



FVRC Newsletter

December 2023

President's Letter



There's something about December. We are (hopefully) in the comfortable throws of our school year, our students are in a groove, and winter break is right around the corner. If my math is correct, we are about 1/3 of the way through the school year. Take a minute to reflect. What is your favorite memory thus far? Which student (or students) stand out in your class? Which student (or students) need a little more attention to get them over the hump before the end of the month? What are you most proud of in the last 12 months? As for me and your FVRC board, I am most proud

of the camaraderie and support we have provided one another. Without it, we would not be able to host such amazing events.

I hope you were able to join us in September for our Fall Book Talk with Anderson's and Crossland Literacy. Not only were we introduced to glorious new books, the conversations that took place among speakers and attendees were raw and honest. I feel so lucky to have been with each of you. In November, your FVRC board hosted an Illinois Reads event at the Aurora Santori Library. Children from the community were ushered into a camp-like atmosphere with fun activities such as s'more making, constellation building, and going on a bear hunt. There were therapy dogs, story readings, photo ops and, of course, free books! Adults and children, alike, enjoyed the event, but I think my favorite part was when a group of high school students joined us after the local Veterans Day parade. These young people exuded such joy, compassion, and fun, and they even stayed to help us clean up once the event was over! To see our Illinois Reads Family Reading Day through the eyes of every person that came through the doors was definitely a highlight of my November.



Lucky for you, the first speaker! Join us Monday, March 11th as we spend the evening with Schu and his “heart” stories. We will explore how the universal truths found in stories can change us, inspire the readers we support, connect readers to each other, answer our deepest questions and promote healing. And, of course, we will wind down the school year with our annual **Wine, Dine, and Collaborate** on Friday, May 17th. This is always such a fun event with our members; I love spending time with those I know and meeting new faces!

Our December newsletter is packed with so many good things; please take a few moments to look over all of the information your FVRC board has collaborated on and provided for you.

Inspire Growth,
Camille Lutz
FVRC President

IRC Award Update

Deadline for the ILA Exemplary Reading Program Award is December 31.

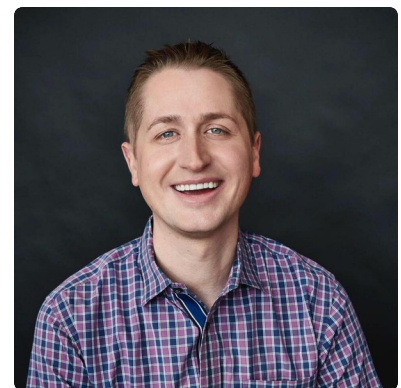
<https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-involved/awards-recognition/awards-grants/exemplary-reading-award>

The Gift of Story with John Schu

Spring Event with John Schu

Come see **John Schu** in Geneva! FVRC will be hosting John on Monday, March 11th at Geneva Public Library from 6-8 pm.

He is a writer and presenter for all educators. His workshops are universal, and you are sure to leave Monday evening rejuvenated and excited to incorporate what you learned!



John will share his love of reading with a session titled, *The Gift of Story*. Our workshop will take us on a journey through the five affective elements of story. His newest book, *Louder Than Hunger*, will also be released, and we will have the opportunity to celebrate his first middle grade novel with him!

The first 25 people link to register and



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<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-gift-of-story-with-john-schu-tickets-754230201837>



Fox Valley Reading Council's Literacy Project Partnership with Love Smiles

Love Smiles is an Illinois-based 501 non-profit organization dedicated to bringing awareness to pediatric cancer while providing moments of peace to those diagnosed and their families.

This month, we delivered several boxes of books from our council. THANK YOU to the members who recently donated to this cause!



We accept donations of any age books. If you would like to donate, contact dianawilkie@aol.com. Or bring donations to our winter event.

<https://www.love-smiles.org/>

Welcome New Members to FVRC!

- Farah Alnemer
- Sandra Boulos
- Jennifer Collins
- Maggie Koch
- Ashley LaGesse
- Elaine Modene



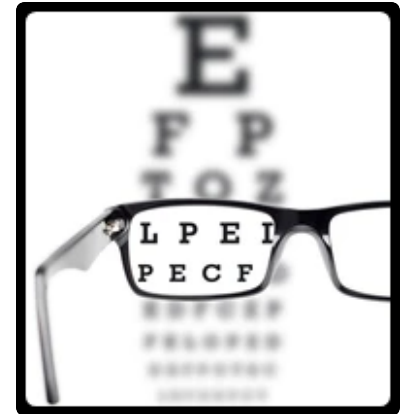
Kristen O'Brien
Brad Wieher
Lauren Zalud
Amy Bender
Cassandra Shelley
Michele Chancey
Annah Dulaney
Jennifer Lancaster
Sandra Lundgren
Evelyn Martin
Jamil Nichols
Mia Salas
Payton Siragusa
Alisha Suvada Welc
Carrie Tucker



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The Vision of the Illinois Reading Council

The Illinois Reading Council advocates for high-quality literacy opportunities that empower all learners. As a leading literacy organization, the IRC provides access to research, materials, and methodologies to teach literacy and promote lifelong learning. As an active well-organized system of local and special interest councils and state committees, the IRC provides a supportive network for grassroots involvement and the exchange of information for a diverse membership.



Book Reviews



My Powerful Hair

Written by: Carole Lindstrom

Illustrated by: Steph Littlebird
(Picture Book)

Mom never had long hair because she was told it was too wild. Grandma couldn't have long hair because hers was taken away from her. However, one young girl can't wait to grow her hair long – for herself, for her family, for her connection to her culture and the Earth,



who came before



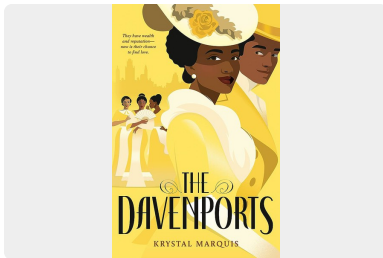
Stuntboy, In-Between Time

By: Jason Reynolds

Illustrated by: Raul the Third

(Middle School)

The sequel to *Stuntboy in the Meantime* reconnects the readers with Portico Reeves, the greatest superhero a lot of people never heard of. And that's the way he likes it because then no one can get in the way of him keeping everyone safe. After all, he's Stuntboy – he's got all the moves and the saves. Except . . . he wasn't able to save his parents from becoming exes. They live on two separate floors in their apartment building, and he is never fully with one parent or the other. He's in-between, all the time.



The Davenports

By: Krystal Marquis

(YA)

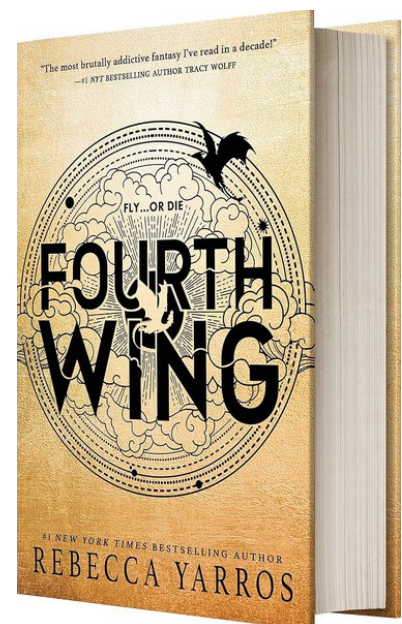
The young protagonists in this novel are based on the real-life daughters of C. R. Patterson, founder of the first Black owned car company in the United States. *The Davenports* takes place in 1910 Chicago and the hallmarks of turn-of-the-century successes are prevalent, such as ball gowns, young love, and ambition. Publishers Weekly offers this praise: "Marquis perceptively explores the history and momentous impact of Black achievements and wealth during an underreported period in U.S. History."

Book Reviews

Fourth Wing By: Rebecca Yarros

(Adult)

Twenty-year-old Violet Sorrengail was supposed to enter the Scribe Quadrant, living a quiet life among books and history. Now, the commanding general—also known as her tougher than anyone mother—has ordered Violet to join the hundreds of candidates striving to become the elite of Navarre: dragon riders. But Violet is smaller and weaker than everyone else and dragons don't bond with the weak, they incinerate them. With fewer dragons willing to bond than cadets, most would kill Violet to better their own chances of success. The rest would kill her just for being her mother's daughter—like Xaden Riorson, the most powerful and ruthless wingleader in the Riders Quadrant. With every passing day, the war outside grows



more deadly, the ki
worse, Violet begin



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ies to rise. Even

Friends, enemies, lovers. Everyone at Basgiath War College has an agenda—because once you enter, there are only two ways out: graduate or die.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Board Member Spotlight-Diana Wilkie

1. What is your name and position with FVRC? What do you do?

Diana Wilkie, FVRC Treasurer

2. What's one professional skill or concept you are passionate about? Bringing books to life for kids so they see reading as powerful! Read alouds and shared reading is my jam. I also love to read novels with middle grades in my intervention groups.

3. What behavior or personality trait do you most attribute your success to and why? I have passion for what I do. Reading with students brings me great joy!

4. What led you to this career? What was your first job? My parents always said I was born wanting to teach. The favorite gift from my Grandma was 2nd grade workbooks so that I could teach at home and give my sisters homework. It is definitely in my blood. My first job was being a 4th grade teacher in Carpentersville. Special memories with this first group of students!

5. What energizes you at work? The kids I work with each day! That's it - the kids love coming to my classroom and add to my joy.



6. **What's a work**
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7. **Tell us about your family.** *I have 2 daughters and 3 grandchildren - the loves of my life.*

8. **What's one thing people don't know about you?** *When I first went to school, I was already reading and loved finding a book on my carpet square each morning. I immediately was sent to first grade for reading. Loved it so much that it was the one time in my life I remember being quiet. The teacher would forget about me as I would happily complete first grade work. They soon called my parents in and suggested I just stay in 1st - so really there was no kindergarten for me!*

9. **Dog or cat person?** *Dog*

10. **What's your guilty pleasure?** *Panera's Mac 'n Cheese!*

11. **If you could snap your fingers and be an expert in something, what would it be?** *Writing!*

12. **What's one of your favorite memories from the past year?** *Climbing a waterfall in Dominica with some of my favorite people from this Caribbean island!*

13. **What do you bring to FVRC? Are you learning anything now that might help the group?** *I believe I bring organization to FVRC and the desire to bring fantastic events to our members. I am learning much from being on the Executive board of IRC and hope to bring that insight home to our local council.*

14. **What are three words you would use to describe yourself?** *Empathetic, planner and a good friend*

15. **Share anything else you'd like to share with us.** *So happy to be a part of the Illinois Reading Council. My bucket is full every time I am with these educators who are full of knowledge and passion for what they do.*

International & Intranational Projects

This year we donated to the **Intra-National project with the Navajo Nation** in Monument Valley, Utah. Our donation will be used to purchase school supplies for students at Monument Valley High School on the Navajo Nation.

IRC Council of Excellence

Our hard work paid off! We were awarded the Council of Excellence this year from IRC!





Fox Valley



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Fox is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

Created with  **smore**

Communicate quickly and effectively with interactive newsletters.

Smore empowers educators to connect with their community, streamline school communications, and increase engagement.

[Create a newsletter](#)

