

Media Connections



January 2010

Volume 10, No. 1

A Message From Your President “Ten for Ten”

By Kelly Brannock

It's 2010, so *drum roll, please*.... here are Kelly's **Top Ten reasons for being a member of NCSLMA** (forgive me David Letterman!).

1. There are lots of freebies at the annual conference... I always come back from the NCSLMA conference with a nifty supply of pocket fans, pens, CD case openers, notepads, posters, stress balls, and other assorted and sundry stuff (not to mention a brand new conference tote bag)! When I pile it up on my desk, it doesn't look like much, but it magically transforms into treasure when I get to give it away. I also enjoy the free advice I get from vendors who are anxious to build relationships and make new sales. Hurray for the exhibit hall and all the vendors who support our annual conference!

2. Your students get to share in the fun of special reading programs . . .like Battle of the Books, NC Children's Book Award, and our newest award program, the YA Book Award. You can create a lot of buzz about reading by involving students in the various book award programs that NCSLMA sponsors. And of all the ways that kids can shine, how great that you can offer them a way to be recognized for being a reader!

Now multiply the impact at your school times the *many* NC schools & students that enjoy these programs . . . WOW-za!

3. You get to participate in awesome professional development programs . . . like AASL's Fall Forum, Leadership Institute and the PROPEL program. At least 30 NCSLMA members have received grants of up to \$1,000 to travel out of state to attend the AASL Fall Forum. (I'm not math-smart, but that sounds like \$30,000 to me!) Many more members participated in the awesome AASL Leadership Institutes sponsored by NCSLMA. And for those in the west, NCSLMA members helped to develop the Library of Congress/American Memory PROPEL program in which participants became certified as Primary Source Specialists.

4. We recognize excellence and support our profession through scholarships & awards . . . I'll admit it – I'm a baby boomer and my clock is running down as a member of the school librarian workforce. Even so, I LOVE my work and I know that I have the best job ever. I'm really proud that our organization offers scholarships to assist students in becoming new certified school library media coordinators. (This

“Ten for Ten” Continued...

spring we hope to offer student membership in NCSLMA to help those new school librarians get off on the right foot. Watch for information about the student membership coming soon.)

5. You can get seed money for new library programs that support reading and research . . . the Read2Succeed and Action Research Grant programs are just 2 ways that NCSLMA supports excellence and innovation with real dollars. Read2Succeed has been a powerful force for innovation for several years and now this year we’ve awarded our first-ever action research grant. Who’s got a great idea that needs a little sponsorship? If you do, NCSLMA may be your ticket to ride!

6. You hear from seasoned leaders like Gerry Solomon & the other talented folks at DPI . . . Gerry is a liaison to our organization and attends every NCSLMA Executive Board meeting. Not only does she share information with us but she advocates for school library media programs and provides valuable professional development, like the current Big 6 training initiative, to school districts across the state. And we all get to see Gerry & her cohorts in action at the many *quality* sessions they offer at the NCSLMA annual conference.

7. You get to spend time with other people who understand what you do . . . I have the best memories about NCSLMA conference because it’s the one time of the year when I can spend time with other media specialist friends. What could be more fun than being squished in a carful of friends as you drive around Charlotte at night looking for a great (AKA open, tasty & cheap) place to eat?! Time spent at the NCSLMA conference is time well-spent in extended conversation with other professionals who really understand and appreciate your day-to-day challenges.

8. You have the backing of strong professional allies . . . NCSLMA is a member of the AASL Affiliate Assembly and 2 of our state leaders represent us as delegates to the Assembly each year. While AASL advocates for school libraries nationally, here at home we benefit from the efforts of NCSLMA’s Legislative Chair, Marti Williams, who goes to Raleigh and to Washington D.C. to promote school library programs. Check out the Advocacy Toolkits on the NCSLMA website for more evidence of the alliances we share!

9. You get and give inspiration . . . from peers working together to elevate our profession and help our students be their best. Long-time NCSLMA Board members like Marti, Jackie, and Deb as well as newbies on the Executive Board like Jennifer, Tammy, and Brita have heard the call and stepped up to make an impact on the learning that goes on in school libraries across North Carolina.

And the number one reason for being a member of NCSLMA . . .

10. You get (and become) a life-ring for staying afloat in the fast moving current of 21st century information! . . . is there a better and/or a more challenging time to be a library media specialist?! I count on my professional organization to help me stay afloat in a rapidly changing information world. One of the most helpful professional activities I’ve engaged in during the past year is to develop a personal learning network (PLN). My PLN keeps me afloat, offers me a lifeline to hold onto when I need it, and encourages me to “hang ten”. My hope is that every NCSLMA member can find a PLN to call their own.

I encourage you to **connect** with others; **learn** -- to keep up and stay ahead of the wave; and then **lead**, whether it's from your corner of the school, the state, or the globe! Look for other professionals you can follow on Twitter, use Facebook for building professional as well as personal contacts, or become a member of the TeacherLibrarian Network. At the very least, *subscribe to the NCSLMA List-serve* so that you can be an active part of this exciting organization. I can't wait to hear about the waves you've been riding!

Here are some lifelines – I encourage you to reach out and grab one (they're free, so take two!) . . .

NCSLMA website: <http://www.ncslma.org>

new NCSLMA blog: "Hanging Out in the Library" @ <http://ncslma.blogspot.com>

NCSLMA on Facebook. <http://www.facebook.com> Search for us as NC School Library Media Association

Find & follow some of your library media heroes on Twitter! <http://www.twitter.com> Joyce Valenza? She's on there. Doug Johnson? He's on Twitter. David Warlick? He twitters too. Twitter is awesome for professional learning!

Teacher-Librarian Network, a community of Teacher-Librarians and other educators, online at <http://teacherlibrarian.ning.com>

News from NCCBA

It was great fun to meet Nick Bruel at the NCSLMA mini conference in Charlotte during the AASL meeting. He was very excited about the 2009 picture book award and was gracious enough to sign many autographs after the session. He was also looking forward to several other stops in North Carolina, and Tennessee before heading back home to New York.

I hope everyone is busy sharing the new 2010 nominees with your students and staff as we gear up for the vote in March! Do not forget to access the fantastic activities booklet from the Bookhive site for some excellent ideas as you share the titles.

We have a brand new opportunity for you to share your own wonderful ideas! The committee has created a new Wiki site at: <http://nccbaactivityshare.wikispaces.com/> where you can post activities you use when sharing the NCCBA titles with your children. We look forward to hearing from you!

Remember, we are now accepting nominations for the 2011 contest through Bookhive, or in an email to Jane Deacle, or myself.

Lisa Foster England, MLIS

From your DPI Consultant, Gerry Soloman

If someone asks you what school libraries look like ten (or even five) years from now, what would you say? While it is impossible to predict the continuing evolution of our profession and our facilities, there are obvious, encroaching signs right now: e-books and electronic readers, virtual libraries, book discussions via social networking tools, and the library media center as a *learning commons* (see David Loertscher's wiki) <http://schoollearningcommons.pbworks.com/>

As professionals dedicated to serving our students and teachers, we must believe that we can continue to evolve and change as technologies and other forces continue to impact facilities and programs.

Tim Staal said it well in the [Blue Skunk Blog](#) "We will always have a need for all kinds of media and a need for librarians / media specialists / informologists to help us learn about the advantages and disadvantages of each format and to help us find, organize, analyze, evaluate, use, synthesize and apply the information found in the sources. We also need the space in libraries to work, collaborate, organize, etc."

So how do you keep up with new technology resources that you can share with students and teachers in your learning commons? Here are a few sites that may be helpful.

LearnNC's *Instructify* page <http://instructify.com/>

Try subject tags such as Ask the Readers (e.g., teaching with Twitter), blogging, creativity (e.g., XTranormal's text-to-movie application), data (e.g., Poll Everywhere), problem solving (e.g., Lure of the Labyrinth math game), screencast, and so much more.

Joyce Valenza's *NeverEndingSearch* blog <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/blog/1340000334.html>

Joyce never seems to sleep and writes constantly about the latest technology applica-

tions that media coordinators can use with students to support information literacy.

Free Technology for Teachers blog <http://www.freetech4teachers.com/> Descriptions of Web 2.0 tools and suggestions for using them

ActivityVine <http://activityvine.com/> A safer social networking site for students and teachers. Includes groups for after school, book clubs, drama clubs, etc.

The fast pace of new technologies can be overwhelming for adults, and most school media centers function within challenging constraints. In a *Blue Skunk Blog* post, Doug Johnson's friend and colleague, Mary Mehsikomer, writes:

"There will always be economic problems. We will never, ever have enough resources in our schools to do everything that needs to be done. There will always be politics, policies and work rules that interfere. But what we do have is the creativity, excitement, and passion...So engage. In whatever way works for you. You only have the kids 30 minutes a week. So make the most of those 30 minutes...Just please, please don't hide in your media center and wait for the world to come to you. There is no longer a choice." You may want to read the entire post at:

<http://doug-johnson.squarespace.com/blue-skunk-blog/2009/11/16/you-no-longer-have-a-choice-guest-post-mary-mehsikomer.html>

A suggestion I have heard is not to feel that you have to do it all (we can't all be Joyce Valenzas), but you can focus on getting comfortable using one new technology resource with your students. If all the teachers in your school each specialized in one tech resource think of the possibilities for mentoring each other through the ever-changing landscape of digital literacy!

News from NC YA

The YA book award is a new youth book award which originated at 2007 NCSLMA conference when Mary Jane Crumm led a session for those interested in promoting reading to the middle and upper grade levels. Studies have consistently shown that interest in reading begins to wane in the middle school years. We wanted to find a way to capture and retain these readers and we felt the best way to encourage reading at this level was to involve the students and get their input. The huge success of the Children's book award led us to use their program as a model for a new book award aimed at the young adult audience. The YA book award encourages critical reading by allowing students to vote on and nominate books they believe are the "best" books for their age level. We invite all NC middle and high school media specialists to advertise the award to their students and encourage participation across the state.

Our middle and high school lists offer ten great books which have so far been extremely popular with middle grade and YA readers. This year, each list also includes a book written by a local author. Alan Gratz, who resides in Western NC, is the author of *Something Rotten*, a detective novel based on Shakespeare's Hamlet. The middle school list includes *The Forest of Hands and Teeth*, a post apocalyptic zombie romance by Carrie Ryan, a native South Carolinian who now resides in Charlotte, NC. If you have ever wondered about the history of zombies or the writing process Ms. Ryan is a wealth of information and her presentations are engaging for both teachers and students.

Last year's winner for the middle grade category, Allan Wolf, presented at NCSLMA's Rev Up Session prior to AASL. Mr. Wolf, who is a resident of Asheville, expressed his gratitude to North Carolina's school librarians for championing his book and for encouraging young people to love reading through the promotion of this award. *Zane's Trace*, the novel-in-verse that took home top honors in the middle

grades category last year, chronicles the manic, (nearly) cross country adventure of Zane Guesswind – a troubled high school student who becomes convinced that, by taking out his frustrations through a series of drawings on his walls, he has caused the death of his abusive grandfather. Mr. Wolf is also available for lively and engaging, curriculum focused presentations/workshops and can be contacted through his website: <http://www.allanwolf.com>

If you would like more information on these authors, the NC YA book award or have any questions about this award please see our web site <http://sites.google.com/site/ncslmayabookaward/> or find us on the NCSLMA web page <http://www.ncslma.org/BookCompetitions/YAaward/NCSLMAYAaward.htm>.

Professional Opportunities

The K12 Online Conference was launched December 1-18th. It was archived for your perusal. This year's keynote speaker was school librarian Joyce Valenza. <http://k12onlineconference.org/>

News from the Capitol Region Society for Technology in Education.

The 2010 CRSTE CyberConvention is scheduled for Feb21-March 5, 2010. Interested in submitting a proposal? See <http://crste.org/callforpresenters.html>

Media Connections
NCSLMA
514 Daniels St., #130
Raleigh, NC 27605

Presorted Standard
US POSTAGE PAID
Permit #212
Hickory, NC



www.ncslma.org

Inside this Issue

President's Message
by Kelly Brannock

NCCBA News
from Lisa England

DPI News
from Gerry Solomon

NC YA News
from Jennifer LaGarde and
Brita Mann

Professional Opportunities
from Ernie Cox