



St. Croix Valley Reading Council

Spring 2015

John Schumacher to Speak at Spring Meeting

John Schumacher (aka Mr. Schu) is a blogger and teacher-librarian at Brook Forest Elementary School in Oak Brook, Illinois. He has served on ALSC’s Children and Technology committee, AASL’s Best Websites for Teaching and Learning, two readers’ choice award committees, and the School Library Month planning committee. *Library Journal* named him “The Xtreme Librarian” for the high level of exertion and gears and stunts he uses to get kids reading, and *Instructor Magazine* named him a Cool Teacher for redefining what it means to be a teacher-librarian. John served on the 2014 Newbery committee, which named *Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures* “the most distinguished contribution to children’s literature.”

Please join the SCVRC on Saturday, April 25, as John provides a glimpse into his elementary school library program. Participants will learn about practical and innovative ways to get their students excited about reading, booktalking, connecting with authors, and technology.

The meeting will once again be at Ready Randy’s in New Richmond. Book sale and social hour begin at 9:00 a.m., breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and John’s presentation at 10:15 am.

Additional information about Mr. Schu’s work:

•“Interview with a school librarian: Q & A with John Schumacher” by Michael Barrett

(<http://oomscholasticblog.com/post/interview-school-librarian-q-john-schumacher>)

•“Mr. Schu Finds ‘Forever Books’ for Kids” by Naomi Krueger

(<http://booksmakeadifference.com/john-schumacher/>)

•Blog: MrSchuReads.com

•Twitter: [@MrSchuReads](https://twitter.com/MrSchuReads)



Officer Team

♦ Lindsay Bruder,
Secretary

♦ Kelly Burm,
Treasurer

♦ Megan Elmhorst,
WSRA and IRA Contact

♦ Lynsey Gausman

♦ Joan Krumm

♦ Meredith Oman,
Membership Coordinator

♦ Laura Ulrich,
Newsletter Editor/WSRA
and IRA Contact

In this issue:

Spring Speaker	1
Winter Speaker/ Secretary’s Report	2
Book Recommendations	3
Volunteer Opportunities	3
WSRA Professional Development Opportunities	3

Secretary's Report: Winter Meeting 2015

By Lindsay Bruder, SCVRC Secretary

A Challenge in Education

Have you ever been with your class or some students in the library checking out books? While you were in there, did you gravitate towards helping the boys pick out books? Were the students able to pick out books “they” wanted or were you guiding them into their choices? Author John Coy had us stop and think about the kinds of messages we’re sending to students, but especially to our boy population. What’s acceptable to read and what’s considered reading? He challenged us to question our practices and thoughts on what boys are reading and what we allow or guide them into reading.

On Tuesday, February 17, Author John Coy spoke to the SCVRC (St. Croix Valley Reading Council) members at Ready Randy’s in New Richmond. He spoke with energy and passion that resonated through the room about “Boys and Reading.” He states, “We have a problem.” With the surprising statistics about the shift in how school and the work force have become more female driven, males have taken a back seat and if we don’t do something about boys’ interest in reading, boys will continue to fail. He states that when boys want to read the same book or kinds of books, LET THEM! They are bound to become interested in something else along the way. “Let them read what they want to read!”

Up until this night, I hadn’t really examined my practice with boys and reading. I’m sure others in the room contemplated their practices as well. To our surprise, John said to let children read what educators might not consider quality literature, including Guinness Book of World Records, drawing how-to books, and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* type books. It’s this way of thinking that I know I hadn’t thought of. John Coy spoke passionately about how boys feel confined in many aspects of school – reading, recess, and even testing. They are very aware of where they “rank” with their classmates and often feel like “what’s the use” when trying to measure up. Being sure to encourage books, all kinds of books, is extremely important to the boys’ confidence and even motivation to move forward.

John Coy believes boys decide about being readers at third, fourth, and fifth grades. He wanted to be sure the boys at this age had different books to read that could peak their interest. Author of *Hoop Genius*, John Coy believes that boys are often driven to read through competition. In addition, he explains that if a household has 100 books in it, the child is more likely to do well. We need to get books in houses as much as possible.

With not many books geared to the interest of boys, he took it upon himself to write the first book in the “4 for 4 Series,” *Love of the Game*, to try to change that. He also brings up a valid point about boys and non-fiction. Boys’ interests are often linked to non-fiction. The title “non” fictions offers a feeling that these types of books are somewhat inferior to that of fiction books. He shared that these types of books have now been changed to “true” or “real” stories instead of being named “non” fiction.

I end with this... a famous author, Dr. Suess, once wrote, “A person’s a person no matter how small.” I leave you with this thought, “A book is a book no matter what kind.” Remember, reading can include so many different facets. Boys are in desperate need of our help to guide them into what “they” want to read. When you are in the library in the near future, I challenge you to observe rather than step in. See what the boys choose and find peace they are CHOOSING books to check out – that’s the first step into reading – getting books into their hands that they are willing to read!

Looking for a good book?

If you are in search of a good book to read this spring or over summer vacation, consider adding the following titles to your To Read list:

Professional Books

- *In Defense of Read-Aloud* by Steven Layne
- *In the Best Interest of Students: Staying True to What Works in the ELA Classroom* by Kelly Gallagher

Young Adult Books

- *The Honest Truth* by Dan Gemeinhart
- *The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion, and the Fall of the Imperial Russia* by Candace Fleming

Middle Grade Books

- *Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Graphic Novels for Middle Grade Readers

- *Nnews* by Doug TenNapel
- *Roller Girl* by Victoria Jamieson

Picture Books

- *Creature Features: Twenty-Five Animals Explain Why They Look the Way They Do* by Steve Jenkins
- *Wolfie The Bunny* by Ame Dyckman

Local and State Opportunities

If you have a great idea for an upcoming presenter, please share with any member of the officer team. We are always interested in new ideas.

WSRA is always looking for individuals to get involved at the state level. By serving on committees or attending assemblies or institutes, educators are able to keep extremely current on what is happening in the area of literacy and also education in general. Being able to collaborate with others who are concerned about literacy is also very rewarding.

If you are interested in getting involved at the state level, please contact Jan Kienbaum, Northwest Zone Coordinator, with questions. Her email address is finetree@charter.net.



Wisconsin State Reading Association
WSRA . . . providing leadership, advocacy and expertise

WSRA and IRC Host Wired Wednesdays

If you are interested in professional development, but can't find the time or funding to attend all you would like, "the Wisconsin State Reading Association (WSRA) and the Illinois Reading Council (IRC) are excited to announce a unique collaboration! The 2014-2015 Wired Wednesday Webinars will focus on the Common Core State Standards in Speaking and Listening. All webinars begin at 7:00 p.m. Wired Wednesday Webinars will be exclusive to WSRA and IRC members. Mark your calendars now to take part in this affordable and convenient professional development opportunity!" Past Wired Wednesdays are also available on the WSRA website for WSRA members.

Upcoming Topic Includes:

Wednesday, April 15: Matt Copeland, Facilitating Student Discussion with Socratic Circles

*For more information and additional professional development events, please visit www.wsra.org.

*Pictures used in this newsletter were found on the following sites:

<http://gatheringbooks.org/2014/04/02/spring-reading-in-2014/>

<http://booksmakeadifference.com/john-schumacher/>