing redeeming about it and haven't put it in the middle school library. (Things may change with the new television series.) In almost thirty years in school libraries, I have observed that students have a great ability to read according to their individual needs. They will return books if they are not ready to read them, and they select books that they both want and need to read. As I learned in Mike Printz' Young Adult Literature classes; it is our main responsibility to provide the right book for the right student at the right time.

Right before Reno, I had bought a book which I felt needed to be donated to the Public Library. I was really questioning my selection methods. I was so fortunate to hear from Judith Krug, the ALA Intellectual Freedom Queen, who eloquently reminded me the importance of protecting intellectual freedom for our students. Lois Duncan, who fought so many censorship battles over Killing Mr. Griffin spoke of her experience defending her books. Carolyn Mackler, popular author of The Earth, My Butt and Other Big Round Things, spoke of her feeling that books helped save her when she was such a misfit in junior high. That is why she writes with such a genuine voice that our students easily relate to. Marilyn Reynolds also detailed a censorship battle in Texas over Detour for Emmy with the theme that we must respond to parents and grandparents who question our selections, and we must especially respond to the media. Chris Crutcher did a fine job both of reminding us why our books need to speak to our students, to help them find their own voice. He asserted that it is really impossible to ban a book anyway. His method is to donate five books to the nearest public library where his books are being challenged in schools and send a press release to the local media. Hearing from these authors who are on the front lines of the intellectual freedom battleground was very inspiring, and I left Reno resolved to keep selecting books based on student needs, not potential parental concerns.

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Scottish School Libraries and Technology

Summer 2008

Join us on an exciting and enlightening trip to Scotland with its lively cities, picturesque small towns, and a wide variety of rural settings from seashores to mountains. Gain new perspectives through study and observation of libraries and technology in Scottish schools.

Enroll in a travel study graduate course designed for certified school library media specialists and teachers interested in expanding their knowledge through international travel and first-hand experiences in another school setting. Pre-trip preparations help you learn about the country and its education system so you can more fully appreciate what you see in your observations and hands-on experiences. Readings, discussions and projects will help you tie your experiences back to your own work life.

Immerse yourself in a different culture for two weeks by spending a week in one school in one of the major cities of Scotland and a second visiting a range of schools and libraries in the Edinburgh region and talking with professionals. Explore the country on weekends.

The course includes:

- One pre-trip spring seminar on the UW-Whitewater campus on April 19, alternative arrangements made for those more than 200 miles from the Whitewater campus
- Continuing online discussion and readings from March through July
- Two weeks in Scotland in schools and libraries (June 13-28, 2008)

If you are looking for six graduate credits, want to look at libraries and technology elsewhere, or just travel to another country, this is a great way to expand your horizons and have fun in the process.

For more information, see the website at <http://academics.uww.edu/libmedia/Scotland> or contact Eileen Schroeder (schroede@uww.edu, phone: 262-472-2837) or Anne Zarinnia (zarinnie@uww.edu, phone: 262-472-1463).

To register by February 22, 2008, contact

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Office of International Education
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262-472-5759
studyabroad@uww.edu



Don't Miss The Best Conference for Kansas School Librarians

By Cindy Pfeiffer, KASL President-Elect

Kansas Library Conference

April 9-11, 2008

Hyatt Regency and Century II in Wichita, Kansas

Plans for the Kansas Library Conference are taking shape and I hope you'll agree with me that this year's conference will be great! Janette Rallison will be the KASL Showcase Author and KASL Luncheon speaker on Friday, April 11. She will also be available for autographs. If you haven't read her books, you're in for a treat. Her books are recommended for fifth grade and up, and her new book, How to Take the Ex Out of Ex-Boyfriend, is now available. Check out her website at www.janetterallison.com.

Our second special guest this year is Ann Martin, AASL President-Elect. Ann took the stage in Reno, and will be sharing some ambitious AASL initiatives. Ann will be presenting a session, and will also be on the KASL luncheon program.

KASL will be sponsoring fifty-three different sessions and one pre-conference. We have the best school library media specialists in the country; because when I asked, begged, and twisted arms, the response was wonderful. *Academic Crosswalks and Intersections in Today's Schools*, which was presented at AASL in Reno, is scheduled for Wichita. We'll be sponsoring sessions on timely topics like *Teaching Text Structure through Children's Literature* and *Using Technology to Improve Reading*. There are sessions on the newest books from Reading Circle to WAW to YA. Blogging, Podcasting, igoogle, and Intel training will be featured. There will also be practical sessions for first year librarians, budgets, weeding, programming, collaboration, censorship, and Battle of the Books.

Our pre-conference is presented by Lisa Blair from the Greenbush Educational Center, and will feature a hands-on introduction to Second Life for Librarians. Space will be very limited for this session, so sign up early.

Be watching for the full conference schedule and registration which should be posted very soon.

Plan to attend the conference, and be sure to stay for the KASL Luncheon. This is our only state membership meeting of the year. It features a great author and the AASL incoming president. More importantly, just for attending, you will be eligible to win a \$250 getaway at the Great Wolf Lodge in Kansas City. Drawings will also be held for \$100 gift cards at five malls across the state. You must be present to win, and the Kansas Library Conference will make you a winner!!!

Tricks of the Trade
Tech Tools
By: Susie Whitaker
<http://teacherlibrarian.ning.com>

It's a "ning" thing and while it may not be new to all, it certainly is new for me!! I had heard about "ning" at AASL and a several other conferences so, I finally sat down and explored it. What I found was a very cool resource created by Joyce Valenca. The TeacherLibrarianNing offers a virtual space to connect and collaborate with school librarians without the dangers and concerns of MySpace or Facebook.



The TeacherLibrarian Ning is easy to navigate and customize, mine was set up in a very short time. I was able to select from a list of active groups (YA Literature in schools; High School TeacherLibrarians; KASL), to join and was even able to add a new group...Kansas Association of School Librarians now has a group on Teach-erLibrarianNing. Log in and check it out!!

I think this could be a wonderful opportunity to learn and share with other school librarians on a much grander scale than I ever have before!!! Let's NING together!



Hooray for YA!
By Terri Snethen

Crutcher, Chris (2007). *Deadline*. New York: Greenwillow Books.

What would you do if you were a senior in high school and learned you only had one year to live? Ben does just what most of us wouldn't. He decides to decline treatment and keep his illness and impending death a secret from everyone except his doctor and his therapist. With nothing to lose he asks out the girl of his dreams, goes out for football, and befriends the town drunk who, it turns out, has secrets of his own. Keeping a secret like this and going it alone aren't easy as Ben soon finds out. Crutcher has once again created a main character many will identify with in a situation that provokes thought about some of life's big questions. (grade 9 and up)

Over the next year, I'll be doing even more reading of YA titles as I was recently asked to be on YALSA's Best Books for Young Adults committee. The committee only has 15 members from across the country and only about 5 new members are selected each year so I feel quite honored to be included and I'm very excited about the opportunity.

Happy Reading!

AASL Reno

Dee Stoecker
Dodge City High School Media Center



AASL in Reno is the third national conference I have attended and, each time, I come back recharged with great new ideas, resources, and projects - and lots of new books. I always meet so many interesting people and hear about their libraries or job choices. Tours exploring the region and learning the local history are always available. I chose the Carson City/Basque Country tour, which included a wonderful Basque dinner!

This year, there were so many wonderful sessions for high school librarians; it was difficult to make choices. Dr. Ruth Cox Clark gave an awesome preconference presentation on "Urban Fantasy, Chick Lit, Graphic Novels, Audiobooks, and More." During the conference, I attended several very informative sessions involving challenged books. The highlight of these sessions was a panel presentation with Chris Crutcher, Lois Duncan, and Carolyn Mackler discussing their challenged books. We will be sharing some of this information with a session at the April Library Conference.

Start making plans to attend AASL in Charlotte, NC in 2009!

Kansas R.E.A.D. Week

Kansas Reading Association R.E.A.D. Week is January 21-25, 2008. Activities were inspired by the 2007 Bill Martin, Jr. Picture Book Award Winner, Our Tree Named Steve by Alan Zweibel. Read Week activity ideas include a webquest, pictorial family tree, letter writing and poetry writing. Also included is a booklist with reviews and a bookmark. Activities are available at the KRA website www.kansasread.org/READ_Week.htm.

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GARY WILSHER
Manager: West Central Division

Interestingly, shortly after I returned from AASL, the first inflammatory emails about The Golden Compass began to appear. A parent in our district forwarded the call for removal to an elementary principal, our middle school principal, and our district office. The same message was even posted on the KASL listserve. It reinforces the fact that you can never guess what the next censorship target will be. That is why I'm so grateful to have ALA and Judith Krug and all the authors who stand so firmly for free speech in our libraries. The school staff responded with the appropriate information concerning district policy for reevaluating a book, I provided reviews, and the parent received a consistent message from the school district. Next, the local paper was contacted. This morning, Dec. 6, The Morning Sun published a lengthy article examining the issues about the series. Our assistant superintendent had been working with me and the reporter to include a balanced look by including the many positive reviews and awards this author has received. I went to the ALA Intellectual Freedom website and found a wonderful response from Loriene Roy, ALA President. I've included the link to her statement defending the principles of Intellectual Freedom in response to critics of The Golden Compass. Here's the link. Please take time to read the article and be ready to discuss this issue professionally when it arrives in your own community.

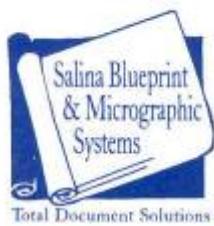
<http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=News&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=169110>

Praise for the KASL Professional Partners Program

Vicki Van Becelaere

Starting out as a new School Library Media Specialist, participating in the Professional Partners Program was a lifesaver. My mentor was Suzanne Eastman, who was not from the same geographical area as I was. We communicated through e-mail until we met at Tri-Conference. After meeting at the Tri-Conference exhibitor's bash and having a great time there, I spent a day at Suzanne Eastman's library during the summer. She has helped me with lesson plans, organizational tips, book fair ideas and other survival strategies, which have been elusive to me before, but were soon just an e-mail away. I learned so much from visiting her Library Media Center. She was also instrumental in getting me involved in the William Allen White program. By sharing ways that she encourages students to read William Allen White books, it has helped me integrate these books into my lesson plans. Best of all, I gained a friend for life. I would encourage each of you to take advantage of this great opportunity for professional growth.

What a wonderful resource! If you have any questions about your job, you can request a mentor by grade level, location or strengths of mentor. Just go to www.kasl.ws, click on the "mentorship" link and fill out a short application to get on your way to any help you may need!



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Professional Partners Program

Peggy Golden, Membership Chair

KASL's Professional Partners Program is now in its third year. It was originally initiated to help strengthen our members through professional networking. The Program provides participants with the opportunity to share their professional and personal skills and experiences, and to grow and develop in the process. It is based on encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn. By sharing our expertise with those who are just starting out in the profession or those who may have questions about certain areas of librarianship, we hope to help them become stronger, more confident school librarians.

Research shows that self-development is rarely successful without the support of other people. Mentoring offers that support by providing individuals with someone who can give feedback, question, discuss, challenge, comfort, and help guide through the learning cycle. Mentoring has benefits for all involved.

Potential benefits for the mentee may include:

- Access to role models on an individual basis
- Development of confidence and enhanced self-esteem
- Increased skills and knowledge
- Receiving encouragement and assistance
- Gaining greater insight into their position
- Regular and constructive feedback
- Increased personal and professional networks
- Development of greater job satisfaction
- Access to opportunities that contribute to personal and professional development

Possible benefits for the contributing mentor are:

- Opportunities to use and share their own skills and experience
- Opportunity to reflect on one's existing skills and practices
- An enhanced feeling of self worth as a result of assisting in a colleague's professional development
- Opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills
- Challenging discussions with people who have a fresh perspective
- Development of new networks
- Increased job and personal satisfaction

If you think you might be interested in taking a part in the Professional Partners Program, it's not too late! Access www.kasl.ws, then click on the Mentorship link in the burgundy header and fill out the short application form. We would love to have you either as a mentor or a mentee! Become a part of the mentoring relationship where a mutually supportive partnership or friendship may develop and endure.

LOL @ Your Library

Margie Eaton, Maize High School



Maize High School students celebrated LOL@ your library when their own Improv Troupe preformed. The eight member troupe performed improvisational games such as Questions, Party Time and their own name sake Quirks. This was just one of the activities promoted during Teen Read Week to remind students to "read for the fun of it".



Would you like for your name or school to appear in print?

I am a reference librarian at Texas Tech University. I am writing an article for Library Media Connection, about new means of communication and the librarian's role in facilitating exchange of information within the school. This could mean anything from running the media distribution system and the tools used to accomplish that to school-wide newsletters and web 2.0 tools. I would like to hear how you have used both new technologies and traditional tools to keep your school informed. Perhaps you have created a wiki, blog, interactive calendar, Yahoo! Group, or cool website. Or maybe you are successfully using a telephone circle or paper newsletter to remind everyone of upcoming events. You might even have a good idea to share that you have not yet carried out. Please send me, Missy Van Dusen, your thoughts, to vandusenm@gmail.com.

Thanks!

Attention Library Clerks/Aides:

If you have a clerical-type question you would like help with, please contact Shelia Blume at (h) 913-723-3831, (w) 913-627-7710 or shblume@kcksp.org.

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KASL District I Helps Seneca Grade School Susan Thowe, Past District I Director

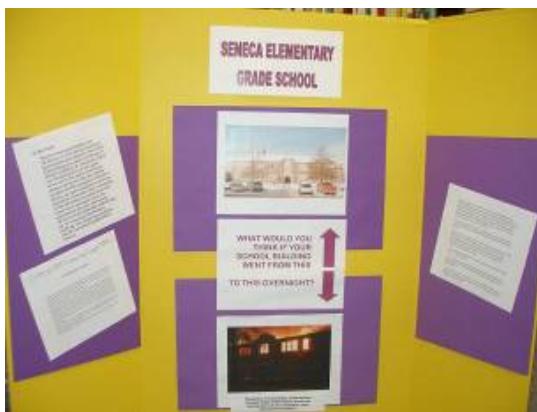
When tragedies hit our schools, insurance can cover a lot of the damage, but there are still some special projects that can use extra help. On March 10, 2007, a fire destroyed most of Seneca Grade School in Seneca, Kansas. The community was left scrambling for other places in the town where they would be able to continue to have classes.

The media center was in a part of the school that was not destroyed, so the only part of the collection that was lost was that which was in classrooms. Because Seneca is in District I, we wanted to do something to help this school during the District I workshop. Media Specialist, Jennifer Rottinghaus, said that while most of the collection remained undamaged, she was not able to purchase new books for the school year, including books on this year's William Allen White List.

Because the children enjoy being a part of the WAW reading and voting, a jar to collect monetary donations was included at the District I workshop. \$183.00 was collected to send to Seneca Grade School to purchase books on this year's William Allen White List.

This is a part of the thank you letter: "The feeling that persons sympathize with our needs has done much for the morale of those involved with recovering from the fire. While the fire was a tragedy, the response of persons such as you who have wanted to help has been gratifying. At times the task before us has seemed huge but because of the support of persons such as you we know we will be just fine in the end." It was signed from Dr. Amy Beck, Principal, and Brian Harris, Superintendent of Schools.

Thank you to all of the District I participants for the donations!!



Catch the Reading Bug @ Your Library (children)

Metamorphosis @ Your Library (YA)



Summer Reading at a High School Library—during the summer? Yep!
This is the second year that I have offered a summer reading program
to my high school students — and they love it.

It really doesn't take much time — a couple of hours a week!
Check with your library service center for help and more information.
I promise—you'll be hooked!! Susie:)





SAVE THE DATES!

KANSAS SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

JUNE 11, 12
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDE TONI BUZZEO AND JANE KURTZ

AASL Standards for 21st Century Learners

At the AASL Conference in Reno, the new Standards for 21st Century Learners were unveiled.

These standards are defined by the following nine common beliefs:

- Reading is a window to the world
- Inquiry provides a framework for learning
- Ethical behavior in the use of information must be taught
- Technology skills are crucial for future employment needs
- Equitable access is a key component for education
- The definition of information literacy has become more complex as resources and technologies have changed
- The continuing expansion of information demands that all individuals acquire the thinking skills that will enable them to learn on their own
- Learning has a social context
- School libraries are essential to the development of learning skills

The Standards describe how learners use skills, resources, and tools to

1. inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge;
2. draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge;
3. share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society;
4. pursue personal and aesthetic growth

Each standard includes skills, dispositions in action, responsibilities, and self-assessment strategies for students.

Full color brochures of the standards can be downloaded at
<http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslproftools/learningstandards/standards.cfm>

Amaizing Things Were Happening at The KASL District III Fall Workshop Maize Middle School



Sheri Roberts and Mary Hobson

Refreshment time



Sheri Roberts, Mary Hobson & Laura Soash



Sharing time in the library



General Session with KASL President Laura Soash



Session by Nancy Malone, SCKLS



Presentation by Jennifer Kern



Secondary Share Session led by
Kendall Heide



Lunch from Olive Garden

Linda Swenson presenting on WAW

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS



13th National Conference & Exhibition
OCTOBER 25-28, 2007
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Snapshots from Reno

