

Will County Reading Council

Nov./Dec. Newsletter

President's Message

Season's Greetings!

It is hard to believe that it is already December. We only have a few more weeks left of 2nd quarter. Time is flying fast. There are so many things to be thankful for: IRC hosted a fantastic conference in October; there have been wonderful Wednesday webinars; and WCRC hosted a marvelous event with Candace Fleming. I hope most of you have joined our IRC book club and are reading *Reading Nonfiction: Notice and Note* by Beers and Probst. I have learned so much and tried many new things.

Also, special thanks to IRC for providing us with a Speaker's Grant to help defray the cost of our fall author visit and Lewis University for partnering with WCRC on this event again. It was truly inspiring to hear Candace speak about her research on her novel *The Family Romanov* and her family trip to research for *Oh, No!* More thank-yous, Wilmington Middle School thanked WCRC for supplying monies to help buy books for students grades 6-8th for their author visit from sports writer/novelist and retired NFL star Tim Green. It has truly been a busy few months.

Coming up, one of our WCRC outreach community service projects will be held at the Joliet Public Library. They are a great partner for the area residents who come out to celebrate the holidays and the love of literacy. Our Santa Reads program is coming up this week. Dec. 13th

and 14th. That has always been a celebratory event. Even if the children are not quite ready to sit on Santa's lap, no one has ever turned away a free book. Come out and have some fun!

Look for information on the January Literacy and Paint Night; WCRC PD mini-conference held at Lewis University; READ 2017 hosted at the University of St. Francis; and the Illinois Reads launch held in Wilmington, Illinois March 11, 2017.

WCRC and IRC want you to value your membership because you are important! We hope you have a safe and happy holiday. We hope to see you at the Joliet Public Library for Santa Reads.

Best wishes always,

Christy Ziller
WCRC President



Read Reflect Connect-- Proposals Needed

Once again WCRC will be hosting our Winter Professional Development, on February 23rd. We will once again be at Lewis University for this fantastic night. **Below** is the **google form** for proposals. Just submit the google form and we will contact you with more information.

Don't forget Santa Stories

Where: Joliet Library, Black Road Branch

When: December 13th @ 6:30 pm and December 14th @ 10 am.

What: Santa is there to greet children and children receive a book from Will County Reading Council

If you are free come donate sometime helping to give children books! We would love to see you there.

WCRC working with USF--Proposals for the USF READ Conference

Proposals are needed for the USF READ conference. WCRC and USF are excited to be working together to bring our members together. Please think about submitting a proposal.

Just follow the link below.
www.stfrancis.edu/real/read

Winter Professional Development 2017

Call for Proposals--Read, Reflect, Connect

* Required

Name of Presenter *

Your answer



Meet Our Spotlight Member-Tena Degraaf!

It is our pleasure to highlight Tena Degraaf, the spotlight member for the November/December Newsletter for the Will County Reading Council. We asked Tana some questions so that we could get to know her. Here are the questions and her answers to those questions.

1. What grade level do you teach?

- I teach 8th Grade Language Arts

2. Describe yourself briefly including personally.

- I love spending time with my family-my husband, two sons, daughter-in-law, and grandson. In addition to walking with friends and scrapbooking, my hobbies include reading and writing. I am the author of two books, and I am working on two more. I write an inspirational blog on tenadegraaf.com and give workshops to women's groups. After having the opportunity with two other teachers to take a group of students to Ireland, Wales, and England a few years ago, I developed the travel bug and look forward to doing more traveling.

3. What are you currently reading professionally as well as personally, if nothing that is okay?

- I am reading the *Poldark* series; I have just finished reading book one, *Poldark*, and am waiting on pins and needles for book two, *Demelza*, to come in from the library. I am fascinated by the complex characters created by the author Winston Graham and by the recent Masterpiece series adaptation on PBS.

4. What is your class' favorite book?

- That is tough question to answer because I truly enjoy all the novels in the 8th grade curriculum. I absolutely love teaching *Book Thief* to my honors class. We dig deeply into the imagery and figurative language and do an additional unit about real people who hid Jewish friends and neighbors with great risk to their personal safety during WWII. In addition, I so enjoy teaching *Call of the Wild* to my regular classes. It is a joy to observe most of my junior high boys and girls asking if they can read ahead! :) As a person who loves mysteries, I also love to teach *Adventure of the Speckled Band* by Sir Conan Doyle. We take our time with this story drawing a map of the house and learning the difference between red herrings and real clues.

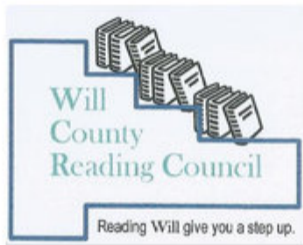
5. What strategy or instructional tip do you love and why?

- My instructional tip is this: Make sure you and your curriculum director are intentional about picking quality literature that is relevant and age-appropriate. I am grateful to teach in a district that has given much thought to the literature we share with the students at the 8th grade level. There are so many choices for young adult readers. We have the unique opportunity to either engage our middle school readers or to turn them off, and this often happens within the first few pages of the text.

6. Why is reading a passion for you?

- Reading is a passion to me because I have the wonderful opportunity to shed light on details and gems hidden in the passages that my students miss because they are reading the short story or novel for the first time. Also, it is my privilege to watch students have their "Aha!" moments when they realize the underlying theme, moral, or life lesson woven throughout the text with the words and actions of the characters. Personally, I like to learn about different time periods and cultures through stories.

Thanks Lana for sharing with us and being an outstanding member to the Illinois Reading Council as well as the Will County Reading Council. We are lucky to have you as a member!



Will County Reading Council

Mission Statement-- Our mission is to enhance lifelong literacy.

Vision Statement-- Our vision is to provide leadership in the field of literacy; support and promote professional growth of educators; and collaborate with family and community partners to promote literacy.