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The Electronic Newsletter of the New York State Reading Association

June - August 2020

Volume 16, Issue 10

Editor: Sandi Kurbiel

NYSED Contributing Editor: Kristen Driskill



Issues are published every month except for December-January and June-August combined ISSUES. (Above image from GoogleImages and Pinterest)

Don't forget, now you can become a friend to NYSRA on Facebook! Have you?
Thanks to all who contributed their time and expertise to our issue this month!

**** For all email addresses, please delete the space after the @ sign to email the recipient.**

Inside: NYSRA & Legislative News by Sandi Kurbiel; NYSED News by Kristen Driskill; & Literacy News/Links of Interest by Sandi Kurbiel

NYSRA and Legislative News

A Message from Thea Yurkewecz, our NYSRA President:

Greetings, Everyone!

The month of June marks the end of my term as President of the New York State Reading Association. Thank you to my executive board, the board of directors, the assembly of delegates, and all the members of this organization for making my term as President rewarding.

I am proud to be a member of the NYSRA community, and learn from change agents in the field who volunteer their time and energy for this organization and its members. I attended my first New York State Reading Association Conference in 2012 and later became involved in my local council (Albany City Area). My interest in NYSRA started small and grew over time because of the welcoming volunteers who value the history and mission of this organization. This past year, I served as both President of this organization and co-chair of the NYSRA conference alongside Dr. Elizabeth Yanoff. I am forever grateful for the friendships and knowledge I have gained through this organization. I also hope my journey inspires others to get involved. This could be serving on a local council's committee, becoming an officer, or supporting councils as a regional director. It could be proposing a workshop or attending a meeting at the local level. It is your help that will continue to make NYSRA and our local councils provide fantastic resources and networking.

This past year we have dealt with many celebrations and challenges. Our goal is to design learning opportunities that meet our professional needs and the needs of our students. Thank you to everyone who helped transition our meetings online, promote resources for remote instruction, and transition the annual face-to-face conference to online workshops.

I'm excited to end my term with the launch of our new NYSRA website in July. Please look for email updates as we showcase this website to feature content and resources more accessible to our members and the wider community. We also plan to host fall online professional workshops using this website. The conference planning team will share this information with everyone soon.

During this time, there is a lot to be thankful for, and we appreciate everyone who supports this organization's mission and values. I'm thankful for your membership, outreach, and dedication to the New York State Reading Association.

Best,

Thea Yurkewecz, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor; NBCT
President of the NYS Reading Association
State University of New York at Geneseo

Conference 2020 Update

by Mary Miller

While NYNPA Conference 2020 has been cancelled as a traditional in-person experience, the committee has been working to organize virtual professional development opportunities for NYSRA members. So far, we have scheduled 90-minute presentations with Q&A with Dr. Donna Scanlon on October 15, beginning at 7:15 pm, another with Cornelius Minor on November 13, also starting at 7:17 pm, and a third session with Zoi Philipokos in December (exact date and time yet to be determined).

These sessions will be available free to members of NYSRA or any of our NYS local affiliates, and are \$40 each for non-members. We will let you know when registration is open and active on the updated NYSRA website. The digital literacy committee is hoping to make the site active to all members sometime very soon. With any luck, we'll be hosting our next in-person conference at the Rochester Regency Hyatt in Rochester in November 2021. We'll keep you posted on our plans as they develop.

President-Elect Message

by Mary Miller

I'd like to thank Thea Yurkewecz for her tireless dedication as President of NYSRA for 2019-2020! Thea has gracefully handled many challenges, including co-coordinating the NYSRA 2019 Conference at Albany Capital Center with co-coordinator, Liz Yanoff, redesigning the NYSRA website, which will be revealed very soon, and helping to organize virtual resources to assist members with distance learning. Thea has been a great mentor, and I'm happy she'll be around to assist me as I take on the responsibility as President of NYSRA, effective July 1. If any of you have ideas or suggestions as we move forward this year, don't hesitate to reach out. I can be reached at President@nysreading.org.

NIE Update

by Mary Miller

Every month the NYNPA produces a stand-alone 4 column by 10-inch educational feature. These monthly features are available for free.

This month's features include two that can be used in June and July. One highlights **Lightning Safety Awareness** and the other promotes **NYS Summer Reading** - especially challenged by COVID-19. These and the additional features for Flag Day 6/14, Juneteenth 6/19, and the United States Census from previous years can be requested free of via email, by contacting Mary Miller at mmiller@nynpa.com or call 518-449-1667 x 701.

To preview these images, please go to <https://nynpa.com/nie/MonthlyNIEFeatures.html>.

NYSRA Charlotte Award

by Sharon Kelly

Charlotte Award 2021 Ballot Wants Readers



Read as many books from each ballot as you can. You do not need to read all the books on the ballot. Vote on one ballot or all the ballots, but you may only vote once on each ballot. Some upper grade titles contain adult issues. Please consider what is personally appropriate before reading. Voting ends April 15, 2021. Log onto this online survey and vote for your favorite:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1k6L7uGdi6XkTUFHfrIb3OrdhUicND7htLN-EM9InUuY>



The Charlotte Award Committee 2021 has put together some great book reviews for some of the books that are on the ballot. If you find something that is interesting, why not pick it up the book at the library or online and read it?

Remember that when you are ready to vote, go to <https://www.nysreading.org/content/nysra-charlotte-award-2021>.

Primary Ballot

***Fruit Bowl* by Mark Hoffman**

The book *Fruit Bowl*, by Mark Hoffman, provides hours of engaged participatory reading activities for students. This book personifies fruit as it is being unpacked and put away by a child, and the conversation is shown through speech bubbles above each character (although the human faces are never shown as the focus remains on the fruit). Students adore picking out characters, and even the least-motivated to read aloud was jumping at the chance to show off their voice for the tomato or the wise old raisin. This educational reading experience provides information on how fruits are grown and what designates them to be a fruit or vegetable, as the characters work together to classify and put away the tomato. An exciting perk for adult participants includes the puns on fruit and vegetable names that emerge in some character one-liners, which could open more doors to teaching and exploring new topics.

Reviewed by Rebecca Benjamin

***Elmore* by Holly Hobbie**

Elmore is a sweet porcupine who spends all his time alone. Poor Elmore becomes sad over time leading him to wonder why he has no true friendships. He eventually finds out the reason no one wants to be around him. It is due to his beautiful but sharp quills that can poke anyone at any time. Elmore does not give up easily, though, and devises a plan that could solve all his problems. The soft and charming illustrations mirror the sentiments in the story extremely well. This short story may engage readers in a discussion to define what is a friendship, and how people who are different can become friends.

Reviewed by Salamah Mulle

Intermediate Ballot

***Write On, Irving Berlin* by Leslie Kimmelman, and illustrated by David C. Gardner**

Who wrote “God Bless America” and “White Christmas?” Yes, it was Irving Berlin, first known as Israel Isidore Baline. The book *Write On, Irving Berlin*, by Leslie Kimmelman, and illustrated by David C. Gardner, tells the about the life of this famous songwriter. Irving started his life by being persecuted for being Jewish in Russia, and flees with his parents and 5 siblings to America in 1893. He was described by his teachers as “He daydreams too much... And he sings to himself.” Irving was drafted into the Army during World War I and was encouraged to write songs to entertain his fellow soldiers. Even when WWII broke out, Irving Berlin was too old to go to war, but went and entertained the troops while overseas. If you want to find out about how this Jewish man made a name for himself using music in America, and how generous a man he was, read this beautifully illustrated book.

Reviewed by Sharon Kelly

High School Ballot

***Fatal Throne: The Wives of Henry VIII Tell All* by M.T. Anderson, Jennifer Donnelly, Candace Fleming, Stephanie Hemphill, Deborah Hopkinson, Linda Sue Park, Lisa Ann Sandell**

Exposing the sultry extravagance of King Henry the VIII’s rule, mixed with the fatal flaws of each of his wives, *Fatal Throne: The Wives of Henry VIII Tell All* crafts the tyrannical tales of Henry and his wives through a myriad of female perspectives. One of these female perspectives with roots to our very own New York State, Jennifer Donnelly, voices the perspective of Anna of Cleves. These iconic and infamous romances drive the plot as Henry, voiced by M.T. Anderson, strives to produce a male heir to his throne – third time’s a charm? Not so much. The voices of these varying perspectives provide a unique style for each chapter, gently urging readers to linger just a bit longer, just one more chapter. The intertwining of history and drama are truly lovely in *Fatal Throne: The Wives of Henry VIII Tell All*, a captivating read for high school students and adults alike.

Reviewed by Courtney McCreddie

Charlotte Book Titles:

** denotes nonfiction titles

Primary Ballot

Can I Be Your Dog? by Troy Cummings

Crunch, the Shy Dinosaur by Ciroco Dunlap

Elmore by Holly Hobbie

Fruit Bowl by Mark Hoffmann

Grumpy Monkey by Suzanne Lang

Imagine That! Let Your Mind Run Wild by Yasmeen Ismail

Moon: A Peek-Through Picture Book by Britta Teckentrup**

No More Noisy Nights by Holly L. Niner

What Will Grow? by Jennifer Ward**

Windows by Julia Denos**

Intermediate Ballot

Annie's Life in Lists by Kristen Mahoney

Exact Location of Home by Kate Messner

The First Men Who Went to the Moon by Rhonda Gowler Greene**

The Heart and Mind of Frances Pauley by April Stevens

My Brigadista Year by Katherine Paterson

RA the Mighty Cat Detective by A.B. Greenfield

Rickety Stitch and the Gelatinous Goo by Ben Costa & James Parks

Sticky Notes by Dianne Touchell

Stuck in the Stone Age by Geoff Rodkey

Write on, Irving Berlin! by Leslie Kimmelman**



Middle School Ballot

The Gone Away Place by Christopher Barzak

Just Under the Clouds by Melissa Sarno

Life in a Fishbowl by Len Viahos

The Lifters by Dave Eggers

The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl by Stacy McAnulty

The Names They Gave Us by Emery Lord

Out of Wonder: Poems Celebrating Poets by Kwame Alexander

Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag by Rob Sanders**

The Science of Breakable Things by Tae Keller

Slider by Pete Hautman

High School Ballot

Ahgottahandleonit by Donovan Mixon

Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card by Sara Saedi

The Beauty That Remains by Ashley Woodfolk

Fatal Throne: The Wives of Henry VIII Tell All by M.T. Anderson, Jennifer Donnelly, Candace Fleming, Stephanie Hemphill, Deborah Hopkinson, Linda Sue Park, Lisa Ann Sandell

Jaya and Rasa: A Love Story by Sonia Patel

Neverworld Wake by Marisha Pessi

Second In Command by Sandi Van

Tess of the Road by Rachel Hartman

The Walls Have Ears: A Black Spy in the Confederate White House by Hope Irvin Marston

The Window by Amelia Brunskill



So read these fantastic books, and then vote which book in each category or in one category. Then vote at

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1k6L7uGdi6XkTUFHfrib3OrdhUicND7htLN-EM9lnUuY/viewform?edit_requested=true

NYSRA Awards 2020

by Kirsten Burke Smith

NYSRA Vice President, 2019-2020

A promotional graphic for the NYSRA Awards 2020. The background is a light blue color. In the top right corner, there is a red and white striped beach umbrella. In the center, there is a large, irregular yellow shape that looks like a splash or a cloud. Inside this yellow shape, the text "NYSRA AWARDS 2020!" is written in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. Above this, in smaller red capital letters, it says "NOMINATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED UNTIL AUGUST 1, 2020 FOR". Below the main title, in red capital letters, it asks "DO YOU KNOW A DESERVING SUPPORTER OF LITERACY?". Further down, also in red capital letters, it says "THE NEW YORK STATE READING ASSOCIATION OFFERS 11 AMAZING AWARDS TO ITS MEMBERS. CHECK OUT THE AWARDS PACKET ON OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS." At the bottom of the yellow shape, in black capital letters, it says "VISIT OUR WEBSITE: NYSREADING.ORG". Below the yellow shape, in black capital letters, it says "FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS: NYSRAAWARDS@GMAIL.COM". There are also two donut-like shapes: a red one on the left and a yellow one on the right, both with white outlines and shadows.

NOMINATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED
UNTIL AUGUST 1, 2020 FOR

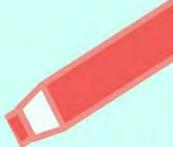
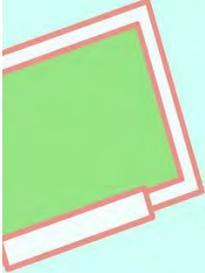
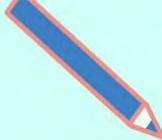
NYSRA AWARDS 2020!

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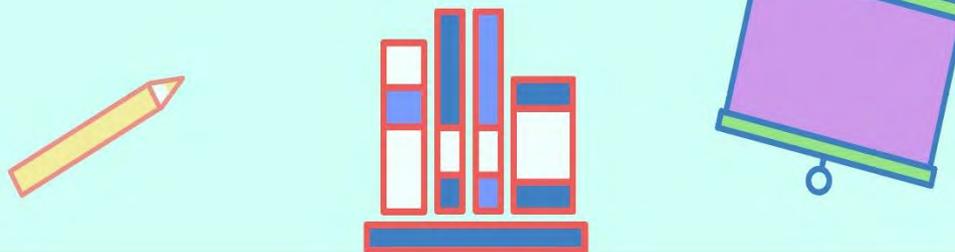


NYSRA AWARDS 2020



Applications accepted until 8/1/2020.
For more information or questions:
NYSRAawards@gmail.com

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.NYSREADING.ORG



Do you know someone who is deserving of recognition for promoting or supporting literacy? Does your local council have noteworthy initiatives, or individuals that have helped boost membership, participation, or great programming? Do you promote diversity in your literacy instruction? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions – please consider applying for a NYSRA award or mini-grant.

Applications are being accepted for the New York State Reading Association 2020 awards cycle. There are 11 incredible honors offered to members of NYSRA. The awards and mini-grants are designed to encompass a variety of members for their contribution to literacy in their schools, communities, or state-wide. There are grants for educators, community service leaders, graduate students, local literacy advocates, council initiatives, etc.

This year, applications must be emailed to NYSRAAwards@gmail.com. The deadline for applications has been extended to August 1, 2020, but it is never too early to get your submission into us. Please also feel free to use this email for further information on awards, or any other questions you might have.



Please visit <https://www.nysreading.org/content/awards-and-grants> , or hover over the QR code here with your smartphone’s camera for details and the full awards packet.

Advocacy News, June 2020 BOD

by Barbara Vokatis, Ph.D.
NYSRA Advocacy Chair

COVID-19 Outbreak Alternative Ways of Supporting Students

To help K-12 teachers incorporate remote learning during this time of emergency, SUNY Oneonta created a special website to provide this support. The website is <http://remoteEd.org/>. The website has weekly events to help teachers, leaders, and school stay connected and support one another.

Other resources include the following:

- PBS educational programming: <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-and-new-yorks-public-television-stations-announce-expanded>
- a new [Continuity of Learning website](#) launched by NYSED, featuring resources to provide districts and teachers with increased options to keep students engaged in learning
- the New York State Museum for [Virtual Field Trips](#) every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 1:00 p.m. (EDT)
- Site about incorporating virtual field trips: https://knilt.arcc.albany.edu/Incorporating_Virtual_Field_Trips?fbclid=IwAR0P5D6QsqMcifb_DcSB7YDIOJhqpDdUQcnT4qcr8ntPxewua5AzjIS-obU

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance on School Reopening

The CDC recommendations are voluntary. They include calling for adults to wear masks, recommending them for students in areas where social distancing isn't possible, and calling for students to stay in small classroom cohorts throughout the day and for cafeterias to remain closed.

Link to the CDC guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf>

Dyslexia Legislation

Link that includes the currently used definition of dyslexia:

<https://www.medicinenet.com/dyslexia/article.htm>

Both senate and assembly bills made it to the respective education committee and have remained there as matters related to Covid-19 are prioritized. We continue to encourage members to comment to their local legislators before the bill is introduced and voted in in the New York State.

Link to the proposed legislation:

https://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A08697&term=2019&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Committee%26nbspVotes=Y&Floor%26nbspVotes=Y&Memo=Y&Text=Y

Link to the site listing assemblymen and senators:

<https://www.aqeny.org/find-your-new-york-state-legislators/>

The following points discussed in Dr. Donna Scanlon’s presentation on this topic at the NYSRA conference in November 2019 could be considered in comments to legislators. Dr. Donna Scanlon is a professor at the University at Albany and Director of Child Research and Study Center. Her research focuses on children who experience substantial difficulty in learning to read and on how to prevent and remediate these difficulties. She also leads “Early Literacy Leaders” (ELL) group. Currently, she considers a collaboration with NYSRA to write a letter to our legislators for consideration in connection to the proposed legislation.

The points on dyslexia legislation to consider:

- While dyslexia is defined as a disability with a neurobiological origin, it is impossible to determine whether a child’s reading difficulty is neurobiological or not (everything we do is neurobiological in origin – the question is whether the difficulties some children experience is due to underlying neurobiological differences or to experiential/instructional differences) .
- Word reading difficulties can occur for a variety of reasons, such as limited understanding of the workings of the alphabetic code, limited engagement in meaning making while reading, or limited oral language.

- Dyslexia screening is already required by many states but there is no broadly accepted way to identify someone as being at risk for or being dyslexic. In the research literature there is not a clear distinction between reading difficulties and dyslexia. The terms are used interchangeably.
- While there is no broadly accepted way to identify someone with dyslexia, the dyslexia legislation suggests that multi-sensory sequential phonics is the approach to choose for intervention. However, there is no evidence this approach is superior to other approaches to intervention for word reading difficulties. Research shows that improving in phonics skills alone does not result in improving comprehension (Torgesen et al., 2007).
- There are also potential risks associated with identifying children as dyslexic: lowered expectations and reduced sense of efficacy.

Further resources to consider regarding dyslexia legislation:

- A podcast interview Dr. Scanlon recorded several months ago:
- <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/interview-dr-donna-scanlon-dyslexia-reading-difficulties/id1448225801?i=1000444024572>
- A link to a recording of Joe Elliot's (first author of *The Dyslexia Debate*) talk for ACARC from September 2019 (<https://vimeo.com/364608773/4b7d8db0c7>) which is a powerful commentary on where things currently stand relative to dyslexia legislation and what we should be advocating for.
- It is also recommended to read the book by Julian (Joe) Elliot and Elena Grigorenko entitled *The Dyslexia Debate*.

New York State Education News

by Kristen Driskill

NYSED Contributing Editor

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

As you know, New York State is in a state of emergency regarding the outbreak of COVID-19. Both K-12 and higher education institutions across the state have been and remain closed. NYSED developed a website dedicated to providing information and guidance for P-12 schools, colleges, and universities, which you can access [here](#).

Here is a list of updates as of this month regarding the current crisis:

- [2020 elementary- and intermediate-level State assessments are suspended for the remainder of the school year.](#) This applies to the grades 3-8 ELA and Math assessments, Grade 4 and 8 science assessments, NYSESLAT, and NYSAA for grades 3-8.
- NYSED has [delayed the rollout of state assessments aligned to the grades 3-8 Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts \(ELA\) and Math](#) for one year, until Spring 2022. Similarly, alignment of state assessments to the NYS P-12 Science Learning Standards will begin Spring 2023.
- June 2020 administration of all NYS Regents exams has been cancelled. NYSED has provided guidance regarding everything having to do with graduation requirements, which can be seen [here](#). On May 26, 2020, NYSED released [an update](#) regarding Regents and graduation requirements.
- [The College Board has provided a few options for students taking AP exams.](#) Students can take a 45-minute online free-response exam, they have access to free resources up until the exam date, and if already registered for an exam they can choose to cancel at no charge.
- On April 6, NYSED released emergency regulations to ease the burden on all educators. You can read a summary of the regulations [here](#). A second series of regulations was released on May 4, which can be seen [here](#).
- [There is now a "Learn at Home" program available in partnership with NYSED and 9 public television stations.](#) As of March 23, students in grades pre-K through 12 have access to educational programming on PBS stations. Programming for grades Pre-k-4 will be on one station, and programming for grades 5-12 will be on another. They can be viewed for free over-the-air with an antenna or cable.
- [NYSED has released guidance for parents regarding COVID-19](#), which was last updated March 27.
- [NYSED has also released guidance for schools in response to COVID-19](#), which was updated March 18, and then [again updated](#) on April 27. To keep track of all subsequent updates and additional memos released, you can go [here](#).
- Earlier in March, guidance for [colleges and universities](#) was released.
- On May 21, 2020, NYSED released [an update](#) on school health examinations in light of COVID-19.
- NYSED has shared a resource as part of their #NYLearnsRemotely initiative for virtual field trips. The NYS Museum offers field trips every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 1:00 pm. You can access the resource [here](#).

Literacy News and Links of Interest

by Sandi Kurbiel

ReAD Editor

International Literacy Association Resources

The *International Literacy Association* (ILA) has numerous resources to help educators with online teaching during the COVID -19 pandemic.

Online Reading and Writing Apps

Find a list of 17 online reading and writing apps recommended by ILA's *ReadWriteThink* website.

Summer Reading Resources

Reading is the best way to keep students from falling behind over the summer, and can be a fun and safe form of entertainment when we are limited in where we can go right now. Find lots of ideas here, including reading challenges and other motivational suggestions.

Summer Reading at NYS Libraries

Read how libraries in NYS are handling the Covid-19 situation for summer reading, and the many opportunities for students.

Literacy News and Covid-19

Find the latest literacy news and articles on how Covid-19 is changing education, and how for some the emphasis on technology has been helpful.

Avoiding Teacher Burnout During the Pandemic

It isn't easy dealing with the many stresses of the pandemic, and it can be especially challenging to make the transition to all online teaching and all it entails. Find tips here.

Educator Resources from Adobe

Adobe has many innovative and creative apps and resources, free for teachers currently.

Resources for Learning at Home

Find some resources from *Reading Rockets* for the many students who are now at home. Several other additional articles and resources from other sources can be found [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Literacy Ideas for the Month of June

Find some ideas for noteworthy dates in the month of June here, including the birthday of beloved children's author Eric Carle on June 25 [here](#).