

INSIGHT

Jesse White · Secretary of State & State Librarian

Emerging Writers Competition winners honored

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White recently honored winners of the third annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition at an awards ceremony in Chicago. White created the competition to promote writing and creativity and to provide a unique outlet for recognizing new Illinois literary talent.

"I am proud and honored to congratulate these very talented individuals," said Secretary White. "Illinois has a long history of producing exceptional writers, and I hope that all the writers who entered the contest will continue inspiring us with their poems and short stories." Prizes were awarded to five winners in two categories:

Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award

First place – Mary Lucille Hays of White Heath for "Tippet Hill"
 Second place – Samira Grace Didos of Urbana for "Antiques"
 Third place – Samira Grace

Didos of Urbana for "Fear of Laughter"

James Jones Short Story Award

First place – Lorie Kolak of Chicago for "Her Terrible Singing Voice and Love of Singing"
 Second place – Andrew Gregory Krzak of New Lenox for "24 Frames"
 Third place – Joseph A. Woods of Park Forest for "Black Shines"

Each winner received a plaque and a monetary award: \$500-first place, \$300-second place and \$100-third place. In addition, winning short stories will be submitted to *Ninth Letter* magazine and *Downstate Story* magazine, and winning poems to *RHINO* magazine, *Ninth Letter* magazine and *Another Chicago Magazine* for possible publication.

The writing competition is a joint venture of the Illinois Center for the Book, for which Secretary White serves as honorary chair, the Illinois State Library and the James Jones Literary Society,

which provides generous financial support for the competition. Illinois Poet Laureate Kevin Stein was final judge for the poetry entries, and author Kaylie Jones, daughter of legendary Illinois writer James Jones (*From Here to Eternity*), was final judge for the short story entries.

In related news, 2006 Emerging Writers winners Anthony Coman of DeKalb and Susan Srikant of Urbana are being published. Anthony's first-place poetry entry, "House," will be published in the April issue of *RHINO* magazine. Susan's third-place short-story entry, "My Arrival in Horseshoe, Nevada," will be published by *Downstate Story* magazine in Volume 16 of the 2007 edition.

For information on the 2008 Illinois Emerging Writers Competition or to read the winning short story and poetry entries from the last two years, visit illinoiscenterforthebook.org.



Attending the 2007 Illinois Emerging Writers Competition awards ceremony were (left to right): Bonnie Matheis, coordinator of the Illinois Center for the Book; winner Andrew Gregory Krzak; Secretary of State Jesse White; winner Lorie Kolak; Illinois State Library Director Anne Craig; and winners Joseph Woods, Mary Lucille Hays and Samira Grace Didos.

Illinois Library Day set for April 10

Mark your calendars and plan to take part in Illinois Library Day in Springfield on Thursday, April 10. This is one of the most important days for the library community, when library advocates can meet with their lawmakers at the State Capitol to discuss issues and concerns facing Illinois libraries. Another march and rally also are planned. Visit www.illinoislibraryday.info for up-to-date information on the day's events.

Insight briefs

News spreads fast on "E-news"

The State Library's weekly electronic newsletter, "E-news from the ISL," is the best source available to find out what's going on at the State Library, from grant offerings and important meetings to news about electronic resources. To join the more than 6,000 subscribers who depend on E-news every Friday, visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/home.html.

Try Ask?Away for free!

If your library has yet to try the State Library's Ask?Away virtual reference service, you can sample it free through May 15. Have questions? Let Ask?Away help answer them. Please take advantage of this great opportunity to provide 24/7/365 reference service to your patrons. Join the more than 200 libraries participating in this exciting venture. For more information, visit www.askawayillinois.info or contact Natalie Tagge at 217-557-6329 or ntagge@ilsos.net.

Big enrollment for "Read for a Lifetime"

Read for a Lifetime is the State Library's highly acclaimed reading program for high school students. The 2007-08 school year has 4,737 students signed up for the program, in which participants must read at least four books from a list of 25 titles representing a mix of classic and contemporary literature. Students completing the program will receive a Certificate of Achievement from Secretary of State Jesse White and a discount coupon from Read for a Lifetime co-sponsor Waldenbooks.

Electronic Resource Exposition

The State Library's annual Electronic Resource Exposition (E-R-XPO) was held in December at Schaumburg Township District Library. This popular free event allows electronic resource representatives to showcase various databases applicable to all types of libraries — academic, public, school and special. Participants appreciate the one-on-one contact with product representatives and the various vendor focus sessions. Thanks to everyone who made E-R-XPO a big success!



Kori Kubitz from Rosen Publishing gave a demonstration to a group of librarians at the E-R-EXPO.



Gwen Harrison (left) and Andrew Bullen of the State Library were on hand during E-R-XPO to answer questions from attendees.

ISL to host exhibit on Midwest POWs

The Illinois State Library will host a fascinating one-day exhibit, "Behind Barbed Wire: Midwest POWs in Nazi Germany," on Friday, March 28, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The exhibit will be housed in a bus called a "BUS-eum" parked outside the north door of the library.

The exhibit is provided by TRACES, a non-profit educational organization created to gather, preserve and present stories of people from the Midwest and Germany or Austria who encountered each other during World War II. Last year the State Library hosted another TRACES bus exhibit on German/American civilian internment during World War II. Several hundred patrons visited that exhibit.

World War II veterans who visit the March 28 TRACES exhibit will be encouraged to be interviewed by State Library staff for Secretary of State Jesse White's Illinois Veterans' History Project. The ongoing project documents war-time remembrances from Illinois veterans and their families.

For more information about the exhibit, please visit www.traces.org.

Veterans' History Project DVDs available on loan

Last fall the Alliance Library System and the State Library hosted a seminar for librarians to learn about the Illinois Veterans' History Project, created by Secretary of State Jesse White to help preserve the stories and memories of Illinois veterans and their families. The seminar was recorded so librarians and others who could not attend could still learn about this important initiative, how to conduct oral interviews with veterans, and how to get their communities involved. Eight DVDs are now available on loan by requesting "A Salute to Veterans" through OCLC and I-Share.

Try-it! Illinois database trial

The eighth annual Try-It! Illinois database trial, sponsored by the State Library, was held Oct.1-Nov. 30, 2007, during which 37,367 users sampled the database. Try-It! Illinois offers the 5,000-plus ILLINET member libraries, their staffs and their communities — library users, customers, clients, faculty, students and boards — an opportunity to survey and evaluate a wide variety of electronic resources.

Thanks to an agreement between the State Library and participating electronic resource vendors, there is no charge for accessing these databases during the trial period. Libraries share Try-It! Illinois with their patrons, who have the opportunity to use and recommend electronic resources for possible purchase at the local level. Try-It! Illinois users also suggest electronic resources for consideration in E-RICH, the State Library's electronic resource service that works with vendors to negotiate best prices for Illinois libraries.

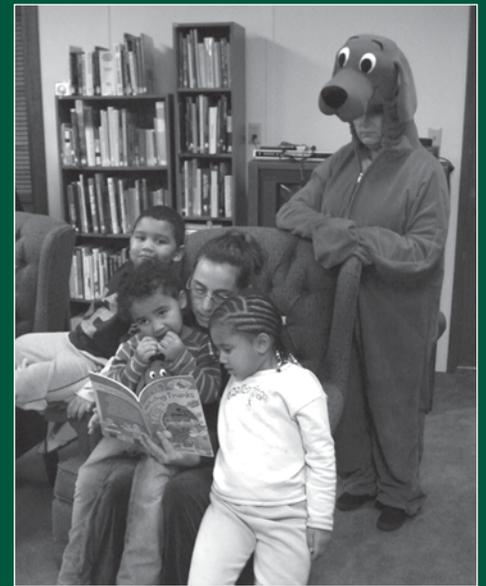
Thanks to our 2007 participating vendors:

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Family Reading Night a crowd pleaser

Family Reading Night activities were held at hundreds of sites across Illinois on Thursday, Nov. 15, 2007.

Sponsored by Secretary of State Jesse White and the Illinois State Library to encourage parents to read regularly with their children, Family Reading Night is held annually on the third Thursday in November. An order form for posters and bookmarks for this year's Family Reading Night on November 20 is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com.



The Sumner family (above) joined Clifford the Big Red Dog for Family Reading Night at Harrisburg Public Library, while the Wenzel family (below) participated in activities at Shawnee Public Library. Both events were organized by South-eastern Illinois College.



SAVE THE DATE

March 12

Illinois State Library
Advisory Committee Meeting
Illinois State Library

March 28

"Behind Barbed Wire: Midwest POWs
in Nazi Germany" Bus Exhibit
Illinois State Library

April 1-3

Synergy Leadership Conference
Starved Rock Lodge, Utica

April 10

Illinois Library Day
Illinois State Library

April 13-19

National Library Week

Congratulations...



LEFT: The State Library Literacy Office staff held a party for Myra Johnson, who retired in December following nine years as a Literacy Program specialist. Pictured left to right are: Dorothy Whitney, Diane Manning, Literacy Office Manager Cyndy Colletti, Myra, JoAnne Hughes and Mark Shaffer.

RIGHT: State Library staff held a retirement party in December for Fred Hicks (center) of the Cataloging Division, who retired after 11 years with the State Library. Pictured with Fred are former State Library employee Ron Leesman and Karen Egan of the Library Development Group.



...on retirement from ISL



Insight
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