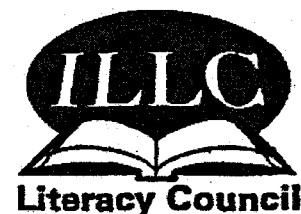


Illinois Language & Literacy Council



"Proud Sponsor of the Young Authors' Conference"

NEWSLETTER

Spring, 2009

President's Letter

Greetings! I'm pleased to say that I've seen the first of the winter dwelling robins out and about – spring must be coming – of course there are probably a few frosts/freezes in the way first...

With spring comes the end of the year activities, including the Illinois Young Authors' Conference (YAC) on Saturday, May 16, at Illinois State University in Normal. I know that there have been questions about this year's conference, even rumors that it wouldn't exist. That is simply not true! The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is still continuing to give some financial support along with posting YAC registration information on their website. ISU has agreed to handle the actual registrations this year. The Illinois Young Authors' Conference will go on!!

I would like to thank all of you for your patience since the materials were delayed this year and for your faith that the conference would be held. Thank you for continuing to encourage your students to write and to participate. If you happen to have May 16 as an open date on your calendar, we'd love to have you volunteer to join us for a day with these talented young authors.

Leslie Forsman
ILLC President

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YAC Poster

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**Please post the Young Authors' Conference Poster (p. 3)
in a visible place in your school**

Featured Authors - 2009 Young Authors' Conference

Grades K-2

Ruth Spiro: *Lester Fizz, Bubble-Gum Artist*

Ruth Spiro is the author of the award-winning picture book, *Lester Fizz, Bubble-Gum Artist*. It's the story of a boy who feels he doesn't fit in with his family of artists, until he discovers his own unique talent in an unexpected medium – bubble gum! The inventive text is bursting with wordplay, and is complimented by illustrations referencing famous works of art. www.ruthspiro.com.

Jenny Meyerhoff: *Third Grade Baby*

Jenny Meyerhoff is the author of the chapter book *Third Grade Baby*, named one of the top five back to school books of 2008 by *Instructor Magazine* and declared "eminently useful for classroom discussion" by *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*. As a former elementary school teacher, Jenny firmly believes in the power of books to teach, inspire and to transform. (And also entertain.) To learn more about Jenny and her books, or for information on school visits, visit her on the web: HYPERLINK "<http://www.jennymeyerhoff.com/>" www.jennymeyerhoff.com.

Grades 3-4

Scotti Cohn: *One Wolf Howls*

Scotti Cohn is a freelance writer and editor living in Bloomington, Illinois. She is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and the author of six nonfiction books published by The Globe Pequot Press. Her poems about animals have appeared in *Highlights for Children* and *Zootles* magazines. Her first picture book, *One Wolf Howls* (Sylvan Dell Publishing, 2009) uses the months of the year and the numbers 1-12 to introduce children to the behavior of wolves. Scotti has two adult children. She and her husband, Ray, share their home with five cats.

Deborah Ruddell: *A Whiff of Pine, a Hint of Skunk: a Forest of Poems*

Deborah Ruddell's first book, *Today at the Bluebird Cafe: A Branchful of Birds* (Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007), was illustrated by the award-winning South African artist, Joan Rankin. It is a collection of poems about the lives of birds and received starred reviews from *Publishers Weekly*, *School Library Journal*, and *Kirkus Reviews*. Her next book, *A Whiff of Pine, a Hint of Skunk*, is a collection of poems set in the forest. It will be published by McElderry in 2009. Ruddell lives in Peoria with her husband, Brian, and has two grown children and two granddaughters. For further information, please visit the author's website: HYPERLINK "<http://www.deborahruddell.com/>" www.deborahruddell.com

Raymond Bial: *Ellis Island: Coming to the Land of Liberty*

Author and photographer Raymond Bial makes images on assignment for books, magazines, advertising, and stock photography. His books have been published by Houghton Mifflin, Scholastic, Walker & Company, Marshall Cavendish, Midwest Traditions, the University of Illinois Press, and other fine publishers. His work has also been used by book publisher ranging from National Geographic to MacGraw-Hill, advertising agencies such as Leo Burnett, and media such as PBS. [http:// www.raybial.com](http://www.raybial.com)

Grades 5-6

Julia Durango: *The Walls of Cartagena*

Julia Durango is the author of picture books, adventure novels, and poetry for kids of all ages. Along with fellow authors Andrea Beaty and Carolyn Crimi, Julia is also a founding member of www.ThreeSillyChicks.com, a book review blog featuring funny books for kids. Julia's current children's books include: *Angels Watching Over Me*; *Cha-Cha Chimps*; *Dream Hop*; *Pest Fest*; and *Yum Yuck! A Foldout Book of People Sounds*, co-authored by Linda Sue Park. Her first historical adventure novel, Her newest book, a middle grade novel, *The Walls of Cartagena*, was published by Simon & Schuster in July 2008. Julia lives with her family in Ottawa, Illinois, where she works as an elementary school librarian. You can read more about her at her website.

Laura Ruby: *The Wall and the Wing*

Raised in the wilds of suburban New Jersey, Laura Ruby now lives in Chicago with her family. Her short fiction for adults has appeared in various literary magazines, including *Other Voices*, *The Florida Review*, *Sycamore Review* and *Nimrod*. Ruby is also the author of the Edgar-nominated children's mystery *LILY'S GHOSTS* (8/03), the children's fantasy *THE WALL AND THE WING* (3/06) and a sequel, *THE CHAOS KING* (5/07) all from Harpercollins. She writes for older teens as well, and her debut young adult novel, *GOOD GIRLS* (9/06), also from Harpercollins, was a Book Sense Pick for fall 2006 and an ALA Quick Pick for 2007. A new young adult novel, *PLAY ME*, is slated for publication in fall of 2008. Her books have sold in England, Australia, Italy, France, Germany, Denmark, Serbia and Montenegro. *THE WALL AND THE WING* is currently in development with HYPERLINK "<http://www.laika.com/entertainment/?m=bookmark&g=projects&c=coraline>" Laika Studios for release as an animated feature.

Continued on p. 5

Make Sure Your District Participates!

2009 Illinois Young Authors' Conference

Saturday, May 16th

Illinois State University

Registration Information online at

www.isbe.net - Enter "Young Authors" in Search

or

http://isbe.net/curriculum/html/young_author.htm

or

www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org - Bottom of home page

Registration Deadline: March 27th

Volunteers Still Needed and Appreciated:

This conference is only possible with the help of many adult volunteers who lead or assist small groups, escort authors, or perform other necessary tasks throughout the day. We welcome your participation!

Please contact Christina Podraza at cpodraza@lisle202.org

For Your Information:

The 2010 Monarch nominee master list is available at: http://www.islma.org/pdf/Monarch_2010MasterList.pdf

The 2010 Rebecca Caudill Young Readers Book Award nominee master list is available at: <http://www.rcyrba.org/pdf/2010MasterList.pdf>

The Abraham Lincoln Illinois High School Book Award selection committee will meet February 28. Their master list should be available shortly there after through the ISLMA website, <http://www.islma.org/lincoln.htm>

To apply for a grant for a set of either 2010 Monarch titles, Caudill titles, or Lincoln titles, please visit HYPERLINK "<http://www.lbssfund.org>" www.lbssfund.org to complete the application online. Please remember that you must also be registered (a separate action through their website and programs) to participate in the award program for 2010 to eligible for the book grant. The application and program registration (to be eligible for the grant) deadline is May 15, 2009.

Featured Authors, YAC 2009, continued

Adam Selzer: *I Put a Spell on You: From the Files of Chrissie Woodward, Spelling Bee Detective*

Adam Selzer is an author by day and a ghost buster by night - if you can find two better jobs, take them! He is the author of two YA novels - *How To Get Suspended and Influence People* (Delacorte 2007), *Pirates of the Retail Wasteland* (Delacorte 2008) and the middle grade *I Put a Spell On You: From the Files of Chrissie Woodward, Spelling Bee Detective* (Delacorte 2008), which holds the record for Most Jokes About Richard Nixon Ever in a Middle Grade Novel. By night, he runs bus tours of Chicago - school groups are a specialty. See HYPERLINK "<http://www.adamselzer.com>" www.adamselzer.com

Grades 7-8

Laurie Lawlor: *He Will Go Fearless*

Laurie Lawlor has written more than 35 award-winning works of fiction and nonfiction for children and young adults, among them *Shadow Catcher: The Life and Work of Edward S. Curtis*, which won the Carl Sandburg Award and the Golden Kite Honor Book Award, and *This Tender Place: The Story of a Wetland Year*, a natural history/memoir recently selected for Outstanding Achievement by the Wisconsin Library Association Literary Awards Committee. Young Adult historical novels published in 2005-6 include *Dead Reckoning: A Pirate Voyage With Captain Drake*, *He Will Go Fearless*, and *The Two Loves of Will Shakespeare*. Trained as a journalist at Northwestern University, she facilitates workshops and presentations in schools throughout the country and teaches in the Fiction Writing Department at Columbia College, Chicago. Visit her website: HYPERLINK "<http://www.laurielawlor.com/>" \o "<http://www.laurielawlor.com/>" www.laurielawlor.com.

Pamela Todd: *Blind Faith Hotel*

Pamela Todd's novel, *The Blind Faith Hotel* (Simon and Schuster 2008), received the 2009 National Green Earth Book Award for Young Adult Fiction from the Newton Marasco Foundation, and also received a grant from the Illinois Arts Council. Her middle grade novel, *Pig and the Shrink* (Delacorte, 1999) was awarded the Judy Blume Grant for Contemporary Fiction from Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. She is an avid prairie gardener, a core teaching artist for the Ragdale Foundation, a popular speaker at schools, conferences, and event, and has led journaling workshops in women's prisons.

The Illinois School Library Association is creating a new book award for students in grades 3-5. Nominations of titles for the first Bluestem Award master list will be accepted until June 15, 2009. That website is http://www.islma.org/Bluestem_nominationform.htm

Book Reviews

2009 Newbery Award Winner

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman

Gaiman, N. (2008). *The Graveyard Book*. New York: HarperCollins.

If you are a Gaiman fan, then this book is for you. Jumping right in, the book unfolds with a murder scene as "a man named Jack" attempts to stab a family to death. A crafty little toddler escapes and toddles his way up a hill into a graveyard, where the ghostly inhabitants adopt him, protect him from the evil "Jack," and give him the rights of the graveyard. Newly named Nobody (Bod) Owens, the toddler grows up in the graveyard a la Mowgli from Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. The book follows Bod through his childhood, and chronicles the dangers, exploits, and joys of a boy who learns how to survive through the teachings of ghouls, witches, werewolves, and other nocturnal characters. Will Bod be able to survive in the real world? Will he be able to survive the pursuance of Jack? This creepy and suspenseful novel will keep you guessing as you feel compelled to turn page after page.

2009 Caldecott Winner

The House in the Night by Susan Marie Swanson

Swanson, S. M. (2008). *The House in the Night*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

This Caldecott-winning picture book is reminiscent of the books from our childhood. The illustrations use only black, white, and yellow, and the spare ink etchings serve to draw the eye to the use of light to illuminate the different things that make a house a home. Each page takes the reader a step back from the images, starting with a close up of a house and pulling back to a view of night, the sun, the moon, and the stars. The story itself uses uncluttered, patterned text in which each pages builds upon the previous. Similar to *Goodnight Moon*, *The House in the Night* names all of the different elements of nighttime to a young, sleepy reader.

2009 Printz Winner

Jellicoe Road by Melina Marchetta

Marchetta, M. (2008). *Jellicoe Road*. New York: HarperTeen.

Seventeen-year-old Taylor is adrift in the world. She was abandoned by the side of Jellicoe Road when she was eleven, and taken in by the kind and comforting Hannah. Suddenly, Taylor's past has come back to haunt her when Hannah disappears, and Taylor has to put together all of the mysterious clues that keep appearing in her life to solve the mystery of her past. Enter Jonah Briggs, a dark and moody boy who keeps drawing her in to his orbit. Who is Jonah, what does he have to do with her past, and what is the mystery of Jellicoe Road?

Reviewed by Melanie Koss

29th Annual Children's Literature
Conference
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb
March 12 - 13, 2009
"Link to Lincoln"

Featured authors and their "Link to Lincoln":

Wendell C. Minor who will introduce his newest book
Candace Fleming, Illinois author of her newest book,
The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at the Abraham
and Mary

James Cross Giblin, author of Good Brother/Bad
Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John
Wilkes Booth

Ann Turner, author of Abe Lincoln Remembers



New Schedule this Year!

Tentative Schedule

Thursday, March 12, 2009

4:45 p.m. **Social** (local author displays)

5:30 p.m. **Dinner**

6:30 p.m. **Welcome**

Rebecca Caudill & Monarch Awards

7:00 p.m. **Wendell Minor**

8:00 p.m. **Autographing Reception**

Friday, March 13, 2009

8:00 a.m. **Registration & Continental Breakfast**

9:00 a.m. **Candace Fleming**

10:00 a.m. **Judith St. George**

Breakout sessions

11:15 a.m. **New Books in Review**

12:30 p.m. **Lunch**

1:30 p.m. **Ann Turner**

2:30 p.m. **James Cross Giblin**

3:30 p.m. **Closing: Preview 2010**

All programs will be held in the Holmes Student Center on the Northern Illinois University Campus.

Four ways to register:

Phone: (800) 345-9472

(815) 753-0277

Online: [http://www.cedu.niu.edu/oep/](http://www.cedu.niu.edu/oep/conferences/childrens_lit_09/chi.html)

[conferences/childrens_lit_09/chi.html](http://www.cedu.niu.edu/oep/conferences/childrens_lit_09/chi.html)

TDD/TTY: Call 815-753-2000, request transfer to Outreach Dept.

Mail or Fax: A mail-in/fax registration form can be obtained on the website or by calling (815)

753-6907 or emailing ceduexternal@niu.edu

Encouraging Family Involvement

Multigenerational activities are a fun activity for children and their families. Encourage your students to compile recipes that are part of their family's celebrations such as Thanksgiving, Easter, Hanukkah Mother's Day and Father's Day. They could type up the recipe and take a picture of the finished product. There also should be a photo of all the chefs that worked on the recipe. The recipes with photos could be compiled into a classroom cookbook that would include at least one recipe from each student.

To extend the activity to the classroom have students bring in a sample of their dish along with a story to read explaining how the activity went with their family.

Encourage student's families to start writing down favorite recipes of Mom, Dad, Aunts Uncles, Grandparents and any relative to be passed down to members in the family. Working on a cooking project uses reading, math and science skills.

Remember it is important to include families in that educational triangle of child, parent and teacher.

Gina Teresa Orazi

"Once you learn to read, you
will be forever free."

Frederick Douglass

**ILLC Board and Committee
Members**

2008-2009



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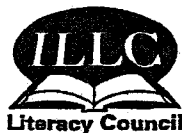
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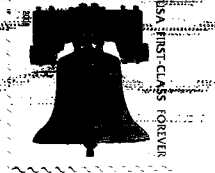
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Newsletter Editors: Heather Van Meenen,
Gina Orazi, Ruth Stevig

**Next Board Meeting- Tentative
Tuesday, June 30 - 11:00 a.m.
Lou Malnati's, Naperville**

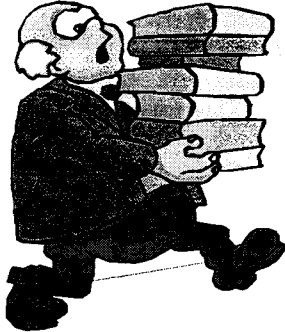
**Please check with a board member
for final date.**



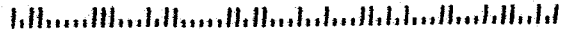
Illinois Language & Literacy Council

“Proud sponsor of the Young Authors’ Conference”

c/o Heather Van Meenen
1 Patriot Court
Cary, IL 60013



61761+6415



ILLC Welcomes New Members!

If you have a friend or colleague who might be interested in joining ILLC, encourage them to join IRC and ILLC. Once they’ve joined, please notify Membership Chair, Ruth Stevig, at stevig@sbcglobal.net. Include your name and their name. We will enter you in a drawing for a free renewal of your IRC/ILLC membership. The drawing will be held at our next meeting.

You can join IRC and ILLC online by going to www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org or you can print a copy of the membership form. Be sure to check ILLC as one of your council choices!

To read is to empower
To empower is to write
To write is to influence
To influence is to change
To change is to live
-Jane Evershed