

ALSCConnect

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Officially Speaking

Taking on the "Cute" Label

ALA President Camila Alire has identified Front Line Advocacy as a central plank of her presidency (though, if you have met Camila, and experienced her contagious spirit, you know her platform is really something more of a dance floor). She means to take advocacy out of the board room, and put it at the circulation desk and in the storytime room, empowering folks who deal with real-live library customers to engage them in a discussion about why libraries matter. Those of us who serve children have a particular horse in this race. Our work is well recognized, and often beloved. It is also, sometimes, misunderstood, and occasionally trivialized. Developmental appropriateness is mistaken for childish nonsense. Learning is whimsy. Our work is cute, and we are sweet.

What's a librarian to do? Changing our M.O. isn't the answer. Storytime is fun. Reading is joyful. You will find my dead body in the way of a march towards taking the pleasure out of children's library experiences, in order to add some gravitas to our charge (and I don't believe that anyone is really suggesting that). But we could do with a complement to the stories and songs and poems and delight, to articulate the meaning of our method.

Janice Del Negro, a professional colleague here at Dominican University's Graduate School of Library and Information Science, is assigning her students the task of drafting a 60-second speech, to respond to the "cute" accusation. What a great idea! Of course, I went home and gave it a try myself. My stab at the speech clocks in at 55 seconds. I've posted it to the ALSC space in ALAConnect, and invite you to open a comment, and add your own. (Log in to ALA Connect at <http://connect.ala.org/alsc>). We are strongest when our different perspectives and experiences inform a united message. And where better to put our strength than behind an expression of the depth of the water that floats our boat.

Thom's 60 second speech: Librarians who serve children make a regular investment in every corner of our community, bolstering our collective intellect with the insight that lives between the pages of a book. If we are cute or quaint or sweet, it is only incidentally. By trade we are strong and fearless and indefatigable. We are united in our commitment to seeing young people for who they are, young temporarily and people forever, and in that recognition promising to secure and protect their access to knowledge, freely, without judgment, and trusting that they will share that access, in turn, with another generation. Wisdom and empathy, integrity and wonder; these are the things of story. And librarians are the stewards of story. We sow the seeds of curiosity and reap the fruits of enlightenment, and we do so by knowing children and knowing stories and knowing how to bring them together.

Why do you do what you do? Let us know!— *Thom Barthelmess, ALSC President*

Councilor's Report: 2009 Annual Conference

Braced for a drop in attendance, ALA Council was surprised but pleased to hear Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels report that 28,941 had attended the 2009 Annual Conference in Chicago. This compares to 22,047 in Anaheim last year and 28,499 in Washington D.C. in 2007.

Children's librarians please note: The ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) brought several interpretations to Council. I strongly recommend that you read the IFC's entire report, but two sections deserve your close attention. These can be found at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/ifgroups/ifcommittee/ifcinac...>

The statement on "Labeling and Rating Systems" (pgs. 12-13) urges "viewpoint neutral directional aids" rather than labels that restrict access. It also states "the inclusion of ratings on bibliographic records in library catalogs is a

violation of the Library Bill of Rights.” This interpretation would appear to apply to motion picture ratings as well as those of commercial reading programs that assign reading levels to specific titles.

The interpretation focused on “Minors and Internet Interactivity” (pgs. 14-15) also has a direct impact on library services to children. This statement specifically addresses social networking, “Usage of these social networking sites in a school or library allows minors to access and create resources that fulfill their interests and needs for information, for social connection with peers, and for participation in a community of learners.”

Now, you may skim, if you wish, the rest of this scintillating report, but I've attempted to highlight key parts of the three Council sessions.

In his Budget and Analysis Committee (BARC) report, James Neal explained that ALA revenue was down, but ALA staff had anticipated this, and had taken measures to keep expenses within budget while maintaining operations.

At Council I, Keith Michael Fiels outlined the progress ALA staff has made on implementing some of the Task Force on Electronic Membership Participation's recommendations. He expressed concern about providing a real time video transmission of ALA Council's deliberations that would enable councilors to participate remotely. The cost of real time audio Web streaming would be approximately \$11,000 per year, the cost of real time audio/video Webcasting would be \$55,000 per year, and the capability for interactive virtual councilor voting would cost \$144,000 per year. ALA legal counsel has also cautioned Fiels regarding the possibility of litigation resulting from audio/video real time transmission of Council proceedings.

At Council II, the ALA Treasurer's report highlighted the steps taken by ALA management and staff to address the budgetary shortfall and Council approved the budgetary ceiling for ALA. Council Committees on Ethics, Membership, Policy, and Monitoring recommended resolutions that Council passed with minor editing.

Council also passed—nearly unanimously—a “Resolution on Civil Marriage Equality Regardless of Sexual Orientation” but voted down a “Resolution on Libraries and the Continuing Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

At the third session, Council addressed a diverse array of issues expeditiously, as many resolutions had been honed via electronic and forum discussions.

Council passed the Committee on Legislation's resolution calling for an “ALA-wide representative group to continue to assess the proposed Google Book Search Settlement and its ongoing impact on ALA members and member institutions and to make recommendations...”

Council passed the Intellectual Freedom Committee's resolution urging the U.S. Congress “to allow section 215 of the USA Patriot Act to sunset.”

A resolution promoting Sunday, October 4, 2009, as “Intergeneration Day Means Libraries” was passed unanimously. Resolutions recommending that libraries provide accessible library Web sites and accessible electronic resources were also passed.

A resolution “Endorsing Legislative Proposals for Affordable, Universal Health Care” passed with near unanimous support.

Council revisited electronic participation with a resolution that directs ALA staff “to implement the most cost effective solution to provide transparency and access to governance activities” and to “begin providing member electronic access to Council meetings for Midwinter 2010.”

Finally, Council passed a resolution that addressed the major issue for most members. “Resolved that the American Library Association immediately address the severe national erosion of budgetary support to all libraries...by developing and instituting a critical crisis management approach...through the creation of an action plan to alert legislators, stake holders, and constituents to action...”

More about this resolution and all Council actions may be found soon on the ALA Web site at <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/governance/council/councilactions/index.cfm>.— *Linda Perkins, Immediate Past ALSC Councilor*

Bright Ideas

Banned Books Club

Take a group of voracious young readers. Give them a list of challenged and banned books to read. Combine these ingredients in a monthly discussion group, and watch as the mixture boils over with enthusiasm.

That's the recipe for our library's Banned Books Club, which was the brainchild of Takoma Park (Md.) seventh grader Alanna Natanson. In the ten months since the club's creation, we've read all kinds of classics, from *The Chocolate War*, Robert Cormier's seminal young adult novel, and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, to *Bridge to Terabithia* and *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, both by former Takoma Park resident Katherine Paterson.

One month we focused on picture books, such as *In the Night Kitchen* by Maurice Sendak and *Heather Has Two Mommies* by Leslea Newman. Other months we've explored more somber topics as we discussed *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*.

Alanna, a top student at a public school communications art magnet program, was inspired to form the club one day last summer as she was looking through the ALA's list of books that have been challenged or banned. She realized that many of the books were ones that she had read and enjoyed, or hoped to read one day. Alanna then came to me with the idea for a Banned Books Club, and we quickly got the go-head from Library Director Ellen Arnold-Robbins. The Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library voted to support the club by purchasing multiple copies of each book we read so there are plenty available for checking out.

Our club is open to all readers of middle school age, and we've developed a core of regulars who love to delve deeply into books and share what they've learned with others. These are kids who take delight in navigating difficult texts, and who are outraged that so many of the books they've enjoyed have been challenged by those who think they don't belong in school and public libraries.

We open each hour-and-a-half meeting by reading the list of challenges to our chosen book as compiled in *Banned Books: 2007 Resource Guide*, a wonderfully comprehensive volume by Robert Doyle (and published by ALA). This opening tradition was the kids' idea: they love hearing the often-repetitive litany of challenges to books they've just read and enjoyed. Reading the challenges helps focus our discussion and inevitably gets us talking about all kinds of important issues, everything from bullying to racism to war. Our discussions are always lively and energetic as club members have strong opinions and love to share them!

Given that ALA figures show there are hundreds of reported challenges annually at school and public libraries nationwide, we are fortunate to live in a community like Takoma Park where intellectual freedom is highly valued. Parents of our club members fully support the idea of having their children read all kinds of books. It's a sentiment widely shared in our community as our library, the only small municipal library in Maryland, has never faced a book challenge.

Obviously, a Banned Books Club wouldn't work in every library. But it's a great way to pull together a group of intellectually-curious kids and read some truly worthwhile books. As the winner of the 2009 John Phillip Immroth Memorial Award for Intellectual Freedom, we hope that our Banned Books Club will inspire others to create their own clubs and celebrate the freedom to read.— *Karen MacPherson, children and youth services coordinator, Takoma Park Maryland Library*

Tea with Famous Women

On Saturday March 21, 2009, at the St. Joseph County (Ind.) Public Library, twenty-four young guests, grades three through eight, sat at formal tea tables with ten women from history. For an hour and a half, the girls asked questions and learned about the challenges and successes of our famous women.

Our celebrities were volunteers from the library system and the wider St. Joseph County area. Emily Dickinson, our head cataloger, appeared complete with white dress and quotes. Other staff appeared as Annie Oakley, Eleanor

Roosevelt, Sacagawea, and Madame C.J. Walker. Laura Ingalls Wilder and Cleopatra were portrayed by eighth grade students, re-playing roles they'd learned in a drama course. Sandra Day O'Connor and Marie Curie were college students, recruited through the volunteer office at St. Mary's College. Rosa Parks was a patron who saw the advance publicity and asked if she could volunteer.

The program was structured to have four to five young guests and at least one celebrity at each table. We required pre-registration so each guest had a place card with her name. Tea service items and glass place settings, items on loan from staff members, were laid out in advance. We included a sheet of discussion starters at each guest's place setting.

Once the guests were seated, each famous woman gave a one- to two-minute self-introduction on stage to everyone attending. They then moved to the tables and staff served tea. After about ten minutes, a hand bell was rung and the celebrities moved to another table. This continued until guests had conversed with each celebrity.

Adults accompanying the girls were invited to observe, and we had a buffet table with cookies and tea in disposable hot cups for them.

We served tea and ice water as well as two types of cookies. Nut and coconut allergies were noted. Our serving time (filling teapots etc.) kept a wait staff of four occupied and some of our celebrity volunteers helped with set-up and clean-up as well.

The quality of the volunteer acting was high and we got many appreciative comments about the event. For some guests, this was the first "real tea" they had attended.

For more details, questions, or comments, contact Kris Springer, manager of children's services, k.springer at sjcpl.org, or Mary Gilbert, assistant to the manager of children's services: m.gilbert at sjcpl.org – *Mary Gilbert, St. Joseph County Public Library, South Bend, Ind.*

Not for Kids Only

A book club can be exciting, dynamic, and lots of fun when the members are intelligent and interesting. Such a group is alive and laughing. For three years the Children's Literature Council (CLC) of Southern California has sponsored a book club where members can relax with like-minded friends who are passionate about children's literature.

We started our book club because a few librarians from Los Angeles Public Library wanted to get together and discuss children's books. I thought it would be great if we partnered with CLC to broaden our recruitment lists. Soon authors, teachers, friends, and school librarians heard about the book club and asked to join.

Today we have about 15 active members. Each month we meet at my house to discuss a book that had been decided upon at the previous meeting. Some of the titles that have been discussed are *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis; *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame; the Freddy the Pig books by Walter R. Brooks; *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick; *The Higher Power of Lucky* by Susan Patron; and *A Drowned Maiden's Hair* by Laura Amy Schlitz.

We hold the meeting the last Tuesday of every month. It starts at 7 p.m. with dinner that I usually buy in advance. We have sandwiches, wraps, chicken, or salad. In honor of the month of the Olympics last summer, we read the Percy Jackson & the Olympians series by Rick Riordan. At that gathering, everyone brought in Greek food so we had a feast worthy of the gods. In October we read a scary book and have a Halloween party.

The group has bonded so we now think of ourselves as real friends. One night we all went to the movie *Mama Mia*. We help each other with our work problems. We listen to book critiques and suggestions for how to use the books in our work. To celebrate our anniversaries, we have dinner at a local restaurant.

I will never forget the Tuesday that Hillary Clinton spoke at the Democratic Convention. Our book group huddled together to watch her speech. It was wonderful having people whom you respect share an important event. I will always remember having my friends with me during that historic moment.

Our club has shown that books are even better when shared with friends.— *Ilene Abramson, director of children's services, Los Angeles Public Library*

ALSC Voices

ALSC Profile

Christopher Borawski
Senior Librarian/Assistant Branch Manager
Montgomery County (Md.) Public Libraries - Silver Spring Branch
ALSC membership: 6+ years

Where did you attend library school?

University of Michigan - School of Information

What attracted you to library service to children?

I guess you could say I fell into it. I always enjoyed visits to the library as a child (especially storytime!). In the summer before my sophomore year of high school, I volunteered in the children's room at my local public library, and in less than a month, they hired me as a student assistant. Things pretty much snowballed from there. The rest, as they say, is history. (Of course, the fact that children's librarians have all the fun was pretty attractive too. We also have the power to really touch the future and make it better with each child we share books, stories, and everything else our libraries have to offer with.)

Why did you join ALSC?

ALSC offers to the up-and-coming children's librarian opportunities to network with others in the field and learn what's really going on in our shared profession. ALSC helps me keep up with the latest trends, great reads, and more. Now that I've moved a bit beyond the realm of children's librarianship, being a member of ALSC helps me keep at least one foot in that world.

What to you is the biggest reward of being a children's librarian?

The smile on the face of the young person whom you just led to his/her favorite book and the laughs, hugs, and appreciation from children who've enjoyed a particular story or activity at storytime. It's also when they come back a day, a week, a month, or even a year or two later and remember the help you gave them or the book you shared with them.

What is your favorite job responsibility?

I don't get to do it nearly as much as I used to, but I think it has to be planning and presenting storytimes. This is how we really begin connecting with our youngest customers. I dare say that for most of us, our love of libraries was born and bred by coming to storytime. You just never know how much of an impact that one story or song you picked out for this week's program might have.

Do you have any advice or a helpful tip for library school students or new librarians just starting out?

When in doubt ask your colleagues. Whether they be co-workers in the same building or library system or fellow librarians from across the country, your colleagues are the best source of new ideas, helpful suggestions, and the answers to your burning questions about the many aspects of librarianship. Whether you're looking for customer service tips, good storytime activity ideas or you just need someone to help you "Name That Title," the answer might only be a desk or a click away.

What is the most popular children's program at your library?

Definitely our "Born to Read" storytime for babies through age two. We regularly fill our meeting room close to capacity for this program. Everyone, young and old, has an enjoyable time hearing stories, singing, dancing to music, moving to rhymes, and playing with the instruments, scarves, and other realia. Parents/caregivers also enjoy connecting with one another before and after the program.

What is your favorite children's book out this year so far?

Hmm...That's a toughy. My usual response is that this is just like asking a parent to name his/her favorite child. One of my favorite picture books from the past year is *A Visitor for Bear* by Bonnie Becker, with illustrations by Kady MacDonald Denton. This is a heartwarming tale in more ways than one. Bear covets the peace and quiet of his little house, hence the sign on his front door: "NO visitors allowed!" Enter Mouse, who won't take no for an answer. Persistence pays off when (after many failed attempts to keep him out), Bear finally allows Mouse to stay for nothing but a quick snack (or so he thinks). Mouse's kindness and companionship soon change Bear's mind about visitors and friendships. Denton's soft but warm illustrations combine with the words of an increasingly exasperated Bear to make a fun and cozy read-aloud.

What are your hobbies?

Hiking, travelling, singing, rooting on my favorite Major League Baseball teams.

What three words best describe you?

Quiet, patient, helpful.

A Distinguished Winner

Congratulations to Jane Botham, 2009 ALSC Distinguished Service Award winner. Jane delivered the following award acceptance remarks at the membership meeting in Chicago in July.

Thank you for this award. It's a privilege to be a part of this wonderful organization and it has been such fun! I want to thank the association and its members for a lifetime of friendships and a lifetime of learning.

I went to my first ALA conference as a library school student. Dr. Elizabeth Nesbitt, the Associate Dean for the Carnegie Library School in Pittsburgh, was on Council at the time. Three of us took the train from Pittsburgh to Chicago with the assurance Dr. Nesbitt would be our mentor. It was the first and only time I saw ALA in action at the famed Edgewater Beach Hotel, which, at that time, hosted all midwinter conferences.

A few in this audience remember the Edgewater Beach well with its dusty hallways and elegant french doors that let all the wintry blasts in! Dr. Nesbitt made sure that I met Mildred Batchelder, the Executive Secretary of the Children's Services Division, as ALSC was known at the time. Mildred was a great encourager to new children's librarians and she always urged them to join the division. And, when you joined, an appointment would soon be forthcoming. So began a series of appointments that introduced me to a nationwide network of colleagues and friends.

My career took me to three coasts, as I like to say--the West Coast, the East Coast, and the Great Lakes Coast! When I was elected President of the association, those years of working in various parts of the country were invaluable. I had a wide range of possible appointees for the many committee assignments. Although I knew a lot of people, it was a lot of appointments, so I formed an informal "committee" (very small). I privately called it the Midwest Mafia; they assisted me in the appointment process. These were people whose judgment I respected. Years later, Therese Bigelow asked me how in the name of heaven she was appointed to the Notable Committee when she didn't know me at all!

I am grateful for the ALSC and ALA appointments I received. They honed my leadership skills, sharpened my ability to review children's materials, and inspired me to promote programs that were an asset to the community I served. It put me in touch with people throughout the nation--who, at the beginning, were only a phone call away.

THANK GOD for email! After eleven years of retirement, we are still in touch.

Looking back, I couldn't possibly have failed in my career--look at the mentors I was privileged to have--all smart, opinionated, wonderful women--Augusta Baker, Effie Lee Morris, Zena Sutherland, Carolyn Field, Mary Liz Ledlie, Anne Izard, Suzanne Glazer, Lillian Gerhardt, Mimi Kayden, Peggy Sullivan. Isn't THAT a list?

I thank you for this award. I have so enjoyed being an active participant in ALSC.

Fresh Conference Perspectives

Each year four deserving children's librarians receive the chance to attend ALA Annual Conference for the first time through the Penguin Young Readers Group (PYRG) Award. Following are two of this year's winners' reflections on the Chicago conference in July.

Action-packed days with unlimited learning and mouth-watering deep dish pizza are some of my most memorable moments at the ALA conference in Chicago. The biggest highlight for me was attending the Newbery/Caldecott/Wilder banquet. It was an incredible and unforgettable experience to listen to all of the great authors talking about their journeys to writing their literary masterpieces. The energy in the ballroom that night was electric! I anxiously look forward to attending the next ALA conference.— *Cheryl Lee, children's librarian, Palo Alto (Calif.) City Library*

I was very thankful to win the 2009 Penguin Young Readers Group Award that allowed me to attend the Annual Conference. My first conference experience was a very positive one. My initial impression of the conference was that it was very well organized and I immediately felt comfortable participating. I was completely surprised and impressed by the amount of people in attendance and the friendliness of those whom I met throughout the conference. The sessions I attended gave me great ideas for programming and other services that I could implement at my library. Highlights of the conference included meeting young adult author John Green on the expo floor and attending the Newbery/Caldecott/Wilder banquet. Standout programs and events that I attended were the Booklist/Booklist Online Books and Blogs program, the Authors Readers Theatre program, and the Multiple Literacies in the Library program. My first conference experience gave me the desire to become more involved in the association and attend future conferences.— *Sarah Polace, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library, Parma-South Branch*

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

2009 Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to our ALSC Scholarship winners:

Frederic G. Melcher Scholarship

Heidi Knuth, Antioch, Ill. -- Dominican University

Mary Bridget Maddan, Hilton Head Island, S.C. -- University of South Carolina

Bound to Stay Bound Books Scholarship

Jessica Ammons, Nicholasville, Ky. -- Syracuse University

Megan Bannen, Overland Park, Kan. -- Emporia State University

Kristin Edstrom, Seattle, Wash. -- Texas Woman's University

Jennifer Raymond, Kennebunkport, Maine -- Simmons College

New from ALSC and ALA!

Born to Read Brochures. Remind parents and parents-to-be that it's never too early to read with baby. The updated brochure contains great tips on how to read, share, talk, and play with your baby. A list of recommended books is also included. Item Number: 978-0-8389-8527-4; 50/pack: \$22.50.

Who's Next? Send Us Your Nomination.

What do Jane Botham, Henrietta Smith, Marilyn Miller, Caroline Ward, Mimi Kayden, Ginny Walter, Julie Cummins, Phyllis Van Orden, Maggie Kimmel, Peggy Sullivan, Lillian Gerhardt, Spencer Shaw, Zena Sutherland, Ginny Moore Kruse, Virginia Mathews, Carolyn Field, Augusta Baker, and Bill Morris have in common?

Each has received the Distinguished Service Award from the Association for Library Service to Children in recognition of his or her significant contributions to and impact on ALSC and library services to children.

Do you know an ALSC member who has made an immediate or sustained contribution to the understanding or expansion of library services to children and to the Association for Library Service to Children? This is your opportunity to nominate a fellow ALSC member for the 2010 Distinguished Service Award and add another name to the august group listed above.

The nomination form and other information about the award may be found on the ALSC Web site at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/awardsgrants/profawards/distingui...>. Please note that both nominee and nominator must be members of ALSC. The nominee may be a practicing librarian in a public or school library, a library or information science educator, a member of the library press, or an editor or other employee of a publishing house. The individual may be active or retired.

In your nomination please describe why you think the nominee has made significant contributions to and has had an impact on ALSC and library service to children. Include a list of his or her achievements that support the nomination. The Distinguished Service Award Committee will evaluate each nominee based on outstanding contribution(s), innovative ideas, breadth of influence, and length of service. Each nomination will be weighed on its own merit. Letters of support or additional nominations for the same person need not be solicited.

Nominations must be submitted by **December 1, 2009**, midnight EST, to Cynthia K. Richey, Chair, ALSC Distinguished Service Award Committee. E-mail: richeyc@einetnetwork.net. Fax: 412-531-1161. USPS mail: (please submit four copies if sent this way) 99 Inglewood Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15228-1503. The committee looks forward to receiving your nominations.

ALSC also offers numerous other professional awards including:

Bechtel Fellowship
Bookapalooza
ALSC/BWI Summer Reading Program Grant
Light the Way: Library Outreach to the Underserved Grant
Maureen Hayes Author/Illustrator Visit Award
Penguin Young Readers Group Award

For more information, applications, and deadlines, visit www.ala.org/alsc, and click on Awards & Grants--Professional Awards.

Free PSAs Tout Library Cards

September is Library Card Sign-up Month--a time to remind parents and kids that a library card is the most important school supply of all. A great way to get the word out is with a public service announcement (PSA) and ALA is offering free print and radio PSAs for download at <http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/advocacy/publicawareness/alainitia...>

WNBA Star and Olympic Gold Medalist Candace Parker, honorary chair of Library Card Sign-up Month, lends her voice to the radio recordings. Don't miss out on this resource for reaching out to your community!

Author/Storyteller Wins Top Civilian Honor

In August, Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow, the last living Plains Indian war chief, received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He is the author of seminal works in Native American history and culture. An author, storyteller, and historian, Medicine Crow was the first member of his tribe to attend college, receiving his master's degree in anthropology in 1939, and he continues to lecture at universities and other notable institutions. He is the last person alive to have received direct oral testimony from a participant in the Battle of the Little Bighorn: his grandfather was a scout for General George Armstrong Custer. A veteran of World War II, Medicine Crow accomplished during the war all of the four tasks required to become a "war chief," including stealing fifty Nazi SS horses from a German camp. His contributions to the preservation of the culture and history of the First Americans are matched only by his importance as a role model to young Native Americans across the country.

He has written books for young readers, including *Counting Coup: Becoming a Crow Chief on the Reservation and Beyond* (National Geographic), which won the 2008 American Indian Youth Literature Award, and the picture book *Brave Wolf and the Thunderbird* (Abbeville), illustrated by Linda R. Martin.

Support the Stamp Effort

The U.S. Postage Stamp Citizen's Advisory Committee, the group that decides what subjects are chosen for U.S. commemorative postage stamps, is considering celebrating the 50th anniversary of the publishing of *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats.

It takes three years for the subject of a postage stamp to be considered, accepted, and developed. The 50th anniversary of *The Snowy Day* is in 2012. Help the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation gather signatures to send to the Citizen's Advisory Committee to let them know how welcome this stamp would be to families and educators across the country.

To support the stamp effort, visit www.ezra-jack-keats.org and add your name to the Support the Stamp list. Tell your friends, your students, your teachers, and your parents to add their names to the petition too. Names will not be used for any other reason than for the stamp petition, nor will they be shared or sold to any other entity. Help make 2012 a celebration of American children in all their diversity!

The Ezra Jack Keats Foundation funds literacy and arts programming in public schools, public libraries, parks, museums, and universities across the country to enhance the joy of learning and teaching for all generations of learners.

Access to Learning Award

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's annual Access to Learning Award recognizes the innovative efforts of public libraries and similar institutions outside the United States to connect people to information and opportunities through free access to computers and the Internet. The award is given by Global Libraries, a special initiative of the foundation's Global Development Program. The recipient of the Access to Learning Award will receive \$1 million.

Please visit <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/ATLA> for more information. Completed applications must be submitted by October 31, 2009.

Getting Together

Online Education Opportunities

Start the school year off on the right foot by taking an online education course with ALSC! Starting in October, ALSC is offering two engaging courses that will enhance your skills and knowledge.

The two fall courses being offered are: "The Newbery Medal: Past, Present and Future" and "Children with Disabilities in the Library." Registration is now open, and the course fee is only \$95 for personal ALSC members. Courses begin the week of October 5 and run through Nov. 13, 2009. Detailed descriptions and registration information is available on at www.ala.org/alscevents.

Courses are taught asynchronously using Moodle, an online learning community. A certificate of completion will be sent to participants upon successful completion of the course. For more information, contact Jenny Najduch, ALSC marketing specialist, at jnajduch@ala.org.

2010 Morris Seminar

There is still time to apply for ALSC's 2010 Bill Morris Seminar: Book Evaluation Training taking place on Friday, January 15, 2010, from 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., during the 2010 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston. **But you must hurry! Applications are due in the ALSC office by Tuesday, September 8, 2009.**

The seminar will bring new ALSC members and members with limited evaluation experience together with those who have served on ALSC's media evaluation committees in an environment designed to train and mentor them in the group process and in children's media evaluation techniques. The seminar will result in new and emerging leaders for future ALSC evaluation committees.

The Morris Endowment supports those selected to attend the training seminar by offering the seminar at no charge to the attendee. This includes all materials, breakfast, lunch, and afternoon break on Friday. To help defray additional costs for hotel and other expenses, a \$200 stipend for each attendee will be provided by the endowment.

For more information and the application, visit www.tinyurl.com/morrisseminar10. Visit the ALSC blog (<http://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/>) to read about the experiences of past Morris Seminar participants. All applicants must be ALSC members. Questions? Contact Jenny Najduch at jnajduch@ala.org.

2010 Arbuthnot Lecture

The Riverside County (Calif.) Library System has been chosen to host the 2010 May Hill Arbuthnot Lecture. Kathleen T. Horning, director of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Cooperative Children's Book Center, will deliver the lecture. "Riverside County's emphasis on multicultural, literacy-based children's programming, its leadership in promoting El día de los niños/El día de los libros, Children's Day/Book Day, and its broad based program Project Read with Me, as well as its strong partnership with the University of California at Riverside, made this an ideal match for Horning's expertise and background," said Kristi Jemtegaard, chair of the 2010 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Committee. The lecture will be held in the spring of 2010. Information about the exact date and how to obtain tickets will be posted when available.

2010 ALSC Preconference

Mark your calendar now for "**Drawn to Delight: How Picture Books Work (and Play) Today**," the 2010 ALSC Preconference. The event will take place on Friday, June 25, 2010, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., during the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

In the company of award-winning illustrators, art directors, and museum educators, learn to look beyond surface stories to uncover the deeper meanings and aesthetic connections in recent picture books. Exploration of the format's blurring boundaries with graphic novels and of the international and digital landscapes mix with studio demonstrations, hands-on experimentation, and original art door prizes. Discover the innovative "whole book" storytime model, developed to help children think critically and derive pleasure from everything picture books offer.

Speakers include award-winning author/illustrator Brian Selznick and Megan Lambert, Instructor of Children's Literature Programs at The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art; additional speakers will be announced at a later date.

2010 ALSC President's Program

Join us at ALA Annual Conference next June for the ALSC Charlemae Rollins President's Program featuring Dr. Patricia K. Kuhl. To help you serve your youngest patrons, Dr. Kuhl will discuss her research and findings on infants' early language and later reading skills.

Dr. Kuhl is internationally recognized for her research on early language and brain development and for studies that show how young children learn. Her work has played a major role in demonstrating how early exposure to language

alters the brain. It has implications for critical periods in development, for bilingual education and reading readiness, for developmental disabilities involving language, and for research on computer understanding of speech.

Dr. Kuhl has spoken at the White House on several occasions, and has appeared on the Discovery Health television series "The Baby Human;" the *NOVA* series "The Mind;" and "The Power of Ideas" and "The Secret Life of the Brain" on PBS. She has appeared on *Today*, *Good Morning America*, *CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News*, NHK, CNN, and in *The New York Times*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*.

Currently Dr. Kuhl is the Bezos Family Foundation Endowed Chair for Early Childhood Learning, Co-Director of the University of Washington Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences, Director of the University of Washington's NSF Science of Learning Center, and Professor of Speech and Hearing Sciences.

Courtesy <http://ilabs.washington.edu/kuhl/>

2010 ALSC National Institute

Are you looking for a truly intensive and dynamic learning opportunity with a youth services focus? Then plan now to attend the ALSC National Institute on September 23-25, 2010, in Atlanta, Ga. Here are just a few of the highlights:

- Meet Ashley Bryan, Carmen Deedy, John McCutcheon, Brian Selznick, and Walter Dean and Christopher Myers.
- Attend exciting and relevant continuing education sessions on children's technology, literature, and programming.
- Enjoy an evening reception at the Center for Puppetry Arts.
- Network with your peers.

The institute will be held at the Emory Conference Center on the campus of Emory University. Registration includes Thursday dinner, Friday breakfast, lunch, and evening reception. Specifics regarding registration and programs will be posted on the ALSC Web site and ALSC-L as plans develop.

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