

# CHESTER COUNTY READING ASSOCIATION

## An IRA Honor Council, A KSRA Exemplary Council

### AUGUST 2016 NEWSLETTER



<http://ccra-pa.weebly.com/>

Editor

Jan Pizarro,

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#### CCRA Executive Board 2016-17

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CCRA's Newsletter is published four times a year. It is emailed directly to all of our members, and is also posted on our website as above. Electronic newsletters can easily be shared with friends and colleagues, and offer interesting and pertinent direct internet links. We also send out occasional "email blasts" of current important literacy and educational updates and interesting items, as well as program reminders for your use. Please watch for these. If you are not receiving your newsletter via your email address, please contact Jan Pizarro or Jane Dulin, as above. If you have changed your email address, please advise us so that we can be sure to include you on our listserve.

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"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island." — Walt Disney

\*\*\* Remember to like the Chester County Reading Association on Facebook! \*\*\*

"Remember that in the end it will be teachers who make a difference in children's lives. It is the teachers who will either lead the change or resist and stymie it. The focus of school change has to be on supporting teachers in their efforts to become more expert, and reorganizing all aspects of the educational system so that they can teach as expertly as they know how." - Richard Allington

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#### Mission Statement of the Chester County Reading Association

*The mission of the Chester County Reading Association is to provide opportunities and resources to all who teach and promote lifelong literacy at home, at school, and in the community.*

### President's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to a new school year! Most of you are awaiting the arrival of a new group of students, your energy has been renewed over the summer months, and you are enthusiastic and prepared to meet the successes and challenges of another school year. Those of you who are

currently retired, I hope you are enjoying this new phase of your life. CCRA is here for all of you! Chester County Reading Association has exciting programs in store for you to support your professional development while you earn Act 48 hours. The first program meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup> will feature former KSRA President, Michael Williams, presenting, "Motivating Boys to Read" from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. at the Chester County Intermediate Unit. Registration begins at 8:30 A.M. A complete list of the 2016-2017 programs is included in this newsletter.

Let me tell you a little about how my journey as President of CCRA came to be. I was invited four years ago by board member, Glendia Kennedy, to attend a CCRA Board Meeting to see what CCRA was all about up close and to decide if I wanted to become involved in its literacy efforts. As a teacher, I had been attending CCRA'S programs for years. I took a giant leap and first stepped up to becoming a board member, (no experience necessary), then taking on the Vice-President position, next fulfilling the President - Elect position, and finally attaining the office of President. It continues to amaze me about how this "jewel" of an organization manages to do what it does manned by volunteers- people like you and me who are committed to literacy efforts among our students and communities. I invite you to feel free to contact CCRA if you would like to attend a board meeting and witness first hand, the literacy commitment of the board and possibly volunteer to become part of literacy efforts in Chester County. Contact me at: [rotutor723@aol.com](mailto:rotutor723@aol.com) if you would like to know more about how to volunteer on one of our committees.

"Literacy Changes Lives" is the theme of the 2016 KSRA Conference in Seven Springs, PA on October 22 – 25. I hope you will consider attending the 49<sup>th</sup> Conference at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. For more information, visit [www.ksrapa.org](http://www.ksrapa.org). As educators, we can readily connect to this theme as we have applied it on a daily basis serving our students in our respective schools. At the state level, KSRA is hard at work becoming more accessible to its membership, keeping abreast of relevant literacy trends, providing PA Department of Education updates that affect educators in our state, just to mention a few of its many tasks. Visit the KSRA website frequently to keep current about statewide and local council literacy efforts. At the international level, through the work of ILA, International Literacy Association, (formerly IRA), ILA's members, affiliates, and its far-reaching literacy community, form an important network that makes a difference in advancing literacy globally. For more information about how ILA is affecting literacy across the world and to become a member, log onto their website [www.literacyworldwide.org](http://www.literacyworldwide.org).

Lastly, reading councils at the local level, like CCRA, are vibrant groups of committed volunteers who make it their mission to promote literacy in their respective communities, provide excellent professional development opportunities for its educators, and impact their communities with special outreach projects, all the while keeping their mission at the forefront of everything they undertake. Hats off to all of you for making a difference in promoting literacy while changing lives through your teaching! Have a great school year.

Sincerely,  
Rosemarie Batson,  
CCRA President 2016-2017

## **49<sup>th</sup> Annual KSRA Conference**

**By Rosemarie Batson**

The 2016 KSRA Conference will be held from Saturday, October 22 to Tuesday, October 25, 2016 at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. Anna Landers is the Conference Chair along with her talented committee. The theme of the conference is “Literacy Changes Lives.” There will be exciting speakers, events, authors, and exhibits designed to change lives through the power of literacy. There are some important questions to think about in regards to this conference theme. How does literacy change lives? How has literacy changed your life? How does literacy change your students’ lives? A few of the general session speakers include Donalyn Miller, Mary Bigler, and Elfrieda “Freddy” Hiebert. There are many more! Featured speakers, breakout, and workshop speakers round out the conference as these many experts share their literacy instruction expertise with attendees. Our very own CCRA members, Rose Cappelli, Lynne Dorfman, Jennifer Greene, Glendia Kennedy, Elizabeth Madarang, and Jan Pizarro will be giving presentations at this conference. Check out the Featured Author Events, too! There are several opportunities to have breakfast, lunch, or tea with a favorite author. The Sunday Authors’ Tea features Lindsay Barrett George, Peter Catalanotto, David Biedrzycki, Sneed B. Collard, III, Shelley Gill, Sara Holbrook, and Frank Murphy, just to highlight a few. Don’t miss the opportunity to learn new ways to use literature in the classroom from inspiring authors by attending this informative conference. Please visit the KSRA website ([www.ksrapa.org](http://www.ksrapa.org)) for registration information.



## **CCRA'S New Website and Thank You!**

**By Rosemarie Batson**

CCRA is excited to announce our new website created by our Technology Committee Chair, Jennifer Greene. She has done a terrific job getting the site ready for a new CCRA year. You can access the website at: <http://ccra-pa.weebly.com/>. Please realize that is still under construction and check back periodically for updates.



On another note, a sincere thank you is in order to board member, Jane Dulin, and her husband, Frank Dulin, who were our webmasters of our former website: <http://home.cciil.org/~ccra/>. We at CCRA have appreciated their hard work and efforts for many years. Thanks, Jane and Frank!

## **Chester County Reading Association Programs 2016-2017**

**Saturday, September 17, 2016**

**9:00 am -12:00 pm**

**Michael Williams, Teacher and Past President of KSRA  
*Motivating Boys to Read***

**\*\*\*\*\***

**Thursday, November 10, 2016**

**5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

**Nancy Viau, Author  
*The Writing Process and How a Children’s Book is Created*  
Nancy’s books include *City Street Beat* and *Look What I Can Do!***

**\*\*\*\*\***

**Saturday, January 21, 2017**

**9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**Mary Ellen Lane, Reading Specialist and Staff Developer,  
Pennsbury School District**

***Text Dependent Questions & Analysis***

**\*\*\*\*\***

**Wednesday, April 19, 2017**

**5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

**Kevin Flanigan, WCU Professor  
*Growing a Love of Words and Ideas: The Vocabulary-to-Comprehension  
Connection for Struggling Readers and Writers***

**All programs are held at the Chester County Intermediate Unit.  
Act 48 hours are available for all programs.  
Flyers for the first two programs are on pages 11 and 12 of this newsletter.**

### **Additional CCRA Information**

**By Rosemarie Batson**

If you are not current with your dues, you can get an application online at: [www.ksrapa.org](http://www.ksrapa.org), or on our new website at: <http://ccra-pa.weebly.com/>. Click on LINKS at the top of the home page and you can access KSRA from there, or pay at one of the program meetings.

If you just retired, your membership is free for the first year. Upon request, contact CCFRA Treasurer Jane Schultz at: [mjschultz46@hotmail.com](mailto:mjschultz46@hotmail.com) for more information.

Our Board Meeting Minutes are posted online on our new website: <http://ccra-pa.weebly.com/>. Click on the ABOUT heading at the top of the home page to get to the minutes. The March 2016 Minutes are currently posted. You can also access our minutes online at: [www.ksrapa.org](http://www.ksrapa.org) and click on Local Councils, and then click on Chester County Reading Association. In this way, you will be able to see what is accomplished at our board meetings and get more information about projects we are involved in to promote literacy in the county. You can also access KSRA from CCRA'S website as mentioned above.

Thank you for continuing your membership in KSRA/CCRA. We hope that you will attend as many of our meetings as you can this coming year. Please share this information with your friends and colleagues, too. Act 48 hours are offered at every meeting.

## **Summer 2016 Transformed**

**By Gretchen Denlinger**

A brief review of ILA: ***Transforming Lives through Literacy*** - Boston Conference

Current research, literacy coaching, professional development models, guided reading, exhibit halls, author visits, technology resources, feature speakers, thousands of excited teachers and friends.....all rolled into one fabulous weekend! As a first time ILA conference participant, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to travel to Boston alongside eight marvelous colleagues from the Downingtown Area School District. Here are a few highlights from my sessions:

My first session at ILA was the Friday Word Study Institute with facilitators such as Donald Bear, Karen Carpenter, Latisha Hayes, and WCU's own Kevin Flanigan. We need to "marinate our students in rich vocabulary experiences" as vocabulary success sets the ceiling on comprehension success. The speakers also discussed the importance of providing every student with effective tools that can be applied flexibly as needed to monitor and build their own comprehension as they become "word conscious" independent learners.

Vocabulary development was a featured topic in several workshops. Darl Kiernan provided a session on planning effective selection of academic vocabulary instruction. I urge you to review her work noted in the article *Selecting Academic Vocabulary Words Worth Learning (2015)*. She introduced conference attendees to the following website, [www.wordandphrase.info](http://www.wordandphrase.info). This website is an informative tool that can help teachers analyze texts in order to narrow down academic vocabulary for learning opportunities.

I had the pleasure of talking with featured speaker Debbie Diller at a book signing event. After meeting, we discovered that we both share Lancaster County ties...small world! Debbie provided an energetic and informative workshop titled, "The Power of Focus: From Instruction to Independence". I am eager to read her newest book and utilize some of her suggestions to strengthen my literacy coaching resources.

Lori Oczkus presented an energetic session filled with engaging strategies to help our students strengthen their own metacognition of informational text. Irene Fountas and Gay Sue Pinnell unveiled their updated resources for their Guided Reading Program. They stressed the importance of teaching the reader, not the curriculum. I appreciated their views of using their Continuum model as a "living tool" to guide students into ownership of their reading strategies. Tim Rasinski's strategies for building a solid foundation for comprehension through fluency

development marked the finale to this worthwhile weekend. There are so many more speakers to mention, including CCRA's own Lynn Dorfman.

I returned home feeling re-energized for the upcoming school year and ready to share new resources with colleagues. In addition, I had the wonderful opportunity to strengthen friendships with my fellow district teachers and CCRA members, as well as establish new connections within the literacy profession. If you ever have the opportunity to attend an ILA conference in the future, please consider attending!



Gretchen's drop-in visit with Debbie Diller at the ILA Conference!

## **Nominations for Celebrate Literacy Award**

**By Tina Faccioli, Celebrate Literacy Chair**

Each year CCRA honors a local organization, group, or person who has promoted literacy in our community. This award searches for candidates who have shown exemplary accomplishments in any of the following areas: direct teaching at any level, organizing local literacy programs, promoting support from the public to enhance literacy, producing teaching materials or special media for literacy programs, conducting research in a field related to literacy, providing young people the opportunity to help in literacy activities, and conducting educational activities of a social, cultural, economic, or political nature in which literacy activities are included.

If you have any possible candidates, please send them to Tina Faccioli at [tfaccioli1@verizon.net](mailto:tfaccioli1@verizon.net) or mail to 127 Linden Street West Chester, PA 19382-3737. Please include a brief description of the person/organization, their contribution to literacy and how they may be contacted.

## **Dogs, Dogs, and More Dogs**

**By Glendia Kennedy**

Is it true? Has KSRA and CCRA really "gone to the dogs"? It certainly looks like it with the Keystone to Reader Book Awards this year! Voted by the children of Pennsylvania, these winners all have dogs as the major characters.

Preschool Level: ***Number One Sam*** by Greg Pizzoli

Primary Level: ***Dozer's Run: The True Story of a Dog and His Run***  
by Debbie Levy with Rosana Panza

Intermediate Level: ***Rags: Hero Dog of World War I: A True Story***  
by Margot Theis Raven

The authors or their representative will receive the awards at the Book Awards Dinner on Saturday night, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at the KSRA Conference in Seven Springs. Books published in 2015 will be given to all attendees.

Another doggie idea? Since this year's KSRA theme is ***Literacy Changes Lives***, the CCRA board has chosen ***Rescues Change Lives*** for their conference raffle basket theme. The contents will include a dog bed filled with all kinds of dog paraphernalia and books provided by board members and assembled by Carolyn Kelly. If you attend the KSRA Conference in Seven Springs (October 22<sup>nd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup>), stop by the hospitality table and take your chance on this doggone good deal! CCRA receives a percentage of the tickets sold.

### **Calling All Chester County Teachers ...**

Do you love books? Do you love to read recently published books to your students? A good way to do that is to participate in the Keystone to Reading Elementary Book Awards so that your students can be involved in voting for a winner!

The Keystone to Reading Elementary Book Award has as its purpose to stimulate the reading of a variety of recently published trade books to or by students in Preschool through Grade 6. Participants are asked to read at least four of the books from the level that is most appropriate for their grade. Teachers can participate individually, as a grade level, or as a school. We ask for commitment by completing a participation form by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. The students vote for their favorite, and teachers submit the results to the committee chairs by March 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **CCRA Preschool Book Project**

**By Mary Ann Mallory**

Chester County non-public preschools responded well to CCRA's invitation to participate in their annual Preschool Book Project during the 2015-2016 school year. The committee took the grasshopper green book bags to twenty-three sites in Chester County, which included 6 Head Start centers. Over seven hundred fifty children voted for their favorite of the 7 books. When those votes were tallied with the others across the state, the winning book in the preschool category for the **Keystone to Reading Book Award** was **Number One Sam** by Greg Pizzoli.

A special thank you to committee members, Jean Kerrigan, Mary Lee Meacham, Carolyn Kelly, Pat Bove, Jane Schultz, Mary Ann Mallory, Glendia Kennedy, Ro Batson, Bunny Sitcoff, and Rose Cappelli, for delivering and recovering the book bags. It was heartening to see the engagement of our youngest Chester Countians as they listened to and commented on the introductory stories shared by our volunteer CCRA readers.

The co-chairs have met to outline the preschool book project for the coming school year. They are most grateful to the **Greater West Chester Sunrise Rotary Club Foundation** for honoring their application for a grant. The monies received will be used to the purchase sets of the

nominated **Keystone to Reading** preschool books for 2016-2017. The book sets will be donated to each of the participating Chester County Head Start Centers and will become part of each center's permanent collection. The children will now be able to revisit these wonderful stories throughout the school year long after they have cast their votes for a personal favorite book. Thus, as Holding Carter has said, we are giving our children "**roots and wings**".

## Children's Literacy Project By Jean Kerrigan

The Children's Literacy Project is one of two special projects ongoing in our CCRA Community Involvement. The project came into being through a wish by Friends' Shelter in West Chester to have "new" books for children arriving at the shelter and especially upon leaving the shelter. At times Community Volunteers in Medicine and St. Agnes's Dorothy Day Room have also received donations from this source. We are open to adding other charitable organizations which need books. If you know of any such need, please inform Jean Kerrigan or anyone on the board. Include a paper with your name and phone number and the name of the organization (and a contact person and phone number, if you know them).

This project has been funded in part by grants from KSRA and largely by allocations from CCRA and occasionally by donations from individuals. Recently Janet Wong, author of children's poetry books, donated some of her poetry books and books of Chinese culture to this cause. Mary Ann Mallory, Corresponding Secretary of CCRA, has donated a goodly number of her very gently used personal books that she read to students. If you can spare any such books, we would be grateful. If you have none to spare, perhaps you would be willing to buy a book to donate. That would be wonderful! The greatest need is for books for pre-school and early grades K, 1, and 2. We accept books from preschool board and other books to grade 5. Just bring the book to the next program (or the following one). We will have a designated spot where you can place the books. Include a notebook sheet with your name and email address so that we can acknowledge your gift.

If you are interested in helping with this project, please let Jean Kerrigan or any board member know and leave a note with your name and phone number so that Jean can contact you. Mainly the need is for people to examine the books to make sure that they are able to be categorized as "new, and then level the book, and place stickers in the book. If there is a name in the book that can be covered by a Happy Reading sticker, we can categorize the book as "new." If not, we have other organizations which accept used materials. Most work can be done in daytime or evening, depending on your availability. The other need is for delivery of books. That takes some stamina and is done in the daytime. In either case you would work only about once per month at most.

We hope you will consider offering a book or your time to this effort. If you have any questions about this project, contact Jean Kerrigan at [jakvma3@comcast.net](mailto:jakvma3@comcast.net) or at 610-431-4921.

## CCRA District Partnership Program

By Mary Ann Mallory

Once again the twelve public school districts in Chester County, as well as the Intermediate Unit's non-public school division, have been invited to participate in CCRA's District Partnership Program. For a nominal fee a district can purchase either 5 or 10 coupons for each of the 4 general membership meetings being offered during the 2016-2017 school year, and distribute them to their teachers who are not members of CCRA.

This program encourages teachers to come and see what great adventures in learning and professional development are available to them at one or more of our general membership meetings. Over the past years some teachers attending a meeting with a partnership ticket (which enables them to come free of charge in most instances) decided to invest in individual memberships. Often **Reading Matters** is in attendance to offer teachers the opportunity to purchase up to the minute professional development materials and/or excellent children's books.

This year we are welcoming back several former participating school districts to this program, and hope that some others will take the partnership plunge for the first time. Each of our meetings awards those in attendance ACT 48 hours upon the submission of PPID numbers. All CCRA meetings are held at the Chester County Intermediate Unit on Boot Road in Downingtown. Two meetings a year are after school, and two meetings a year are held on Saturday mornings. What better way to refresh, learn, and engage with other Chester County teachers? The coupons will be sent to participating districts in time for our opening meeting on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> featuring Michael Williams, immediate Past President of KSRA. His topic will be *Motivating Boys to Read*. I know that partnership is a win-win endeavor for CCRA and the area school districts that choose to participate.

## A Special Offer for Retirees

By Rose Cappelli, CCRA Past President

Have you recently retired, or are you planning to retire soon? If so, you are probably sifting through a lifetime's accumulation of teaching materials, deciding what to keep, what to discard, and what to pass along to a colleague. You might also be thinking about your affiliations with professional organizations such as CCRA and KSRA, wondering whether or not those memberships will continue to serve you in your retirement years.

What are the benefits of remaining an active member of CCRA and KSRA? First of all, you have devoted many years to helping students become literate human beings because you care about them and the future. It's not that you haven't stopped caring, it's just that you want more time to pursue some personal goals. CCRA and KSRA were established, in part, to promote reading as a life-long habit, and to support research and effective instruction in literacy through advocacy and quality professional development for teachers. Your membership will help to ensure that these goals continue to provide benefits to students locally and across the state.

Perhaps you are considering keeping a hand in teaching by doing some tutoring. As a seasoned educator, you might even be asked to provide advice to parents (who may be your own

children) or beginning teachers on literacy issues. If so, you will want to remain current on best teaching practices and relevant research. Through our informative programs, newsletters, and conferences, CCRA and KSRA can help you do that.

In retirement, you may be looking for ways to give back to your community. Membership in CCRA can also offer a variety of volunteer opportunities. You can read to preschool students, help assemble book baskets for less fortunate families, or gather and deliver reading materials for use in public places. You might even consider becoming a member of CCRA's Board of Directors. Many of our current board members are retirees who continue to advocate for literacy.

But perhaps most importantly, remaining active in CCRA and KSRA will provide continuing contact with friends and colleagues who care about literacy and helping children grow in their love of learning.

**Still not sure? To help you with your decision, CCRA is offering a free one year membership renewal to first year retirees. Take a year to think about how maintaining your CCRA/KSRA membership can help you continue to reach students and remain a loyal supporter of literacy in Pennsylvania. What have you got to lose?**

**(To take advantage of this opportunity, please contact CCRA Treasurer Jane Schultz when your membership renewal is due.)**



"So a metaphor is a simile, but a simile is like a metaphor minus 'like' or 'as?'"

**Scroll down for the first two program flyers on pages 11 and 12...**

# Chester County Reading Association

Presents

## Michael Williams

### *“Motivating Boys to Read”*

Saturday, September 17, 2016

9:00 am-12:00 pm (Registration begins at 8:30)

Chester County Intermediate Unit



Join us for a morning of learning and inspiration with KSRA Past President, Michael Williams. Michael teaches second grade in the Central Dauphin School District where he gets students, especially boys, interested in reading through book clubs. He has presented on this topic at state and local councils and organizations.

CCRA Members/District Partner Ticket Holders	No Cost
Full-Time Undergraduate Students	\$5
Non-Members	\$10

**Please RSVP by Nov. 3, 2016 to Jane Vardaro at [jvardaro1@comcast.net](mailto:jvardaro1@comcast.net).  
Remember to include your PPID# if you want Act 48 credit.**

Questions? Contact Lynne Dorfman at [lynnedorfman@comcast.net](mailto:lynnedorfman@comcast.net).

# Chester County Reading Association

Presents

## Author Nancy Viau

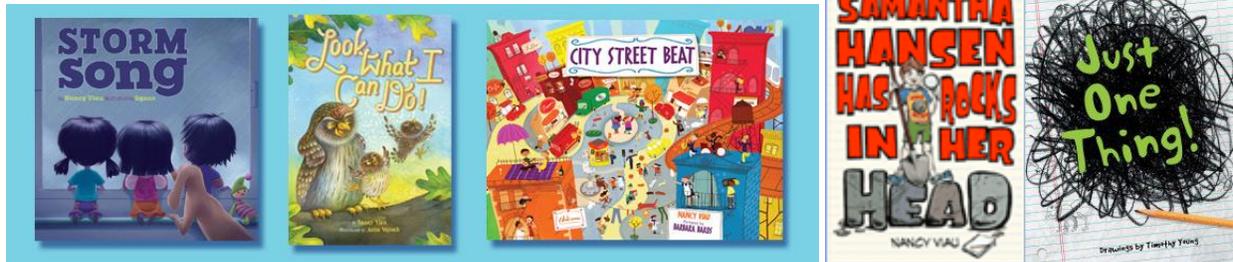
Thursday, Nov. 10, 2016

5:00-7:00 (Registration begins at 4:30)

Chester County Intermediate Unit



Nancy is the author of three picture books and two middle grade novels.



Please join us for a fun afternoon as Nancy introduces us to her books and talks about her writing process.

CCRA Members/District Partner Ticket Holders	No Cost
Full-Time Undergraduate Students	\$5
Non-Members	\$10

**Please RSVP by Nov. 3, 2016 to Jane Vardaro at [jvardaro1@comcast.net](mailto:jvardaro1@comcast.net).  
Remember to include your PPID# if you want Act 48 credit.**

Questions? Contact Lynne Dorfman at [lynnedorfman@comcast.net](mailto:lynnedorfman@comcast.net).