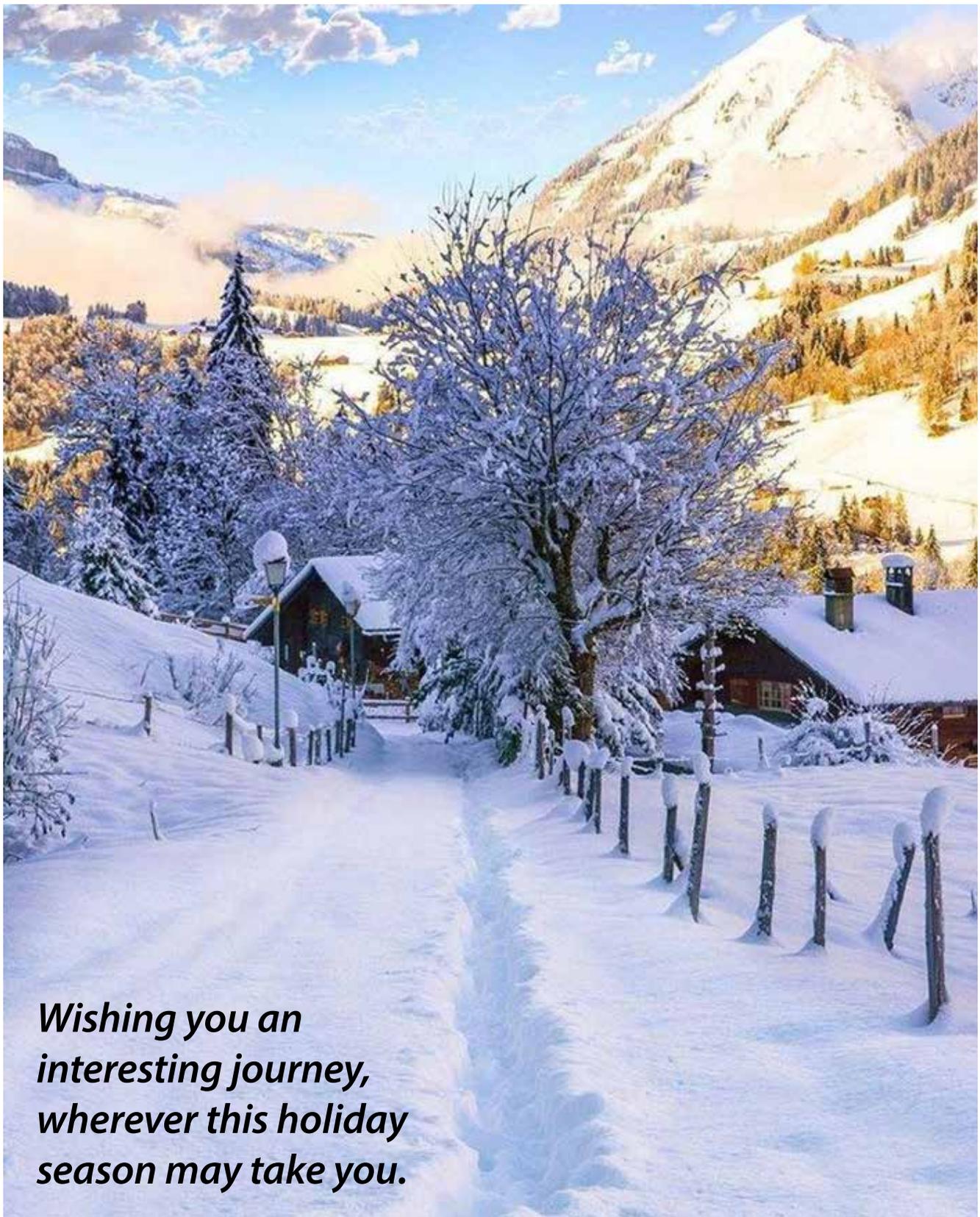


MSLA JOURNAL

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*Wishing you an
interesting journey,
wherever this holiday
season may take you.*



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President's Message

By Christine Robinson

This year's Manitoba School Library Association MTS PD Day conference was a huge success. Many participants spoke to me about how much they learned, how much they appreciated the topics and sessions we offered, and how much they needed the opportunity to learn about our role in Reconciliation. The conference was titled "Truth in our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation" and we selected this title with purpose. Libraries are places where stories live and where people seek truth. Stories are the life blood and currency of the library, but they also sustain us as a society. Stories play an important and fundamental role in our lives; they are how human beings connect to each other. Stories are how we learn. They are how we come to understand our world, our past, our shared experiences, the experiences of our fellow human beings and the ways in which we can make the world a better place. Stories are how we can recognize our role in the future. As school library staff, we are often tasked with connecting students to stories in meaningful ways. This can be challenging but also rewarding! While attending Treasure Mountain Canada with fellow school library staff from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario, I heard our role referred to as "knowledge keepers who work in memory institutions." That phrase reminded me that our role in connecting students to stories and to truth is one of great importance. That is why this issue of the Manitoba School Library Association's Journal is dedicated to a similar theme - truth in our stories.

Christine Robinson,

President



Editor's Message

By Lisa Ferguson



Hello Friends, I thought I would take a moment and introduce myself. I am the new editor of the MSLA Journal, thank you Mona-Lynne for all your hard work as the previous editor of the MSLA Journal. I work in the Louis Riel School Division. I've been a teacher in LRSD since 2004 and moved into the role of teacher-librarian seven years ago. I work in two K-8 schools and spend my days working with students on inquiry

projects, being responsible digital citizens and passing on my love of books.

When I took on the role of editor of the MSLA Journal in the spring of 2017, I really was not sure what to expect. One part of me was intrigued with the idea of being the creator of a magazine...the power! The glory! (Insert evil laugh here). The other part of me was terrified...how on earth was I going to write or gather enough information to create a magazine!?!

As these last few months have passed, I have been pleasantly surprised by how many people were willing to contribute to the creation of this magazine. We have some amazingly talented and generous writers, educators, library staff and volunteers in our community and each of them worked to make this journal into a reality. Thank you to each contributor...I could not have done this without you. You are all amazing!

As I'm putting the final touches on this edition, my mind has already turned to the next journal. If any of our readers are interested in contributing, your voice would be appreciated! If there is something lacking, that you would like to see included in future editions, please let me know. I hope that as you read your way through this journal, you learn something new, are inspired to introduce something into your library/classroom or that you find the answers to some questions you didn't even know you had.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and happy 2018. May there be books to read, people to collaborate with and people to inspire!

Sincerely,

Lisa



2017 MSLA SAGE Conference and TMC 2017 Libraries Are for Everyone

By Michelle Campbell, Member of the CSL Communications Committee

Treasure Mountain Canada 2017 was held October 20-21st in Winnipeg Manitoba in partnership with the Manitoba School Library Association (SAGE) PD Day on October 20th. The theme for SAGE this year was Truth in Our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation which fit seamlessly with the TMC theme of Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Commons. Hosting the TMC conference on the heels of the SAGE conference was an ideal opportunity for TMC participants to partner with Manitoba School Library Staff and participate in their conference.



MANITOBA SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

MSLA SAGE Conference
Truth in Our Stories:
Seeking a Path to Reconciliation

TMC Canada Symposium
Culturally Relevant and Responsive
School Library Learning Commons

TMC
Treasure Mountain Canada

**School Library Learning Commons
Research Symposium
and Think Tank**

A Canadian School Libraries Project

October 20 – 21, 2017 **Winnipeg, Manitoba**

Truth in Our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation

October 20, 2017 MTS PD Day

The focus for the SAGE conference was to educate our learning communities about Indigenous history, culture, spirituality, treaties, ways of knowing and their continuing cultural contributions to Canadian society. Highlights of the day included being welcomed by a local Indigenous elder, a drumming circle, a keynote speech from award-

winning author Melanie Florence, and a series of breakout sessions featuring well-known leaders from the Indigenous community in Manitoba. At lunch participants were treated to the sounds of the father and sons Metis fiddle group, Double the Trouble, and the sights of a seven year old Indigenous hoop dancer, Rylee Sandberg.



Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Commons – TMCANADA Symposium

October 20 - 21, 2017

After a thought provoking day at the SAGE conference we were given a private tour of the visually stunning Canadian Museum for Human Rights. Although our time was limited and we really just scratched the service of the interactive experience we all came away feeling revived and inspired to move forward in the hope of erasing barriers and creating meaningful, lasting change.

Our guest speaker for TMC's Friday Kickoff Dinner, Karen Boyd, Assistant Superintendent River East Transcona School Division gave us an inspirational and upbeat presentation that set the tone for the conference and challenged us to continue our quest to be culturally relevant and responsive educators. Later that evening a surprised Anita Brooks-Kirkland was presented with the Angela Thacker Memorial Award to honour her years of leadership in the school library community in Canada and the instrumental role she played in the formation of Canadian School Libraries and its new website. CSL also recognized Dianne Oberg for being chosen as a lifetime IASL Ambassador.

Bright and early Saturday morning we welcomed Camille Callison, who is currently the Chair of the Indigenous Affairs Committee for the Canadian Federation of Library Associations, and the Indigenous Services Librarian at University of Manitoba. Camille provided an overview of the work of the CFLA to advance reconciliation in libraries in



*Keynote Camille Callison
Chair CFLA Indigenous*

Canada. Although libraries are not specifically mentioned in the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the CFLA group has put forward ten overarching recommendations for the library community. You can read the CLFA full report at: <http://bit.ly/2pzEqrB>



*Dianne Oberg Prof Emerita
U of Alberta Faculty of Education*

Our focus speaker, school library leader Dianne Oberg, discussed theoretical frameworks and strategies around cultural responsiveness in educational and library pedagogy.

She talked about how it is our moral purpose as educators and librarians in Canada to grow to understand the role of cultural responsiveness within the dimensions of instruction and embrace creating culturally relevant communities of practice. You can read her full paper at: <http://bit.ly/2ARvChY>

Jennifer Brown, Melanie Mulcaster, Alanna King, Michelle Campbell, Jo-Anne Gibson, Vivianne Fogarty, Pat Trottier, Monica Berra, Leona Prince and Diana Maliszewski shared their work in Table Talk sessions where participants were able to ask questions, add their perspectives and delve deeper into issues with writers. Leigh Cassell and Michelle Brown who were unable to attend in person joined us virtually for discussion of their work.

Think tank challenges lead by Carol Koechlin, David Loertscher and Anita Brooks-Kirkland got the group brainstorming about how we can ignite a culturally relevant and responsive learning commons by moving from consumption to creation and encouraging participatory learning in our virtual learning commons. Our Big Think centered around what we want others to know about Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Commons in Canada and what actions can we take to turn our vision and new understandings into reality for our schools. Watch for the analysis of participant responses and next steps soon.

Treasure Mountain Canada is held every two years and it is an opportunity for teacher-librarians, school library support staff and administrators to reflect on the latest in school library learning commons research and best practice teaching artifacts. This year participants

explored the theme of Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Common under four sub-themes. See TMC Blogposts: Taste of TMC5 Paper: Learning Environment Taste of TMC5 Papers: Instructional Approaches Taste of TMC5 Papers: Learning Partnerships

Taste of TMC5 Papers: Leveraging Technology

You can find all the 2017 papers at: <https://sites.google.com/site/treasuremountaincanada5/table-of-contents> Archives of past TMC papers can be accessed at: <http://tmc.canadianschoollibraries.ca/>





Project of Heart

By Lisa Ferguson

Project of Heart was created by Ottawa, Ontario teacher, Sylvia Smith. It is a project meant to educate Canadians of the history, trauma and impact of residential schools. Each tile created is meant to honour a child who died as a result of the residential school experience.

Participants at our 2017 MSLA MTS PD Day event were given the opportunity to create their own tile and reflect on the meaning of this tiny but important piece of art. Anyone who is interested in bringing this project to their library or classroom is encouraged to visit the website, Project of Heart, to explore how to make this project a part of your community.



Mapping the Secret Path

By Linda Connor - Social Studies Consultant, Manitoba Education and Training

On November 14th, 2017, as part of Manitoba Education and Training's GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Day initiative, 40 teachers gathered to learn how ArcGIS Online tools can be used to create interactive story maps. They heard stories of the legacy of Canada's residential schools system and found out how using interactive story maps can help to integrate inquiry into the classroom—in this case, inquiry into the impact of residential schools in Canada.

Under the expertise of Manitoba GIS ambassadors Rod Epp and Pat Adams, participants explored a visual representation of Gord Downie's Secret Path multimedia project.

"Mapping the Secret Path" showed teachers how to design an interactive story map of Secret Path, which tells the story of young residential school student Chanie "Charlie" Wenjack's arduous fatal trek as he tried to travel the 600-kilometre distance from the Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School in Kenora to his family in Ogoki Post.

They created a story map that brought the text of Secret Path to life by building layers of maps, ranging from on-the-ground maps to satellite overviews of the considerable distances Indigenous students such as Charlie travelled from their home communities to school. "Mapping the Secret Path" also showed the interplay between the past and the

present experiences of Indigenous students, using maps to tell the stories of the distances Indigenous students travel today to receive an education.

Creating story maps, as demonstrated in "Mapping the Secret Path," allows students to see the interplay between geography and history. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, GIS has been embedded into the learning outcomes for the Manitoba social studies curriculum. Early Years students identify geographic regions and landscapes using maps as well as satellite images. In Middle Years, Manitoba students can construct maps using a variety of information sources and technologies such as GIP and GPS. Senior Years students

use GIS to study the importance and impact of resources such as fossil fuels, minerals, forestry, and hydroelectricity. By using GIS, teachers can bring history alive in their classrooms!

In addition, under the tutelage of Charlene Bearhead, Co-Chair of the Gord Downie Foundation, participants had the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of residential schools, both past and present. Charlene Bearhead provided information on many of the teaching resources available through the National Centre for Truth and

Reconciliation (NCTR), such as story maps for “Mapping the Secret Path” that use archival and video material that is available for teachers from the NCTR (see <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=905>). She also highlighted the Manitoba Teachers’ Society Secret Path Lesson Plans, which are available on the MTS website at <http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2017/04/26/secret-path-lesson-plans/>.

“Mapping the Secret Path” was made possible by Manitoba Education and Training. Teachers who are interested in incorporating

GIS into their classrooms can find many useful learning resources from ESRI, one of the major GIS software developers. Manitoba Education and Training has a provincial license with ESRI to allow teachers access to GIS software as well the ArcGIS Online tools. To get ArcGIS Online access for teachers and students, fill out the form at www.esri.ca/agolaccess. **Tutorials** and lesson plans can also be found on the Manitoba Education and Training GIS in the Classroom website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/gis/index.html.





prairie BOOKINGS

Welcome Back Teachers from Prairie Bookings!

Looking to inspire your students to write and read? Prairie Bookings is a new, local booking company that can place authors into your school. Our roster includes Children's and Young Adult authors such as Maureen Fergus, Larry Verstraete, Colleen Nelson, Gabrielle Goldstone, Melinda Friesen, Anita Daher, Melanie Matheson, Judy Cook and Jodi Carmichael. We are also in contact with national touring authors as they come into Winnipeg.

Please visit us at www.prairiebookings.ca on facebook or twitter, or send us an email to prairiebookings@gmail.com for more information. We would love nothing more than to bring the energy and excitement of a visiting author to your classroom.

Spoiler Alert: This article contains opinions. FAKE NEWS!

By *Harriet Zaidman*

That phrase, uttered by the braying Donald Trump, is considered to have been a key element in deciding the result of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Ironically, Trump himself is a principal purveyor of “alternate facts.” His claims, popularized by FOX News and like-minded commentators has led to the resurrection and validation of discredited ideas from the deep margins of society.

It’s not that made-up “news” only emerged in the recent American election. Whether it’s “Jews taking over the world,” The Loch Ness Monster or cancer-curing teas, false stories have been splashed in the news as far back in history goes. None of them are valid, but that doesn’t stop people from believing in them, even to this day.

But Trump’s invented facts changed the dialogue in society. His march to the presidency began with his persistent untrue pronouncement that Barak Obama hadn’t been born in the United States and therefore held his office illegally. Trump used his celebrity status and bombastic posture to promulgate his Big Lie. He attracted a following - racists who couldn’t tolerate the idea of a black man occupying their country’s top position as well as disaffected Americans looking for a voice to express their unhappiness with the economy, government and a variety of issues.

If anyone thought that, once elected, Trump would demonstrate decorum and a reasoned approach to governing, they were wrong. We all have heard his announcements (“some very fine people” among the



Nazis who terrorized Charlottesville, Virginia). Not only does he make things up to suit his world view, he also launches blistering attacks against anyone who presents him with hard facts, ridiculing and demeaning journalists who question him. It seems every news organization who doesn’t report the news as he wants to hear it is against him, and by extension, is unpatriotic to America.

It’s hard to keep up. In the face of all the rhetoric and distortions, what’s a teacher to do?

I’m an advocate of deep discussion, depending on the age of the children you are teaching. I think it’s more critical than ever that we teach children about using reliable news sources - both mainstream and alternate, validating information with other respected sources, digging into the history and backstory, investigating the motives of those making statements (profit, biased outlook). We need to teach research skills that will help students find accurate information they can

understand (check the suffix of the url, use link:url (link:address) to see if a site is linked to other valid sites or if it’s a front for a racist, homophobic or fascist group.

Usually-reliable news organizations have sometimes published inaccurate information. Think of the false evidence the Bush administration invented to justify the invasion of Iraq in 2003, which went unquestioned for a long time. Moreover, big corporate media have suppressed opposing opinions, such as when the government of their country declares war (think Afghanistan and Iraq. More recently the big American media outlets didn’t seek out critics to balance their coverage when Trump dropped a bomb on Afghanistan and attacked an airstrip in Syria).

This is a tough task. Investigative journalists would encourage you to teach your students to question claims on important issues. If you’re leading an inquiry unit, invite a journalist, a researcher or an individual involved with a relevant issue to speak with

your students.

Inquiry units take several weeks to complete, especially the first time. A teacher can help students out initially by providing websites that have been checked in advance. For younger students especially, use online encyclopedias and other sites to which your division subscribes.

Don't forget to use books, but as with the Internet, don't judge a book by the pretty cover. Read it first. I have reviewed titles published by well-known Canadian school publishers that contain inaccurate information and unacceptable attitudes. Old ideas die hard. Check out the resources you are giving your students.

But since the Internet is becoming our primary source for information, take students through the exercises of searching for information, refining searches so time isn't wasted. Select a site with the class and analyze the content together. Using your judgement, find inaccurate sites to generate discussion about the importance of confirming facts.

The adage is that there are two (or more) sides to every story. Our students

come from a variety of backgrounds, with their own community or family history. We have to be respectful of their ideas when we discuss issues.

Our hope is that our very diverse and inclusive classrooms will help dispel old prejudices. To a large extent that is true - it's heartening to see kids from different communities working



and socializing together. But negative attitudes still exist and teachers need to find ways to deal with them, either privately with individual students or in the context of the classroom.

Our educational system promotes equality and inclusion. We cannot tolerate sexist, homophobic, racist or fascist attitudes just because these are the ideas students have learned at home or in their community. It's one thing to have different approaches

to solving a problem, however, we cannot provide a platform to age-old prejudices unless it is to challenge and defeat them. No, no, no - Jews are not trying to take over the world. No, no, no, all Muslims are not terrorists. No, no, no indigenous people are not lazy. I've had students tell me they learned these "facts" from their families or their communities. No, no, no.

We must also never accept the claim that are "very, very nice" Nazis or well-meaning terrorists no matter their origins. The intention of those people is to frighten and intimidate targeted groups on the basis of their gender, race

or country of origin. They also hope to recruit vulnerable young people to adopt their outlook.

We should do our best to imbue our students with the attitude that by working together we can build a better future for all people, no matter the external difference. The way to move society forwards starts with facts - and a good teacher.



Notes from the Library Desk

By Krista Siemens - Library Technician, St. George School

I am now in my fifth year as a library technician in a K-8 school and every year has brought new and completely different aspects to my career. There are so many wonderful things about working in a school library compared to working with adult patrons. For example, students are so joyful and excited when you find the right book or series that seems to fit into their life so seamlessly. When I worked in a manuscript reading room in a university library, I did not see the same joyful faces all the time!

We have started three programs in our library over the past year that have brought smiles to those faces. They all require loads of work, but the result has been noticeably worth it.



Indigo Love of Reading Grant

Our school was fortunate enough to be awarded an Indigo Love of Reading grant in May 2016. The application process was lengthy and included a telephone interview, but you could not believe how excited and surprised we were when Indigo staff popped into our library with balloons and a massive cheque (I mean the actual dimensions of the cheque, but the dollar amount was pretty amazing as well!). Our grant is spread out over three years and the 2016-2017 school year was our first full year of collection development through Indigo. It's such an amazing

feeling to walk into a bookstore and know that you are not as confined as you normally are with your library budget. Also, it's really awesome to clear out Indigo's stock of certain titles!

When we return to our school with items from Indigo, we set up a day just for students and staff to peruse the new collections. While there is no quantifiable way to show how happy these new books have made our students, our staff is in awe of how wonderful our library looks and how excited our kids are about reading. That is the reason Indigo offers these magnificent grants.

<http://www.loveofreading.org/>



Global Read Aloud

This initiative was started by teacher and author Pernille Ripp in 2010 and currently involves more than 60 countries around the world. The main goal is to connect schools and libraries globally through "book clubs". There are four chapter books and one picture book author chosen. Our teacher-librarian and myself have planned special activities for every week of Global Read Aloud to engage and involve students with each particular book. For example, our Grade 5/6 students will be making their own robots out of recyclables to accompany *The Wild Robot*. Those robots will then be displayed in the

library, which the kids love!

Our students are loving the book choices so far and can't wait to see what happens next. They are also looking forward to planned Skype visits with other students around the world. It's such a wonderful way to globally bring together kids with books.

<https://theglobalreadaloud.com/>





Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award (MYRCA) Books

Every year, the MYRCA committee chooses a list of books written by Canadian authors appropriate for Grade 5-8 students and these students are able to vote every spring for their favourite book. These books have been selected based on their quality and appeal to young readers. Past award winners include Allan Stratton, Eric Walters, Kenneth Oppel, and Gordon Korman.

In the past, we have never pushed these books with our students. We have always purchased the books, labelled them with MYRCA stickers, and created displays, but our students never really knew their purpose. This year, our teacher-librarian did presentations about MYRCA and the 2018 nominee list in September with Grade 5-8 classrooms. I could not believe how excited and anxious the students were to get their hands on these books! Sometimes all it takes to get just one student wanting to read a book is to talk to them about it and show how much you enjoyed reading it. It may not always seem like it, but kids really value your opinion about things, especially books.

<http://www.myrca.ca/>



The Art of Collaboration – Teachers and Teacher-Librarians Working Together

By Lisa Prokopetz - Classroom teacher, Victor Mager School

I applaud my Teacher Librarian for designing, and furnishing a functional, attractive, and welcoming space where students can work, gather, and collaborate. Our Victor Mager School library!

As a classroom teacher, I am always looking for collaboration amongst my colleagues. A vital partnership that can be forged to create a unique and rich learning experience for my students. In working with a teacher librarian, I have found that match! When classroom teachers and teacher-librarians work together, students get the benefit of the classroom teacher's subject area expertise and the teacher librarian's cross-curricular perspective and information and digital literacy expertise.

My teacher librarian has spent time on the development of a rich collection of materials, both print and digital to support research, reading, and independent interests. Students need access to carefully curated collections in a wide variety of formats. I have experienced my teacher librarian help my students learn to access, use, and evaluate information and to become creators themselves! She has also helped match them with the books that will capture their imaginations and transform them into lifelong readers, and support students' pursuit of their passions and personal goals, regardless whether those passions are related to school.

An attractive, robust virtual library that provides access to library

resources, flipped instruction, information about library activities, and opportunities for student input. Collaborating with Ms. Ferguson has served as a valuable resource for me and has taught me about the meaningful integration of technology into my curriculum.

I have had the privilege to see some of the most magical opportunities offered/created for students to go beyond the school walls and connect with the world through social media and activities such as: blogging, Skype/Google meetings, public service announcements, video production and publishing, and more. We have experienced special events, such as author and other expert visits which have excited my students to continue with their love of reading.

Working with Ms. Ferguson has been an incubator for new options and ideas. It is a way to start a new conversation about fresh ideas that could be implemented within the classroom with an anchor of support from the library. No matter what our topic when we collaborate, our one wish is that perhaps some of those students who haven't yet found a passion will discover one through our co-teaching.

MYRCA Award Ceremony 2017

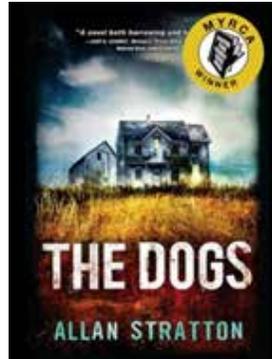
By Colette Dufault - MYRCA chair

On September 29th 2017, the 27th annual MANITOBA YOUNG READER'S CHOICE AWARD was presented to Allan Stratton for his novel *The Dogs*. He was selected by Manitoban children who had read at least 3 books from the nominated list. Honour book winners were Kevin Sylvester for his novel *Minrs* and Kevin Sands for his novel *The Blackthorn Key* who were each presented with a pen in an engraved rosewood case. Kevin Sylvester was particularly pleased with his gift, tweeting that he was going to sign the contract for *Minrs 3* with it.



Allan Stratton is a prolific Canadian author and has won numerous awards both in Canada and internationally, writing for all age groups, in several genres including novels and plays. As he told the children who came to see him, he worked as an actor for many years, but writing was always his dream. Allan says that his greatest influence in his life was his mother, who showed incredible fortitude in leaving his father and his violent abuse while he was a child in the days when such things were frowned upon. *The Dogs* was directly influenced from these events.

The Dogs is a mystery, a thriller and a ghost story all rolled into one! Cameron and his mother live life



on the run from Cameron's abusive father, although the reader is never sure if Cam's mother is justified in her fear of his return. They move into a creepy old farmhouse and Cam starts seeing the ghost of a little boy who died on the property. The true beauty of this novel is how it appeals to all age groups; young and old alike enjoy the suspenseful atmosphere and the surprise ending!

Fun Fact: Allan Stratton names his characters by determining what year they were born and then looking into census records to see what the top names were at the time of his character's "birth".

The MYRCA award ceremony was held at the Manitoba Theater for Young People and was attended by over 300 students from Winnipeg and rural Manitoba. The ceremony is an invitation only event and the room was filled to capacity with students who read the nominees and voted for the award. The MYRCA committee was very proud to be able to partner with Thin Air, the International Writer's Festival who provided us with the theater space and hosted Allan on their School Stage events during the week. Allan was able to take in several readings and was

very excited to be invited during this incredible event. He told us that Thin Air is one of his favorite festivals in all of Canada!

Lisa Ferguson's class from Victor Mager School were honoured with hosting the event. The grade 6, 7 and 8 students did a remarkable job presenting Allan with his award. Logan, Mirha, Amelia, Sami, Jency, Dupe and Allison were poised and polished, well-rehearsed and very professional. They also produced a book trailer about *The Dogs* that Allan loved so much that he asked them if he could use it for his website. The students were very excited to meet him and the buzz backstage before the ceremony was electric. Allan offered the students some sage words of advice regarding nervousness before a show, his past years of working as an actor clearly showed. Lisa's class added some fun elements this year, adding jokes and including trivia questions for the audience. Guessers were gifted with an autographed bookmark!



Allan then read from his new novel *The Way Back Home* about Zoe's struggle as she watches her beloved Granny deteriorate from the effects of Alzheimer's. With bullies at school and unsupportive parents, Zoe begins

to make some drastic decisions to keep Granny from being placed in a nursing home. Like Granny, Allan's mother passed away from Alzheimer's and he cared for her in her twilight. At every visit, he would read to her the dedication page from *The Grave Robber's Apprentice*: "For Mom, who took me to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival when I was a kid". It was a joy and surprise to her each time.

It was then time to announce our wonderful news! The MYRCA committee has noted the difficulty in finding appropriate titles for the full range of ages we serve. Students' reading interests in grade 5 are vastly different than students in grade 8. The same holds true for their reading level. Having a long list of 18 books, MYRCA selectors have always hoped that there is something on it for everyone, but in reality, there are always a few books that are too "low" for the grade 8's and too "high" for the grade 5's.

With this in mind, MYRCA has decided that now is the time to change! Starting in 2019, MYRCA will offer two lists of 10 books each; one for grades 4-6 and one for grades 7-9. In this way we are expanding our readership into grades 4 and 9 and will be offering titles that are better suited to them. MYRCA voting system will remain the same, participants may vote once if they read 3 or more titles and twice if they read 6 or more. Teachers and librarians report this to be very motivating to their students, many will read "just one more" to get that extra vote. In these ways, MYRCA hopes to encourage all young people to become readers

for life. We hope these changes will encourage you to participate!

So if you are a parent, teacher or librarian who has students in grades 3-9, we want to hear your suggestions! Starting January 2nd until February 2nd, 2018, eligible adults will be able



to submit their children's suggestions to the MYRCA committee via a google form sent by email (www.myrcaward.com). On February 7th, 2018, and through the rest of I Love to Read Month, students will be able to vote on their favorite names from a short list of 5 suggestions provided by



you! On March 7th, we will announce the new names and award prizes for the winning suggestions. The school/class/library or family who provided the winning suggestion will receive a complete set of the 2019 MYRCA list books. There will be one set of 10

books for the grades 4-6 list and one set of 10 books for the grades 7-9 list. Full contest details will be posted on www.myrca.ca for the duration of the contest. So check back often for the details.

After the ceremony, attendees were invited to compete in a scavenger hunt in the afternoon. The talented and amazing (local author) Colleen Nelson organized a scavenger hunt. Students were given a map and clues where they could find hidden pictures of dogs. Once located,

the students had to answer a multiple choice question about the nominees from the 2017 list. Students enjoyed running around the Forks on a beautiful fall day and were rewarded with a selection of Canadian books provided by the numerous publishers who support MYRCA every year. Thank you publishers!

If you and your students are interested in participating in MYRCA, there is no cost and it is easy to do. Simply encourage your students to read, or read to them a minimum of three books from the nominated list. The current list is on the MYRCA website at www.myrca.ca. From there you can sign up for our newsletter which will keep you informed of the changes and upcoming events. Voting begins in late March and the winner is announced in early May. Only voters are invited to the ceremony, so get those kids reading and join us for all the fun next year!



HISTORICA
CANADA

[Historica Canada](#) offers programs that you can use to explore, learn and reflect on our history, and what it means to be Canadian. All of our programs are free and bilingual.



@HistoricaCanada



Classroom resources



THE CANADIAN
ENCYCLOPEDIA

The online Encyclopedia holds more than 19,000 bilingual articles on Canadian history. Each article is written by a subject expert, and is professionally copy-edited and fact-checked for accuracy.



HERITAGE
MINUTES

The *Heritage Minutes* boast a collection of more than 85 short-films in both French and English – on subjects including Terry Fox, Nellie McClung, War of 1812, and residential schools.



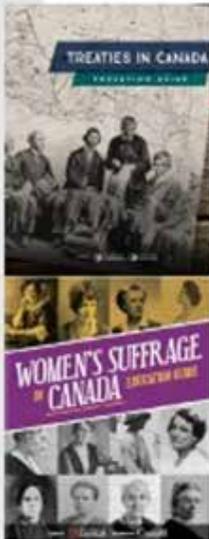
PASSAGES
CANADA

A searchable story archive presents a dialogue on Canada's rich diversity, and the many experiences of people moving to and living in Canada. These stories address a range of topics including identity, human rights and discrimination.



THE MEMORY
PROJECT

A searchable database of primary sources from more than 2,000 veterans, including photographs, audio and bilingual text. The audio recordings offer an opportunity for students to listen to first-hand accounts of peacekeeping and military experiences in Canada in the twentieth century.



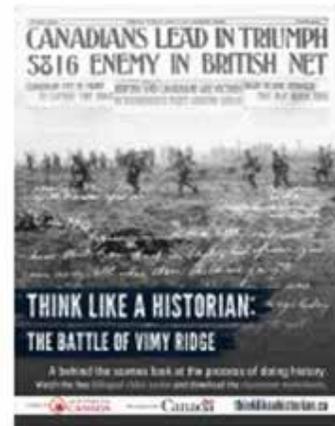
Learning Tools

Historica Canada has produced a number of learning tools for educators and students. Recent guides include:

- Black History in Canada
- First World War and Second World War
- Residential Schools and Treaties
- War of 1812
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier
- Women's Suffrage
- Think Like a Historian: The Battle of Vimy Ridge

For a complete listing of learning tools please visit our education portal:

<http://education.historicacanada.ca>



Classroom activities

HOST A SPEAKER

Historica Canada has two speakers' bureau that facilitate classroom visits:

[The Memory Project](#) has 1,500 veterans and currently serving Canadian Forces members across Canada. In addition to sharing their stories of service, speakers can address personal perspectives on Canada's role in historical and recent conflicts.

The [Passages Canada](#) storytelling initiative nurtures cross-cultural dialogue in Canadian communities. New and established Canadians share their personal experiences of identity, culture and immigration.

INDIGENOUS ART & WRITING

[Indigenous Arts & Stories](#) is Canada's largest art and writing contest for Indigenous youth. Facilitators run workshops across the country, tailored to the age demographic, with creative activities designed to help participants consider what stories they have to share. Winning pieces from previous years are available online to inspire and educate students.



Memory Project speaker



"Maikasina" - Jenna McGuire



Passages Canada speaker

The Ins and Outs of Author Visits

By Colleen Nelson



Some moments from childhood stick out, forever ingrained in my memory: the day I cracked my chin open on the play structure, the grade five Medieval banquet and the day Martha Brooks came to speak to my class.

I listened as she explained how she ‘shows, not tells’ in her writing. She gave the example of a character in her novel jabbing the pointy end of her geometry compass into a school desk to show frustration. Even though I was only eleven and (at the time) had no aspirations of being a writer, her words stuck in my head. So did the stories Carol Matas told us a year later when she visited and Di Brant’s poetic wisdom when she came to my creative writing class in high school. As a book nerd, these women were endlessly fascinating to me as real authors.

Twenty-five years later, the seed that was planted by the author visits finally began to germinate—fertilized by the boredom of being on maternity leave and three teenaged step-children—as I began working on my first YA novel.

Would I have begun writing if the author visits hadn’t occurred? Who knows? But the fact that the writers I met left a lasting impact speaks volumes (no pun intended) about the importance of connecting students to authors. In my current role as Literacy Leader and Teacher-Librarian, I make every effort to invite as many authors into my school as I can. I know first-hand how impactful the visit can be. Hearing an author read from his work, or learning about the hard work, determination and perseverance that it takes to write a book and get it published, all contribute to students understanding the value of literacy. As a T-L at an elementary school, students are always excited to meet the ‘famous’ author and to listen to her read from her latest work. We recently had Marsha Skrypuch visit our school and she not only read from her picture book ‘Adrift at Sea’ but she explained the personal connection behind many of her historical fiction books. Since her visit, her books are constantly checked out.

When Larry Verstraete visited our school with the release of his non-fiction book ‘Dinosaurs of the Deep’ the students stood up and recreated the size of a prehistoric beast that once swam in the sea that covered our province. It brought the concept of dinosaurs alive for them. Coupled with the art he showed us and his explanation of the research that went into writing all of his books, the students were left with a sense that stories are everywhere.

One of our school’s more frequent visitors is local author Maureen Fergus. To hear her read her Buddy

and Earl children’s books is a delight. Her humour and voice comes through loud and clear and the students are on a first name basis with her, frequently asking to take out ‘one of Maureen’s books’. I would argue that inviting local authors, not just the big names on tour, is where our emphasis as T-Ls should be. Introducing students to authors who live in their city, maybe even their neighbourhood, brings a sense of immediacy to the books and takes away the barriers that exist between writer and author.

Every year, I strive to invite at least one author for each age group. I have been able to pay for the visits through funding requests to our school’s Parent Connect, raising money at Library Movie Nights, our book fairs and receiving grants from the Manitoba Arts Council. I also request skype visits with authors and people in the book industry. We had an inspiring skype visit with the Canadian Children’s Book Center’s Amy Mathers who completed her Marathon of Books in 2015, reading a book a day as she made her way across Canada, literary-style.

This year, my school is adopting a local author. With the help of Prairie Bookings, a local business that connects authors to schools. (Full disclosure, one of the owners is my sister), we approached Winnipegger Jodi Carmichael and asked if we could adopt her for this school year. Her newest middle grade novel, *Family of Spies* is set for release April 29th with Winnipeg publisher Yellow Dog Books. Over the next few months, Jodi will visit the grade 4/5 classes every six weeks to show them how

an author edits a book, how a cover is finalized, and discuss the research that went into her novel, which is loosely based on her grandfather. The students will even get invited to the book launch, which will be exciting for them because they will have shared in the process of the book coming to reality for the last six months.

We've also invited illustrators and designers to discuss the creation of the books and MYRCA-nominees who are always thrilled to find out students are reading their work. Every book has a story behind the story. It is thrilling and inspiring to learn about it from the author themselves.

I am in the unique position of being both a T-L and an author. Many of my favourite author moments have been in front of school groups who respond enthusiastically to my books and ask insightful questions. I am sure most authors feel the same way.

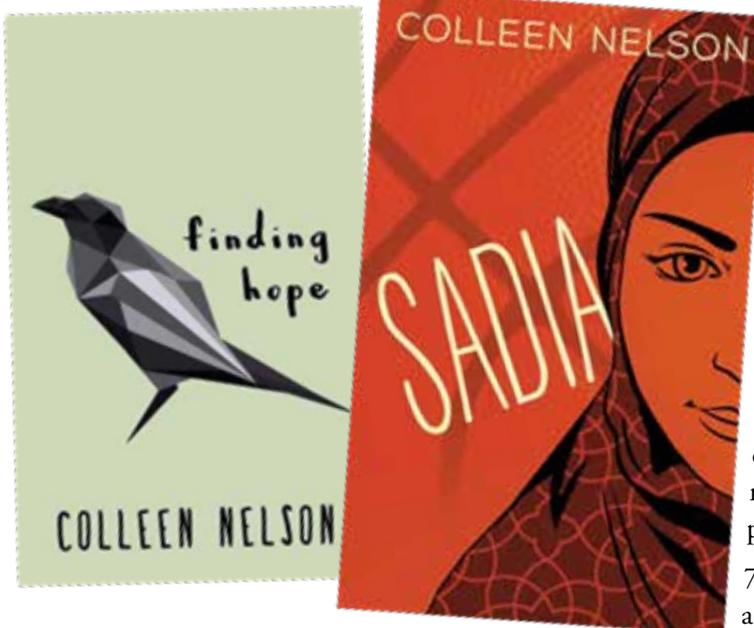
While writing happens in a solitary way, it is through connecting with students that children's and young adult writers see the impact their books and their stories have had. Often, students will linger after my presentation and confess that they connected to a character in one of my books. Literature is a powerful tool; it has the ability to reach out, across age, gender and identity, and create a bond between writer and reader.

Having been both a visiting author and a hosting T-L, I'd like to share a few things I appreciate when I visit a school and make sure to do when authors visit my school:

1. Read at least one of the author's books. It is a nice way to connect to the author and get a sense of

what they will be speaking about in their presentation.

2. Have as many of the books the author has written in the library so students can check them out after the visit.
3. Prepare a visual, like a poster or book display, so the author is familiar to the students when they arrive for the presentation.



4. Confirm the cost and the date of the visit a few days before. It is possible to get funding for members of the Manitoba Writers Guild through Manitoba Arts Council, but the process must be started six weeks before the visit. MAC also offers Artists in the Schools, a week-long residency that is subsidized by MAC. Applications are due in May. Thin Air Writers Festival also offers subsidies to book presenting authors. Thin Air is held the last week of September and the line-up is usually released in May or June.

5. If it is a Skype visit, we brainstorm

for questions and arrange who will ask them beforehand. This process makes the Skype visit run smoothly. (I always bring my laptop from home as a back-up in case the school computer decides to take an unscheduled holiday).

6. Out of town authors will need help with transportation. I once spent more on taxi fare in Toronto than I made off my school visit.

Be mindful that the author is usually paying out of pocket for their food, hotel and transportation to visit schools. An out-of-town trip is only worthwhile if he is able to fit in at least two or three visits a day. It is helpful if you are able to prearrange transportation with the other schools. You can meet half-way or ask a parent driver to help.

7. Generally speaking, authors make about 10-15% off the sale of their

books. Author visits, grants and awards are more lucrative and well-known authors will charge \$350/hour-long visit. Local authors may charge less. The Writers Union of Canada sets a fee rate at \$250 for a visit, which most authors use as a standard.

8. When an author is visiting younger students, it can be more beneficial to split the hour into two 30 minute sessions. Smaller class sizes mean the students will have more opportunity to ask questions.
9. When booking an author, think outside of the box. Winnipeg has

lots of poets who are interested in school visits, like Ariel Gordon. Even if her poetry isn't geared at children, she is able to take classes through the writing process and explain where she finds inspiration. If you notice an author is visiting for a conference or an event, contact them to see if they would be interested in doing a school visit. Or contact Prairie Bookings and ask for their help in coordinating a visit. An author is more likely to stay an extra night if they can book two or three visits which can be arranged by a booking agency like Prairie Bookings.

10. Use the author's website to prepare students. The questions they ask will be more meaningful if they know more about the author.
11. It is advisable to ensure the invoice submitted at least two weeks ahead of time so that the cheque is ready for the author when they arrive at the school. It is the author's responsibility to send this to you ahead of time.

I have never been disappointed by a school visit, or hosting an author. Winnipeg has so many talented writers—I haven't even mentioned David Alexander Robertson, Anita Daher, Carol Matas, Deborah Froese....the list goes on!



JODI CARMICHAEL

Jodi Carmichael's dreams of becoming an author began to come true when she attended her first SCBWI conference in Los Angeles in 2007 and was nominated for the Sue Alexander Most Promising New Work Award.

A champion for the underdog and kids who think differently, she wrote *SPAGHETTI IS NOT A FINGER FOOD AND OTHER LIFE LESSONS* (2013) which won numerous awards including a Gold Mom's Choice and a Silver Moonbeam in 2013.

In 2016 her novel about relationship abuse, *FOREVER JULIA* (2016) won the Manitoba Book Award; The McNally Robinson Books for Young People Awards - Older Category and received a Bronze Moonbeam Award for Young Adult Fiction - Mature Issues.

FAMILY OF SPIES is set to launch in 2018 and follows three cousins intent on discovering the secrets of their rogue World War 2 spy-master great-grandfather.

Jodi offers 3 distinct Presentations to bring to the classroom:

HOW TO BECOME AN AUTHOR - The journey begins in elementary school

READING, WRITING AND EDITING - What it takes to be a good writer

ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES - Celebrating our uniqueness and searching for similarities to build acceptance and friendships.



Rates are \$150 per 45-60 minute presentation or \$250 for two sessions. Contact prairiebookings@gmail.com to book a school visit.

prairie
BOOKINGS



On one hot summer day, Sabrina was extremely bored and had too much time on her hands. Already read a ton of books she decided to try out blogging. She produced Beyond the Book Reviews and took on the persona of Library Luv as her blogging name. Since then she has been blogging for over two years and reviews mainly YA books with the occasional NA. To go along with reading YA she now reads middle grade Canadian novels for the Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Awards committee she is now on. Sabrina has had many wonderful authors and blogger guests appear on her blog for interviews since starting out. Sabrina not only blogs about books, but is now an Entangled Publishing editorial intern looking over manuscripts.

Author of the Month Interview: Lisa Maxwell

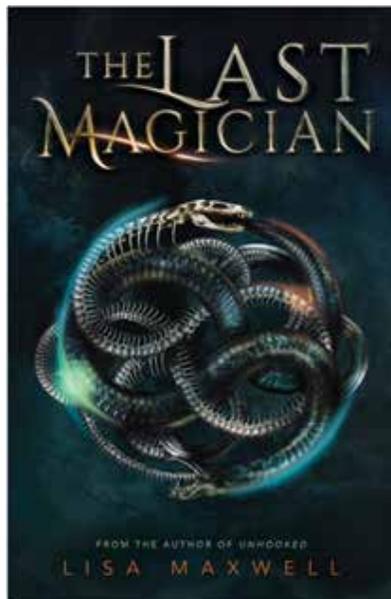
Sabrina: Hello Lisa! It is a real pleasure getting the opportunity to interview you. I just recently read *The Last Magician* and fell in love with it.

Lisa: Thanks so much for having me! I'm so glad you loved the book.

Sabrina: Back in July you released a new YA read, *The Last Magician*. Readers are transported back to 1900 New York city. Did you find it challenging to stay true to the time era while writing out scenes?

Lisa: I did a ton of research going into writing the book, so I had a very clear sense of what New York would have been like at the time. Strangely enough, the most frustrating and difficult thing about writing in 1902 New York was the language. I had to constantly look up the etymology of words and phrases—especially sayings and slang that we take for granted—to make sure that people in the early 1900s would have used them.

Sabrina: *The Last Magician* is lead



with a strong bunch of characters, who was one of the more challenging characters to write?

Lisa: I think that Jack Grew was one of the harder characters to get right. It was way too easy to make him cartoonish, and I wanted readers to understand that he felt he had legitimate reasons for doing what he did. I wanted the

reader to hate him, but I also wanted the reader to understand him so they didn't dismiss him.

Sabrina: How would you describe *The Last Magician* in two sentences for readers out there who want to read it?

Lisa: *Gangs of NY with Magic:* A time traveling thief has to go back to 1902 and stop the Magician from destroying a book that could save magic.

Sabrina: Which two quotes from *The Last Magician* make you proud to say that you wrote it and would share them with readers?

Lisa: "Liars make the best magicians, and he happened to be exceptional."

"She moved with confidence—its own sort of magic, she supposed."

Sabrina: You're an author currently of 4 published novels, do you believe any of your characters would cross and get along well together?

Lisa: I think Rowan from UNHOOKED and Harte from THE LAST MAGICIAN would get along. Or maybe they would just sit and give each other broody, grumpy stares, never admitting how alike they really are.

Sabrina: If you got the opportunity to have a lunch date with one of your characters, who would it be and why?

Lisa: Definitely Viola. She's one of my most favorite characters, and we'd probably just sit around over a couple of cannoli lamenting the pitfalls of growing up in an Italian household.

Sabrina: Has your writing process become easier since your debut novel Sweet Unrest?

Lisa: I don't think so, no. In fact, I wrote SWEET UNREST so much from instinct that it felt easy to write. But since then, my plots have gotten more complex and I've done a lot of work on learning theories of craft, so all of that slows me down and makes things more difficult. I'm a lot more aware now of when things aren't right.

Sabrina: Being an author of many settings, where would you want to visit and maybe live?

Lisa: Always Italy. Always.

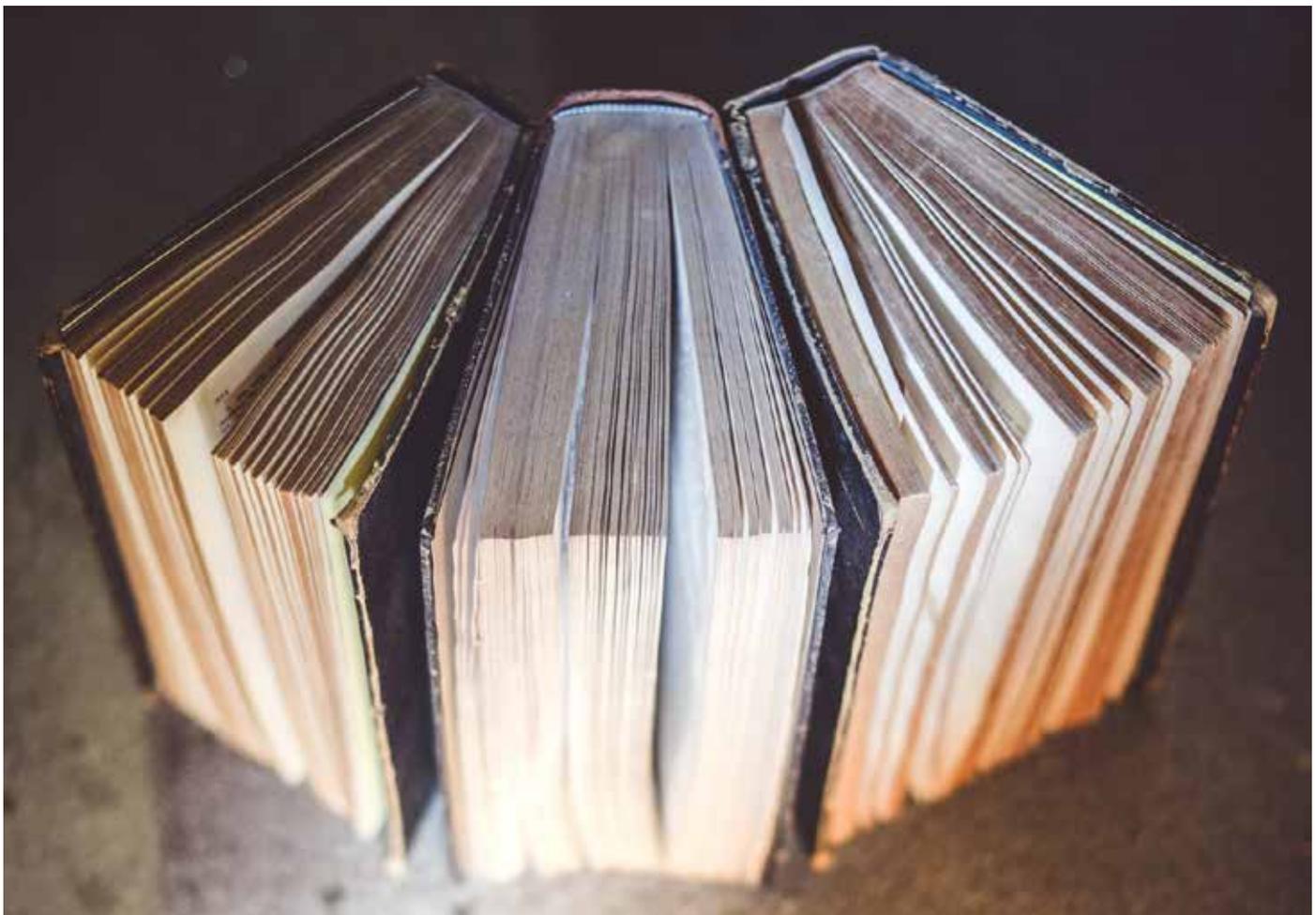
Sabrina: How do you balance your time to write, read, and work?

Lisa: I'm not sure that I do balance it. There are times I write like there's

nothing else in the world, and I'm a terrible mom and wife. There are other times I let the writing fall to the side, because I need that break. I just try to focus on what needs to be done and who needs my attention, and I try to be forgiving of myself for not being able to be the best mom, teacher, and writer all at the same time.

Sabrina: Thank you so much Lisa for agreeing to join me today! I look forward to the sequel of The Last Magician, and I can't wait to read your future creations.

Lisa: Thank you! These were such great and thoughtful questions, and I had an awesome time answering them.





FEBRUARY IS I love TO read MONTH

DEDICATING A WHOLE MONTH TO PROMOTING
A LOVE OF READING

We have a wide array of authors available for readings in February. What better way to celebrate I Love to Read Month than to book a school visit with an author?

**Anita
Daher**



**Colleen
Nelson**

**Gabriele
Goldstone**



**Maureen
Fergus**

**Samantha
Beiko**



**Jodi
Carmichael**

**Judy
Cook**



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Hello readers! Today and for the next week I'll be featuring a new series of posts on my blog. It came from the idea of my *Author of the Month* posts and an English assignment.

Author of the Month has been a fun feature for me during the past year because I got the opportunity to interview some of my favourite authors. However, most of those interviews were rather generic and didn't pertain to a certain novel the

author had written. So, I thought it would be a fun activity to showcase for the next week some "Reader Response" interviews conducted with an author for every one of my favourite YA genre categories.

Today's author is a writer of fantasy, and for the next following days you will see interviews conducted for the following genres: historical, contemporary, science fiction, mystery, and horror.

These interviews take an in-depth look at one book the author has written, so my suggestion is that if you have not read the book, you may want to swing back to my blog once you have. But if finding out some detail doesn't affect you then read on. To go along with these interviews will be a brief review at the bottom of the post. Happy reading!

About the Book



Title: *Air Awakens* {*Air Awakens* #1}

Author: Elise Kova

Publication Date: August

Description: A library apprentice, a sorcerer prince, and an unbreakable magic bond...

The Solaris Empire is one conquest away from uniting the continent, and the rare elemental magic sleeping in seventeen-year-old library apprentice Vhalla Yarl could shift the tides of war.

Vhalla has always been taught to fear the Tower of Sorcerers, a mysterious magic society, and has been happy in her quiet world of books. But after she unknowingly saves the life of one of the most powerful sorcerers of them all—the Crown Prince Aldrik—she finds herself enticed into his world. Now she must decide her future: Embrace her sorcery and leave the life she's known, or eradicate her magic and remain as she's always been. And with powerful forces lurking in the shadows, Vhalla's indecision could cost her more than she ever imagined.

Reader's Response to Air Awakens

Sabrina: Good morning Elise, thank you so much for taking some time out of your busy schedule to answer some of my questions.

Elise: It's always a pleasure to have the opportunity to connect with readers. Thank you for reaching out!

Sabrina: Throughout the beginning chapters of *Air Awakens*, Vhalla is corresponding with the "phantom" and we as readers get to read the letters. Do you feel that having the readers get the chance to see the letters impacted their experience differently? Considering since at the time we did not know who the "phantom" was.

Elise: The correspondence through letters really was one of my favorite parts of *AIR AWAKENS* because of how much they accomplished.

From a story perspective, two characters who would be completely blinded by their prejudices toward each other if they had met outright could engage in discourse with some of those feelings mitigated. It also underscored the value each of them placed in intellect.

From a reader's perspective, I think it was a similar experience. While I'm sure most readers had their suspicions on who the "phantom" was, they weren't certain and learned alongside

Vhalla both about the "phantom" and his knowledge. Additionally, it offered a subtle way in the tone of the letters, and formalities (or lack thereof) exchanged to show the reader the developing closeness between the two.

Sabrina: Aldrik's mother had a Rose garden and it's mentioned that Aldrik smells a little like roses, was there a particular reason why you chose this flower over any other?

Elise: Roses have always been one of my favorite flowers because of an anime that was particularly influential to me earlier in life: *Revolutionary Girl Utena*. Roses are particularly important in this show and the rose garden was an homage to both the anime as inspiration and the impact it had on my life.

Sabrina: Throughout writing *Air Awakens*, were there any characters that made you frustrated?

Elise: Honestly, Vhalla! Firstly, the story is told only from her perspective. So even though I, as the author, know the whole truth, I can only write from the truth that she would know. She's also lived a very sheltered life up to *Air Awakens* and is a bit naive, despite her book smarts. So, there are many times she would make what I (and I suspect many readers) consider a foolish decision, but it's truthful to her

character and what Vhalla would do, so I ultimately decided to keep such things.

Sabrina: We as readers experience a lot of difficult scenes that must have been hard for Vhalla to go through. Did you have a scene where it was difficult for you to write out?

Elise: At the end of the first book, the jail scene was particularly difficult to write. The first draft of that scene was a lot more intense and was edited down.

Sabrina: Magic and having an affinity was a sensitive topic for some of the characters in *Air Awakens*. Did you feel it helped Vhalla's character grow in a sense because some of her closest friends didn't regard magic in a more positive way?

Elise: I think every experience helps mold and shape a person--both positive, and negative. In my belief, it's when the people whom you hold dear, whom are your counsel, disagree that you really grow as a person. Because it forces independent choice, disregarding what either side may believe, in favor of what will make the individual happiest.

Sabrina: Thank you so much Elise for joining me today and answering some of my questions.

— Mini Review —

This novel was character driven however I think the story would have to have been my favourite part. Usually for me it's all about the characters, however this novel's premise sucked me in. I hadn't ever seen or read much where the main character apprentices in a library; let alone reads and gets lost in books as much as I do.

I also liked the sorcery aspect to the book as well. The main character Vhalla was new to sorcery, while it was being described for her benefit so she could learn, it also helped the readers understand but not feel like they were being informed. I also liked that the sorcerers magic all had element aspects to it (Firebearer, Waterrunner, Windwalker, Groundbreaker). The story was also well put together, especially considering it was the first book in the series. Though there was a lot of information to take in, I however never once felt confused or lost while reading. It was also a roller-coaster of emotions, one minute you were gushing and then the next you were frustrated. Overall it Kova demonstrated her ability to captivate readers and craft a story worth reading.



MSLA I Love to Read Grants

Amazing I Love to Read events and activities are happening in school library learning commons throughout Manitoba. To encourage you to share these wonderful activities and events, the MSLA has set aside two, \$150.00 grants to be awarded by random draw to any school library in Manitoba who sends us what they are doing to promote I Love to Read Month.

To qualify:

1. Submit, in writing, a minimum 500 word description of your I Love to Read event, lesson or activity. (Note: The MSLA reserves the right to publish this in either their website and/or journal at a future date).
2. Include your name, school, grades of students, school division, email address and phone number on your submission.
3. You must be a member of the Manitoba School Library Association to participate.
4. Your school has not won the same grant in the past five years.

Entries:

Each school in Manitoba is allowed one entry per year. Please forward your entry to Colleen Nelson (cnelson@pembinatrails.ca)

Winning Submissions:

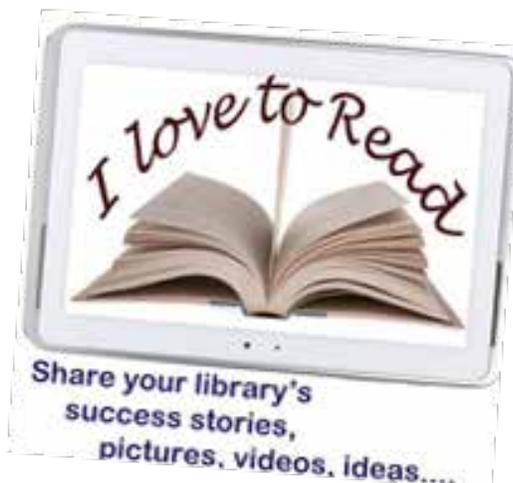
Winners will be chosen by a random draw from qualified submissions. If you are one of the lucky winners of this grant, you may either use this money to bring in an author to your school, help defray costs for attending the MYRCA award ceremony in September or purchase books for your school library.

Deadline for Submission:

March 30, 2018.

Reimbursement:

Recipients will be informed by mail. Note: Cheques to recipients will be made out to the school and not to the recipient directly.



Name It!

By Colette Dufault

As you may have already heard, the MYRCA award will be expanding into two awards starting next year! One award will be geared for grades 4-6 with 10 books on the list, the other award will be for grades 7-9 and will also have 10 books on the list. Students who read a minimum of 3 books will be able to vote for their favorite. But, we need your help!

We need new names! What should we call our new awards? Well, looking around Canada for inspiration, there is the Forest of Reading in Ontario that uses tree names for their awards; examples include the Red Maple Award, Silver Birch Award and the White Pine Award. Over in Saskatchewan, they have the Willow Awards where they use the Shining Willow and the Diamond Willow to distinguish age groups. Farther west, we find the Rocky Mountain Award (Alberta) and the Red Cedar Award (B.C.). So there seems to be a trend in naming award after trees and geographic features.

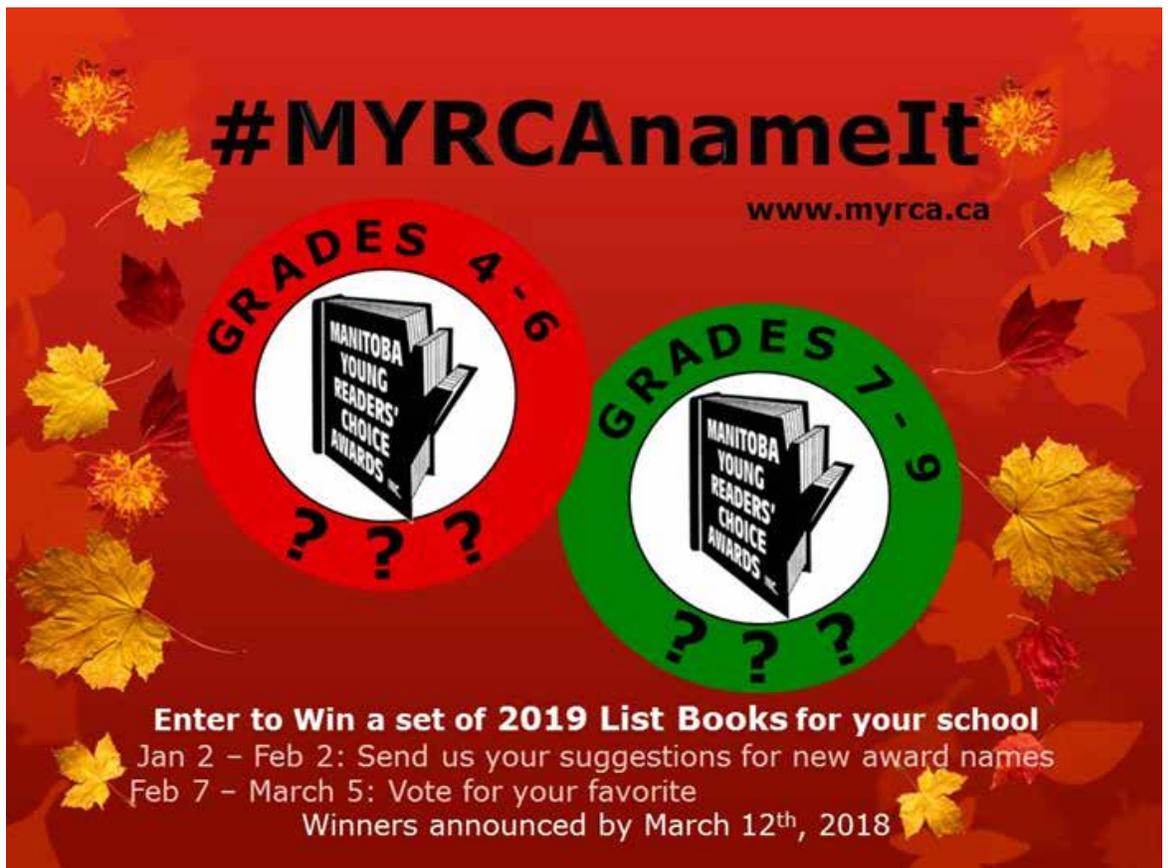
Do we want to be like everyone else? Personally, I like to chart my own path and be independent so if it were up to me, I would do something totally original...I happen to LOVE cinnamon buns, why not name one of the awards the Cinnamon Bun Award?

Well, luckily, it's not up to me. The MYRCA directors have decided to leave it up to you! If you are a parent, teacher or librarian who has students in grades 3-9, we want to hear your suggestions! Starting January 2nd until February 2nd, 2018, eligible adults will be able to submit their children's suggestions to the MYRCA committee via email (www.myrcaward.com). On February 7th, 2018, and through the rest of I Love to Read Month, students will be able to vote on their favorite names from a short list of 5 suggestions provided by you! On March 7th, we will announce the new names and award prizes for the winning suggestions.

Did I say prizes? I sure did! The school/class/library or family who

provided the winning suggestion will receive a complete set of the 2019 MYRCA list books. There will be one set of 10 books for the grades 4-6 list and one set of 10 books for the grades 7-9 list. Full contest details will be posted on www.myrca.ca for the duration of the contest.

We sincerely hope you will be able to come up with some fantastic ideas; we are ready and willing to consider them all. You can keep up to date on all the latest news by subscribing to our newsletter, by following us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook or by checking the website regularly. So stay in touch, it's going to be a memorable year!



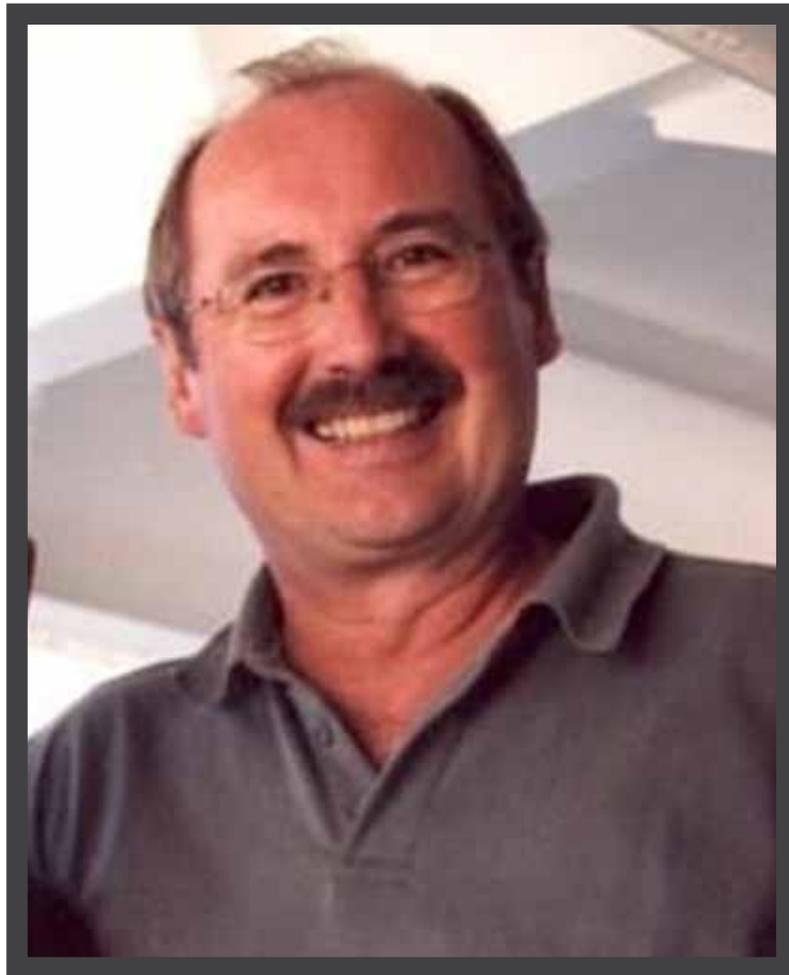
#MYRCANameIt
www.myrca.ca

GRADES 4-6
 MANITOBA YOUNG READERS' CHOICE AWARDS
 ???

GRADES 7-9
 MANITOBA YOUNG READERS' CHOICE AWARDS
 ???

Enter to Win a set of 2019 List Books for your school
 Jan 2 - Feb 2: Send us your suggestions for new award names
 Feb 7 - March 5: Vote for your favorite
 Winners announced by March 12th, 2018

IN HONOUR OF
Kevin Mowat



BORN: 13 DECEMBER 1952 IN WINDSOR, ON
DIED: 05 SEPTEMBER 2017, IN WINNIPEG, MB

Remembering Kevin Mowat (1952-2017)

By Kathleen Atkin - Coordinator of Library Services | Louis Riel School Division | Winnipeg, Manitoba



What makes a great teacher-librarian the ideal learning leader to nurture literacy and learning in our schools? Perhaps someone who grasps the “big picture” potential of a learning community? Or an experienced collaborator who models effective learning strategies, through co-teaching and collegial mentorship? Someone who demonstrates a broad understanding of curriculum, student learning, and assessment practices? Someone who leverages emerging technologies and engages in personal professional learning? If these are the indicators of the quintessential teacher-librarian, then there was no better exemplar than the incomparable Kevin Mowat, Library Learning Consultant from Winnipeg School Division.

On September 5th, 2017, our education community lost a most treasured friend and colleague. For many of us working in school libraries in Manitoba, Kevin Mowat was that exemplary mentor and leader who inspired, motivated, and advocated our work as school

library personnel. Always modest and humble, he believed strongly in the power of authentic collaboration, and demonstrated generosity in his ability to recognize and encourage the potential in others to be successful. Kevin developed strong relationships with colleagues and empowered each of us to be better school leaders as per his example.

“No matter who you were, Kevin made you feel special and that you could do anything. He did it with me, and I watched him do it with others. He loved school, he loved libraries, and he loved serving kids and staff.”

– George Couros
(Twitter, September 6th, 2017)

Stewardship and service are fundamental tenets of librarianship which Kevin Mowat honoured throughout his 40+ years in education. His dedication to the profession was always evident in how he championed our core values such as learning, literacy, equity, and democracy. He believed in our shared responsibility as school library personnel to move learning forward, to meet the emergent needs of a new generation – reimagining the library as a learning commons, embracing technology, providing equitable access for all, and fostering learning partnerships. Kevin advocated that the needs and learning priorities of our students, our schools, and our communities are the targets that guide our work. He reminded all of us working in school libraries that there is a reciprocal relationship between leadership and stewardship.

Kevin knew that the work of the library is always at the heart of the school’s purpose. In addition to promoting the instructional role of the teacher-librarian as a learning leader, Kevin was successful in aligning the school library more directly with classroom instruction, student learning and assessment practices. He was proactive in developing inclusive resource list recommendations to support Human Diversity: Gender Inclusion Core Collections for the benefit of all students and staff. He also expanded views of what it means to be literate in today’s world – successfully leveraging social media opportunities and introducing access to virtual library collections. He was passionate about exploring how libraries are essential partners in cultivating a culture of innovation within our schools and collaborated with colleagues to implement a new design thinking process model across his division.

“One of the things about having an online connection is that people like Kevin shine a light in your life, sometimes without them knowing it, and definitely from afar on a map – but very close in social spaces.”

– AJ Juliani
(Twitter, October 5th, 2017)

Kevin Mowat truly personified today’s learner in how he approached his own personal professional learning. For thousands of followers on Twitter, Kevin sourced, curated and shared new ideas on a daily basis. His Twitter feed engaged a variety of diverse educators

On Internet Friends and My Friend Kevin

By Chris Kennedy - Courtesy of the September 7, 2017 blogpost by cultureofyes



A lot is made about whether one can truly have “friends” on the Internet. It was probably Facebook that really got us talking when instead of using “connection” or some other less intimate word they used “Friend” as the type of connections we made as we connected with someone on the Internet through their site.

I have only known education with the Internet. My first email address came with my first teaching job twenty-one years ago, and my first Internet access (AOL) was at home that first fall of teaching. I have been thinking about friendship in the Internet era this week with the sudden passing of one of my Internet friends, Kevin Mowat.

Kevin was a Library Learning Consultant with the Winnipeg School Division. We got to know each other through Twitter. We shared a passion for school libraries and the key roles teacher-librarians play in leading learning. I wrote something on my blog in 2011 that he saw, and we connected from there. Kevin saw the good in the digital world for teachers – he would share resources and more

importantly cheer people on – whether it was a colleague in Winnipeg or a Superintendent in West Vancouver. When I wondered if people actually read my blog, Kevin would make a comment, or email a link to colleagues.

Kevin invited me and a colleague of mine Gary Kern to work with staff in Winnipeg in the fall of 2013. What stands out four years later is the thoughtful way he treated us. Gary and I would joke, can he really be this nice a person – nobody is this nice – but he was. Some people can be nice online but they are often someone different when you meet them – Kevin online was Kevin in person. It was a wonderful visit and Kevin’s colleagues clearly fed off his positive leadership.

As is the power of digital connections, after spending time together in 2013, we stayed even more connected over the last four years. This past weekend wishing each other the best on Facebook as school started-up again. I often thought Kevin was a great example of how friendship is changing in the digital world.

Another of our Internet friends, George Couros wrote a very nice tribute to Kevin earlier this week:

“I am very saddened by the loss of a great person today, Kevin Mowat. Kevin was someone who I became friends with over the last couple of years through my work with Winnipeg School Division, and he honestly was one of the kindest, and most supportive human beings I have ever met. For the past two years, if I was in Winnipeg, he would pick me up every morning, and we would have 15 minutes of just talking and joking around, and he would always make me smile before I started a day. I never heard him say

a bad thing about anyone, and he was one of the most passionate educators I had ever met. No matter who you were, Kevin made you feel special and that you could do anything. He did it with me, and I watched him do it with others. He loved school, he loved libraries, and he loved serving kids and staff.

The world lost a very good man and my heartfelt condolences go out to his family, friends, and Winnipeg School Division. His memory will live on in the amazing legacy he left in his work.

I will miss you Big Kev as so many others will. I am better for having you in my life.”

I got an alert on Twitter last night that Kevin was trending in Winnipeg. The tweets were amazing – I wondered if it was just me that felt the way I did about Kevin – it wasn’t. It is worth doing a Twitter search for Kevin – it will make you smile, and maybe cry. So many of the comments kept using the words kind, generous, passionate, caring.

I spent just a few days with Kevin in-person, but he was a wonderful friend. He is proof of the power and possibility of the Internet. When we see others use the technology so poorly, he reminded us that technology can bring us together, build community and support each other.

My best to Kevin’s family and colleagues. It is terribly sad. The entire education community has lost one of its leaders.

Chris

Kevin Mowat Memorial Seed Grants

In honor of Mr. Kevin Mowat, the Manitoba School Library Association is pleased to offer three, \$330.00 grants to school libraries needing funds to improve their school library programs and collections. The purpose of the grants is to address inequities in school library funding and encourage school library staffs to increase the innovation of their programs and the diversity of their collections. Possible uses for the grant might be to:

- purchase materials for your Makerspace
- purchase books that reflect the true history of Canada's Indigenous population
- purchase mother tongue or dual language books that reflect the diversity of your population
- purchase LGBTQ books that reflect the make-up of the Canadian population
- purchase materials that support inquiry-based learning
- purchase materials that support digital citizenship programming

Who Can Apply:

Anyone who is working in a school library in Manitoba and is a member of the Manitoba School Library Association.

How to Enter:

1. Write a minimum 250/maximum 500 word piece describing why your library is a good candidate for the grant and how you plan to use it.
2. Submit a budget as to how you plan to spend the money.
3. Please indicate your name, school, grades of students, school division, email address and phone number on your application.
4. Submit your written piece and budget to MSLA's Advocacy Chair, Colleen Nelson (cnelson@pembinatrails.ca)

Selection Criteria:

1. Have not been awarded a seed grant from the MSLA in the past 5 years.
2. Your written piece clearly articulates a need for the grant and describes how it will be used to improve your school library program.
3. Must be willing to write a short article for the MSLA website or journal in the same fiscal year that the grant was awarded describing how you used the grant money in your school library. Since articles are always more interesting with pictures, please submit at least one picture of how you used the grant. Please ensure that the MSLA has permission to post them on the MSLA website or journal.

Selection Committee:

A committee comprised of 3 to 5 members of the MSLA Executive will make up the selection committee. Members of the Selection Committee are not eligible to win. Decisions of the committee are final.

Submission Deadline:

January 31, 2018

Reimbursement:

Recipients will be informed by mail. Note: Cheques to recipients will be made out to the school and not to the recipient directly.

2017 Seed Grant Recipients

The 2017 recipients of the I Love to Read grants were: Bernie Wolfe Community School (Nicole Ziemianski, Teacher-Librarian) and Pacific Junction School (Sandi Ferguson, Teacher-Librarian).



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MSLA Executive, 2017–2018

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