

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
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Chapbook...

Volume 36, Summer 2001

Quarterly Journal of the Children's Services Section
North Carolina Library Association



Chapbook... **Volume 36** **Summer 2001**
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A Message From The Chair...by Ann Burlingame

This will be my final article as Chair of the Children's Services Section. Serving on the CSS Board has been a most rewarding experience and I am very proud of the programs and services we achieved over the past two years.

In the beginning of my tenure, the CSS Board began to focus on ways to better publicize our mission and to clearly define our vision. Our priority was to once again begin publishing our quarterly newsletter, "Chapbook." Under the leadership of our Chapbook Editor, Loretta Talbert, we are now publishing the Chapbook in a new attractive format. I greatly appreciate the work that Loretta continues to invest in "Chapbook" and congratulate her on the professional and attractive newsletter she continues to produce.

The Board also had an interest in having a presence on the web. With the assistance of Diane Kester, NCLA Treasurer, we have created an attractive webpage which features information about the section, clearly defines our mission and includes the current issue of Chapbook.

We had a number of staff resign from the Board this past year and we regretted losing them. Pam Standhart, our NC

Libraries Representative, left to accept a position as a School Media Specialist and Tammy Baggett, one of our Directors, left the state.

We also had a number of additions to the Board. Loree Pennock, with the East Regional Branch of Cumberland County Libraries, filled the vacant Director position. Loree started working hard at her very first meeting and has coordinated our session at the Biennial Conference "Collection Development for YA's Catcher in the Rye, What Shall I Buy."

In June, Angela Boone, Youth Services Librarian at East Regional Library in Wake County, accepted the position as CSS's representative to NC Libraries. Angela has extensive experience serving youth and we look forward to having her on the CSS Board.

I also want to recognize the other members of our Board: Mel Burton, incoming Chair, Jo Ann Rodgers, Director, Jacky Miller, Treasurer/Secretary, Hannah Owen, Membership Rep, Sue Mellott, Para-Professional Liaison, Carol Laing Bylaws Rep, Jenny Barrett, NC Book Award Rep, and Loretta Talbert, Chapbook Editor. All of these people are committed to CSS and providing and promoting professional development experiences for those individuals working with children and young adults. I want to thank them for their enthusiasm and innovation over the past two years. It has been a rewarding experience to serve with this group of talented and motivated professionals.

Remember to mark your calendars for the 54th NCLA Biennial Conference on October 2nd-5th at the Benton Convention Center in Winston- Salem, NC. Conference Programs have been mailed to all members of NCLA and are also available at www.nclaonline.org. Read on to find out more information on the CSS Sessions. See you at the Conference!

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
54th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 2-5, 2001

m.c. benton convention & civic center
adam's mark hotel
winston-salem, nc

PROGRAMS FOR A NEW MILLENIUM

The breakfast speaker at the 2001 NCLA conference will be renowned children's book author, **Mary Calhoun**. Not many authors have had landmark books published for a couple generations. Mary Calhoun is one such author. I fondly remember a series of books about a girl's adventures in a small town and in a big old house starting with the title, *Katie John*. Later readers are attached to a series of picture books about a Siamese cat named Henry which started with *Cross-Country Cat*.

Our breakfast speaker is a very versatile author though, being the author of over fifty books. Some of her other titles are *Flood*, *The Hungry Leprechaun*, *While I Sleep*, and *Jack and the Whoopee Wind*. Coming in October 2001 is *A Shepherd's Gift* that will be available in a Spanish language edition. Look forward to *Henry the Christmas Cat* in 2002.

Mary Calhoun as a young mother made up stories for her two sons, Michael and Gregory, and soon she was writing the stories down. Now she lives near Steamboat Springs, Colorado with her husband, the Reverend Leon Wilkins. Mary wears many hats as Episcopal priest's wife, nature enthusiast, and storyteller, but she is never too busy to select the right words for her books. Mary Calhoun states, "A picture-book story is a portrayal of an inspiration. Its impact is conveyed in a very few words, combined with the illustrations. I try to put as much thought and effort into each of my stories as Shakespeare must have put into a sonnet."

We welcome **Sheila Anderson** as she comes back to North Carolina for a presentation called "*Collection Development for Yas: Catcher in the Rye, What Shall I Buy?*" which the YA Roundtable of the Public Library Section will cosponsor.

The State Library of North Carolina will tell about its Internet portal for children with the tentative title, "*Start Squad: Learn More about the State Library's Kids' Portal*".

Plans are underway for a panel that will discuss school and public library cooperation to be cosponsored by CSS and New Members Roundtable.

Bring money for presents for your friends, colleagues, and relatives since the CSS notecards will be on sale at the great price of \$6.00 a box!

More details will be available later on the NCLA website and the conference mailing. See you in Winston-Salem in October!

Submitted by Mel Burton, Information Specialist, Children's Dept.,
North County Regional Library/PLCMC

FROM THE STATE LIBRARY

By Jim Rosinia, State

Library Youth Consultant

Work continues this summer on the Kids' Portal, which is scheduled for release at the beginning of the school year. As I described in the last issue, this web-based resource will feature links to quality sites for preschoolers, elementary and middle school students, as well as for parents, teachers, and librarians. The sites have been selected for inclusion by a group of N.C. librarians and school library media specialists. Libraries and school library media centers will even be able to customize the Portal by including local information and adding local links.



And what's summer without Summer Reading? Even as I hear stories about 2001 Summer Reading successes, I've been receiving final artwork from **Virginia Wright-Frierson** for the 2002 Summer Reading program ("Exercise Your Mind. . . Read!"), taking orders for materials, and working with the committee on the manual for next year. We have also been planning the fall workshops – November 26 in Hickory and November 27 in Raleigh. This fall I will be sending out a mailing which will include the registration information for the Summer Reading workshops.

But mailings aren't the only way I get news out to youth services librarians across the state. As those of you who subscribe to NCKids know, I also use that email distribution list to disseminate information on a regular basis. I subscribe to several services (e.g., BigChalk.com's "Wonders of the Web" and "Top Eight Web Sites" and "E-Reviews" from the N.C. Department of Public Instruction) and I forward those weekly postings to NCKids. The State Library receives copies of new children's and young adult titles which librarians are welcome to examine *if* they will promise to send me their reviews – reviews which I then post to NCKids. If I learn of new funding opportunities, I send a message to NCKids.

And I'm not the only one who uses the list. Other subscribers post questions to the list and take advantage of the combined knowledge and experience of this "virtual community" to help them do their jobs. If you'd like to join the conversation, send a message to majordomo@ncsl.dcr.state.nc.us. Leave the subject line blank. In the first line of the message, simply type "subscribe nckids" (without the quotation marks, of course). And, when you receive confirmation that your subscription has been approved, please post a brief message to the list and say a few words about yourself. This will simultaneously test your subscription and introduce you to your colleagues across the state.

Speaking of introductions, I'll be at NCLA and, of course, the workshops coming up this fall. Please come up and introduce yourself. (And, if you've met me at the "Trade Secrets" workshops during my frantic first month here, please don't be offended if I've forgotten your name. Those were days of serious "information overload" when I'm afraid my brain was made of Teflon and nothing stuck.)

But please don't wait for these occasions to introduce yourself. Feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, suggestions, or complaints – or just to say "hello" and to tell me what you've been doing at your library. You can reach me by email jrosinia@library.dcr.state.nc.us or by phone at (919) 733-2570

Governors' Village Storytelling Festival



“One of the secrets to motivating children to tell stories is to make it look like so much fun that they want to try it.” (School Library Journal, April 1993, Vol. 39 Issue 4, p.30)

In the Fall of 2000, the media specialists in Nathaniel Alexander and Morehead Elementary and myself, the Children's Manager of University City Regional Library, applied for a **LSTA Powerful Partners** Collaboration Grant for a dream that we wanted to fulfill. Nathaniel Alexander and Morehead Elementary schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District are K-5 elementary schools part of a community of 4 schools sharing a 200-acre campus. University City Regional Library is one of the five regional branches in the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County (PLCMC with a total of 23 branches systemwide). The library and schools are approximately 2 miles apart from each other in the community.

Our shared vision was to create a “Governors' Village Storytelling Festival” where children in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades would choose a story, learn how to tell the story and present it in front of parents, peers and others. Our goal, as written in the grant proposal was to have a total of 36 students participate. To our amazement and delight we had 110 students from both schools participate.

We believed in our mission from the start. The benefits of traditional storytelling are manifold and the children who have the courage to stand up in front of their peers to recite a tale from memory are champions. Just a few of the storytelling skills include the ability to speak clearly and effectively, develop self-confidence, be creative, and to improve memory and concentration. A storytelling festival allows children to explore an art form not part of everyday schoolwork as well as provide options for children who may not “shine” in other extra-curricular areas such as sports.

Grant Expenditures

The grant for \$11,000 was approved and we were ready to begin. The bulk of the money (approximately \$8,000) was spent on books and videos for the two schools and the public library branch. The professional storyteller was hired at a cost of \$2,000 and the remainder of the grant funds was spent on prizes and medals.

Timeline of Events

Materials were ordered as soon as possible so that the children would have books from which to choose stories. In December 2000, I visited both schools everyday for two weeks and told stories. I saw every 3rd, 4th and 5th grade class and gave general “rules” about the storytelling contest with instructions to see their media specialists for more information. I love to tell stories. I believe in the traditional form of storytelling and I believe that children benefit from listening to and learning stories. In order for the students to get excited about learning stories, the adults involved must share the same enthusiasm.

During the month of January, after the winter break, all interested students signed up with the media specialists. A list of folktales was prepared from which they could choose a story (see appendix). We realized only AFTER children began selecting that separating the stories by grade level would have been a useful element to incorporate. Many 5th graders chose “*The Little Red Hen*” for their story. However, we asked ourselves after the contest was over that if we DID limit the choice of stories by grade level, would older students who were not confident in learning longer stories have participated?

Students spent the remainder of January and February learning and improving their presentations. A professional storyteller, **David Joe Miller** was hired to present workshops for the students at the end of February. In March, I came back to the schools and “screened” all students who had signed up. Only 20-25 students did not make the final cut from both schools. The “Judging Criteria” (see appendix) was used as a tool for students. Each presenter took home the notes I made on their presentation in hopes that they would work on those areas.

The grade level contests were held in April. One of the incentives we used included a prize – just for trying. Each student who had the nerve to tell a story received a \$10 gift card to Media Play. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners received medals. The medals, by far our cheapest expense (total spent \$80) were the most coveted prize by the children.

Gold Medal Winners

The 1st place winners in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades from each school had additional responsibilities after the contest was over. The students presented their stories at “Storyvine” PLCMC’s Annual Storytelling Festival. Each student had an opportunity to meet professional storytellers and present their stories to kindergarten classes that came to the festival from other Charlotte Mecklenburg schools. Library staff and other storytellers showered praises on the winners and parents reported that the

children had not stopped talking about the experience. In one case, the parents of the 3rd grade winner wanted to know about more opportunities for their daughter that involves storytelling!

Success

“Educators have increasingly emphasized the importance of oral language as a basis for written language. Too often, however, this emphasis has been more evident in theory than in practice. Students still spend too little time speaking.” (*Storytelling Games*, Oryx, 1995, p. ix) The “Governors’ Village Storytelling Festival” was designed to support the language arts curriculum as well as perpetuate and preserve the ancient oral tradition of storytelling. Do the students who participated know they were learning and improving presentation and memory skills? Do they know that by learning a story from their own or a different culture they are being exposed to various cultures? The enthusiasm that was evident in the participants tells us that we succeeded in making the “Governors’ Village Storytelling Festival” entertaining and educational. The students were not told that they are “meeting language arts” requirements or “improving memory”. This was a contest, simple as that.

“When children bring books to life through storytelling, they develop a love of language and stories that is theirs for life.” (*Children As Storytellers*, School Library Journal, April 1993, Vol. 39, Issue 4, p.30) That was our goal and although 110 students participated, we exposed over 800 students to storytelling by sharing the love of telling stories with them. Cathy Cadden (Nathaniel Alexander), Ingrid Powell (Morehead Elementary) and myself (Olga Kuharets) hope that our festival will serve as a model for all Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools and other school systems in North Carolina. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions on how to organize a storytelling festival in your school. When watching the children perform on stage, all recollections of the amount of work it takes to organize the event are eradicated from memory. It is truly a worthwhile undertaking with paybacks that far exceed the input.

For more information please contact:

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**1st ANNUAL GOVERNORS' VILLAGE
STORYTELLING FESTIVAL**

Student's Name: _____ Total Points: _____

Grade Level: _____ **School:** _____ **Date:** _____

Judge: _____

Folk Tale Title: _____ **Origin:** _____

Each item will be rated from 1-5 points with 5 representing the highest level of skill.
Maximum points: 35

_____ 1. **Enunciation and Pronunciation:** Does the storyteller pronounce the words correctly and clearly?

_____ 2. **Voice Control:** Is the voice quality appealing and unaffected? Is the voice natural and appropriate to the story?

_____ 3. **Pacing:** Does the storyteller tell the story at a pace that is comfortable, and appropriate to the story?

_____ 4. **Poise:** Is the storyteller relaxed? Does he/she avoid using distracting mannerisms and avoid sounding mechanical?

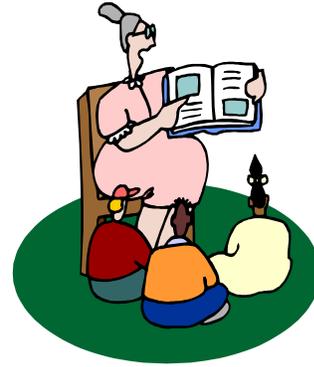
_____ 5. **Audience Contact:** Does the storyteller look at and involve the audience? Is eye-to-eye contact maintained?

_____ 6. **Memorization:** Does the storyteller know the story by heart?

_____ 7. **Overall Performance**

A Love of Storytelling

Storytelling was an activity that our family regularly practiced at the dinner table while I was growing up. Having public school teachers for parents, one sister, two brothers, a close-knit family of aunts, uncles, grandparents, and other relatives directly concerned with the well being and growth of children, produced lots of stories to tell. My father and mother grew up happy but poor children of mill workers. Storytelling was also the main part of their interaction with family members. It is no wonder that today, storytelling is a large part of my job as a children's librarian.



After I made the decision to go to library school, I chose to be a public librarian instead of a school media specialist so I could be the “good guy.” School is important for kids; but let’s face it, they have to do a lot of “unfunny” things. This is good as it prepares kids for their future jobs. After all, we do have a lot of “unfunny” things to do in our jobs. As the “good guy,” I wanted to turn kids onto books and reading so they would do it for the rest of their lives.

When I first graduated from library school everything was so overwhelming. I had very little experience beyond some limited story times. Imagine how surprised I was that within a month I had to present stories to groups as large as 150-200 people. Then I had the privilege of working with THE GREAT Melvin Burton, a very talented storyteller. With Melvin’s help I was able to build a core storytelling collection, learn the importance of observing age levels and comprehend their needs, and to address the “squirminess factor” which is found in all kids.

I discovered that kids generally like you if you tell fun, exciting stories. What could be better than when they ask for more? I also tried to think like a kid. What did I like when I was their age? So, I looked at North Carolina legends, folklore, bizarre events, ghost stories, ghost stories, and more ghost stories. These were the kinds of stories I couldn’t get enough of as a kid.

Some of the early stories I experimented with were: *The Squeaky Door* by Laura Simms (Crown Publishing 1991), *Gunnwolf* by Wilhelmina Harper (Dutton, 1967), and a version of *Sody Saleratus* called *Cheese and Crackers*, found in *Parent’s Guide to Storytelling: How to Make Up New Stories and retell Old Favorites*, (August House Little Folk, May 2001).

Like anyone else, I had to find stories I truly liked so the kids would catch my enthusiasm. I moved on to more complicated stories such as *Rindercella**, and some found on audio cassettes:

-*The Skeleton Woman* by Gayle Ross, *Graveyard Tales*, (National Storytelling Festival, August House, 1991),

-*Why the Dog Chases the Cat*, by David Holt, by that same title, (High Windy Audio, 1994).

Also, children's picture books made great stories:

-*Stephanie's Ponytail* by Robert Munsch (Annick Press, 1996),

-*Joseph had a little Overcoat* by Simms Taback (Viking, 1999), and

-*Small Green Snake* by Libba Moore Gray (Orchard Books, 1994).

Enthusiastically, I branched out even further by telling stories from my life experiences. For instance, I remembered how awful it was the time I skated down my best friend, Julie Beaver's, driveway. I remembered how badly I wanted to do it, finding the courage to finally zoom down the hill, and then making the awful realization that I had considered everything **but how to stop.** Kids can really understand that. Through sharing these stories, I was able to excite them about wanting to write their own stories, visiting the library, and reading books!

I continue to go to family members for more inspiration. Like everyone else, I don't want my stories to get stale. I visit old resources I thought already tapped out, finding forgotten ones. I go back again and again to well known tellers such as Jackie Torrence, David Holt, Syd Lieberman, and Laura Simms, which are some of my favorites. There are just too many other favorites to include in this list. I hope they know that they are also responsible for sparking my enthusiasm.

No matter how many stories I read or how many stories I tell, there are still millions waiting to be told.

Submitted by Julie Shatterly, Gaston-Lincoln Regional Library

Children's Coordinator,

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**Rindercella* is a backward way of telling Cinderella. I first heard it from a friend of mine at the Rock County Public Library in Rock Hill, South Carolina. She in turn, heard Susan Adams tell it at a workshop at Brown Summit. I researched its origins, but was able to come up with multiple places where it first began. If you look on the Internet at www.yahoo.com, type in 'Rindercella', you will receive many versions of this goofy story.

Editor's note: Ms. Shatterly has mastered the art of participatory storytelling. It is a delight to watch her in action.

JULIE'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

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Shannon, George. *Stories to Solve: Folktales From Around the World*, Greenwillow Books, 1985.

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Whedbee, Charles. *Blackbeard's Cup and Stories of the Outer Banks*, J.F. Blair, 1989.

Whedbee, Charles. *The Flaming Ship of Ocracoke*, J.F. Blair, 1971.

Whedbee, Charles. *Legends of the Outer Banks and Tar Heel Tidewater*, J.F. Blair, 1966.

Whedbee, Charles. *Outer Banks Mysteries and Seaside Stories*, J.F. Blair, 1978.

Whedbee, Charles. *Outer Bank Tales to Remember*, J.F. Blair, 1985.

Wolff, Patricia Rae. *The Toll-Bridge Troll*, Browndeer Press, 1995.

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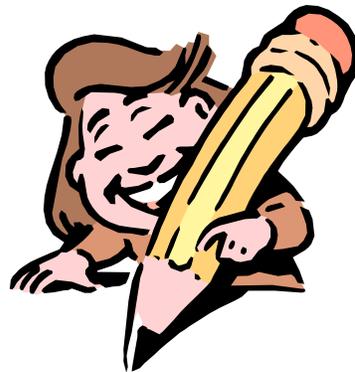
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From the Editor.....

I invite our readership to submit articles to the Chapbook. Please share your tried and true special programs, or interesting projects, or upcoming events whereby

all may be informed or even motivated to try something new. There is no deadline.

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