

# Illinois



# Language and Literacy Council

**“Proud Sponsor of the Young Authors’ Conference”**

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**Newsletter**

**Fall, 2014**

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## **President’s Letter**

Greetings to you all! Welcome to the Illinois Language and Literacy Council and thank you for your new or continued membership!

Please join me in welcoming Stacey Keleher to our ILLC Board of Directors as our new Treasurer. Stacy is taking over for Heather Van Meenan who has served as our treasurer for many years. We would like to thank Heather for her service and we hope that she will enjoy her future endeavors.

On the subject of “Thank You’s,” a huge Thank You goes out to all who helped with the 40<sup>th</sup> annual Young Authors Conference last May! We truly could not provide this opportunity for our young authors without the help of our volunteers!

Speaking of authors, the Illinois Reading Council was invited to host some of the Illinois Reads authors in Lt. Governor Sheila Simon’s tent at the Illinois State Fairs. (Did you know Illinois has 2 state fairs? One is held in Springfield, the other is held a couple of weeks later in DuQuoin.) The participating authors shared their books, their ideas, and their experiences with the writing process with the children and adults who stopped by to visit. Several copies of each participating author’s books were given away to attendees. An entire set of this year’s Illinois Reads selections (36 books) was raffled away at the fair also. Some of these Illinois authors were once Young Authors’ Conference attendees.

For the final link in my chain of thoughts, for those of you who are planning to attend the Illinois Reading Council’s (now) FALL conference, please consider attending the session about the Young Authors’ Conference (or any of the other presentations by our ILLC members). Enjoy this last Springfield IRC conference (we’re moving to Peoria in 2015).

I hope you enjoyed your summers and that you were able to rest a peaceful, restful spot in there somewhere. I hope that the school year is off to a great start for you and your students, despite the extreme heat.

**Leslie Forsman, President, ILLC**

**41st Annual Illinois Young Authors'  
Conference  
Saturday, May 16th  
Illinois State University**

**Sponsored by the Illinois Language and Literacy Council and Illinois Reading Council, this daylong event is designed to honor exceptional writing by K through 8 students across the state of Illinois.**

**Guidelines and registration materials can be located after October 15th at**

**<http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org/yac.html>**

**or**

**<http://www.isbe.net/young-authors/>**

**Updates on the conference are also posted on our Facebook page at “Illinois Young Author’s Conference.”**

**Volunteers are always needed and appreciated for this event.**

**Please email Christina Podraza at [cpodraza@naperville203.org](mailto:cpodraza@naperville203.org) if you are able to assist in this endeavor.**

**Young Authors'  
Presentation at October IRC  
Conference  
Get Your Students Enthused  
About Writing**

Need some ideas about getting your students enthused about writing and getting involved in the Young Authors' conference? Plan to attend the session, **Building a Passion for Writing Through the Young Authors' Conference** (K-9) at the October IRC conference in Springfield. ILLC Board members **Christina Podraza** (YAC coordinator) and **Sue Anderson** (YAC Anchor) will present this session on **Thursday, Oct. 2 in Center B -4W 1:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.**

Learn how to get your students involved in the Illinois Young Authors' Conference to be held May 16 at Illinois State University. The sessions will include application of ELA CCSS and other writing ideas.

Christina will also be speaking briefly about Young Authors at the Daniel Handler (Lemony Snicket) Luncheon on Thursday.

**More ILLC Board Members  
Presenting at the Fall IRC  
Conference**

In addition to Christina Podraza and Sue Anderson who are presenting a session on getting your students involved in writing and the Young Authors' Conference, other ILLC Board Members will be making presentations at the Fall IRC Conference October 2-4 in Springfield.

Also on Thursday, former ILLC President **Ruth Quiroa** along with Amy Huftalin will present a session entitled, "Are You Looking For Complex Texts? Consider

Wordless Picture Books" (PreK-12,ELL, Spec) from 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

ILLC President **Leslie Forsman** will lead a session entitled "Llbrarians' Roundtable" also at 9:15 - 10:15 Thursday, Oct. 2nd. Leslie is also presenting The 2015 Abraham Lincoln Illinois High School Book Award Nominees on Friday, at 9:15 - 10:15a.m. as well as the 2015 Bluestem nominees at 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Christina Podraza will be presenting again on Friday morning in a session entitled "Enhancing Student Motivation in Literacy (K-6) at 9:15 - 10:15a.m.

Please mark your conference program and plan to attend any of these sessions which interest you.

**New Members Always  
Welcome**

If you have a friend or colleague who might be interested in joining ILLC, encourage them to join IRC and ILLC. One can join IRC and ILLC online by going to <http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org> or you can print a copy of the membership form. Be sure to check ILLC as one of council choices!

We are also looking for members who would like to be more active in our organization. We have openings for board members, committee members, and for a Vice-President. We typically meet 3-4 times a year, usually in the greater Chicago area. Our major focus is, of course, the Young Authors' Conference, but we have helped with or hosted professional development opportunities. If you are interested in becoming more involved or if you have suggestions for professional development activities, please contact President Leslie Forsman or another board member. See page 9 for board members' contact information.

## Friday Night at the Authors' Reception/Book Signing

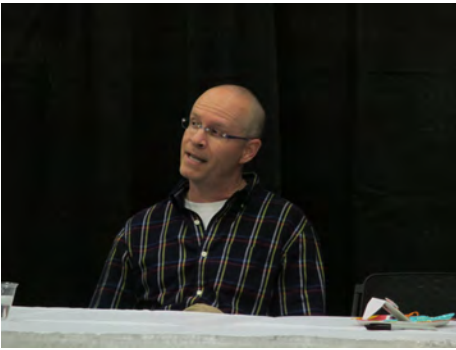


Pictured are some of the authors at the Friday night reception, Young Authors' Conference May, 2014

Top row: Eric Kahn Gale, Kat Falls, Alice McGinty

Second Row: Kim Sheahan, Julia Durango

Third Row: Tom Watson, Carolyn Crimi, Larry Day



Afterward an author panel session, attendees could purchase books and have them signed.





# Young Authors Proudly Display Their Books



## 2014 Young Author Conference - Scenes From Saturday



Sue Anderson , ILLC YAC Anchor, addresses parents and students at the Opening Ceremony.



David Finch returned this year to present an inspiring talk to parents.



Authors Judy Fradin, Julia Durango, and Adam Selzer answer young authors' questions during an author panel session.



Storyteller Chris Fascione entertains students.



The Recognition Ceremonies for each grade level are the culmination of a day of learning about writing, sharing young authors' books, and making new friends.

Young Author T shirt sales help fund the conference and provide a fun souvenir from the special day.





# Illinois Authors Interact With Students on Saturday



Top Row:  
Larry Day, Left  
Carolyn Crimi, Right



2nd Row:  
Alice McGinty, Left  
Kat Falls, Right



3rd Row:  
Adam Selzer, Left  
Eric Kahn Gale, Right



Bottom Row:  
Gayle Rosengren, Left  
Judy Fradin, Right



## **A Legacy of Writing**

### **The Importance of the Written Word**

I was reminded of the importance of the written word when my mother recently died at the age of 93. Shortly after her death when my father was cleaning out the attic, he discovered hundreds of the letters they had written to each other from 1939-1942. These letters have provided much comfort to him as he remembers their courtship, engagement, and marriage. There is also a record of the events leading to World War II and the war itself as my father was drafted into the army. She also tells him of books she was reading and recommending.

Not only did my dad find the letters, but also uncovered a 5 year diary that my mom had kept from 1939-1944. She had managed the feat of actually filling in every day of those five years, something I have tried to do several times and never accomplished. One can hear her voice in the letters and diary entries as she makes comments and relates her activities.

Another gift of writing that she left our family was another series of letters. She was the oldest of 11 living children and her family had a Round Robin Letter going from 1964 to 1972.

My mom had saved the letters she wrote which is a wonderful chronicle of our family's activities in those years. Most importantly, all of this is told from her point of view which gives us a real sense of who she was and what she valued.

Finally, several years ago my mother had suggested to her family that they each write an account of their life until they left the family home. This was published by a member of the family and is a wonderful document of local history as well as the family's history.

This legacy of writing is something that my family is cherishing and a reminder of the importance of the written word which gives our lives more permanence.

Ruth Stevig

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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



**ILLC Board and Committee  
Members  
2014 -2015**



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**NEXT BOARD MEETING**

**October 25, 2015**

Please contact Sharon Ball at  
[sharonb277@aol.com](mailto:sharonb277@aol.com) for details