

# INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION International Development in the Caribbean (IDCC) Newsletter August, 2006

[www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)

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This newsletter is the result of an IDCC meeting held in St. Croix, August 16-18, 2006. Members attending were:

#### **Dr. Jim Wile, IRA International Director**

Ann Fergusson, Barbados  
Ameenah Ahad, Bermuda  
Marsha Frett, British Virgin Islands  
Michele Warrick, Grenada  
Barbara Richards, Guyana  
Joan Hay, Jamaica  
Lynette Noel, Trinidad  
Janice Ferdinand, US Virgin Islands

The IDCC committee members had three goals for the meeting.

- Create this newsletter to share Information about literacy activities going on in the Caribbean, conferences, and contact people
- Increase communication among Caribbean IRA councils and affiliates.
- Write IRA Developing Nations Grants for \$2,500 US.

If your IRA council or affiliate is not represented in this newsletter we hope you will contact a member of this committee. Our goal is to continue to create a newsletter at least yearly.

## **Caribbean Conferences**

Why don't you plan to attend one?

**Bermuda:** 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Reading Conference, Feb 3, 2007 Topic: TBA [aahad@college.bm](mailto:aahad@college.bm)

**Grenada:** Reading Conference first week of July, 2007 [michelewarrick@hotmail.com](mailto:michelewarrick@hotmail.com)

**Guyana:** "Empowering School Leavers Through Literacy Skills", Last week in August, 2007 [babszee@yahoo.com](mailto:babszee@yahoo.com)

**St. Croix USVI:** Spring Conference, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
Featured speakers IRA Board members Maryann Manning & Jill Lewis [maubi@hotmail.com](mailto:maubi@hotmail.com)

**Trinidad:** National Conference, April 5 & 6, 2007  
"Exploring Literacy Through Arts-based Learning"  
[Lyntn8@yahoo.com](mailto:Lyntn8@yahoo.com) or [cprevattw@yahoo.com](mailto:cprevattw@yahoo.com)

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## **Promoting Council Development in the Caribbean**

Committee members have adopted a Caribbean island, without a recognized reading council, to work with. They will try to make contacts and help develop or re-establish IRA reading associations.

- Lynette Noel & Trinidad Assoc. will adopt Belize
- Ann Fergusson & Barbados Assoc. will adopt
- Michele Warrick & Granada Assoc. will adopt St. Vincent
- Barbara Richards & Guyana Assoc. will adopt St. Lucia
- Marsha Frett-Williams & British Virgin Islands Assoc. will adopt Montserrat
- Janice Ferdinand & St. Croix Assoc. will adopt St. Thomas USVI
- Joan Hay & Jamaica Assoc. will adopt Cayman Islands
- Ameenah Ahad from Bermuda Assoc. will adopt Anguilla

## BARBADOS

Contact person Ann Fergusson  
[annfergusson@hotmail.com](mailto:annfergusson@hotmail.com)  
4 Poinsettia Drive, West Terrace, St. James, Barbados

Congratulations to the Barbados Reading Association on re-launching their organization. The first meeting identified needs assessments on both a local and national level. In order to recruit members for the Association, letters will be sent to primary and secondary schools inviting teachers to join the Association. Workshops will be organized to support (Barbados continued) the classroom teachers. We would like the theme of this workshop to be about current research based teaching methods. Members expressed interest in attending the IRA Conference in Toronto, Canada in 2007, since much can be gained from international exposure.

## BERMUDA

*Bermuda Reading Association*  
P.O. Box DV755, Devonshire DV BX, Bermuda

President: Yolanda Burrows  
Corresponding Secretary: Wynford R. Austin  
[wrabda97@yahoo.com](mailto:wrabda97@yahoo.com)

**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Reading Conference** was held on Saturday, February 3, 2006. The featured conference speaker was Dr. Karen Wixon, member of the International Reading Association Board of Directors. Additionally there was a workshop presented by Ms. Darnell Wynn & Mr. Christopher Swan, local educators. Approximately 300 teachers and parents attended the conference, which was strongly supported by the Ministry of Education.

On April 21, the BRA launched a new activity - a **story telling corner** at the Annual Exhibition, formerly the Agricultural Exhibition. This event is attended by all school children and many members of the community. Attendees of all ages enjoyed the stories.

The Bermuda Reading Association sponsored an Island-wide **TV-Turnoff Week** from Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, April 30. Rather than watch TV, community members were encouraged to

(Bermuda Continued)  
participate in alternative relaxing and recreational activities, especially reading. Information was disseminated to the community via radio and newspaper articles. A contest was held to determine which schools had the most students actively observing the week. Top prizes were donated by Scholastic Publishing and three major local bookstores. This event has become a trademark of the Bermuda Reading Association with schools holding complementary events that promote reading.

Two Bermuda Reading Association members, Ameenah Ahad and Juliette Harris, made presentations for the Bibliotherapy SIG at the 2006 **IRA Conference** in Chicago on May 2.

## BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

- is dedicated to fostering the love of reading and the development of lifelong readers.

***Literacy our goal for all.***

*President – Yvonne Mactavious*

*Contact: H. Lynden Smith 284 468-3701 x 2527 (M, W, F) [bvirc6200@hotmail.com](mailto:bvirc6200@hotmail.com)*

### ***Upcoming Events***

August 26, 2006

Make-N-Take Workshop (Membership Drive)  
Council member Marsha Frett-Williams and St. Croix, USVI IRA member Linda Perez will be presenting "ePublishing Culturally Relevant Books for the Classroom" This was a Caribbean presentation given at the IRA conference in Chicago. Tortola participants will learn to make their own culturally relevant books using MicroSoft Word and insert pictures from digital cameras.

- September 8, 2006

Walk for Literacy is a walk-a-thon to draw local attention of the need for literacy programs.

Award for the Most Improved Student  
This award is presented to a student from a challenged home environment. Teachers make recommendations and the council makes the final selection.

- TBA

Essay contest "Give an account of the first time you saw and/or rode in a motorcar."

## Grenada

*Michele Greaves-Warrick, President*  
*michelewarrick@hotmail.com*

Challenges :. As an association we are planning to re-launch now that our lives are a bit normal after hurricane Ivan and Emily. Most school structures are in place. We are planning a number of activities for the upcoming school year.

Our Association looks forward to the Caribbean Chapter of the International Reading Association for continuing help and support

Our May-June reading festival is linked to the National Young Authors Programme. The event allows students to share original writing. All students receive tokens of appreciation.

- Sept. 8, 2006 - Drop Everything and Read Day
- International Literacy Month Promotion - October 2006
- Story Telling Day October 2006
- Reception of Reading Association and Tea party - November 2006
- Re-Launch/Implementation of Young Authors Programme  
School Year September 2006-July 2007
- Reading Festival May -June 2007
- Attend Reading Workshop Trinidad - April 2007.

## GUYANA

### **Guyana Association for Reading and Language Development (GARLAND)**

*President, Landomae Fraser*

Contact: Barbara Richards [babszee@yahoo.com](mailto:babszee@yahoo.com)

At the moment Guyana has been trying out a lot of education intervention so that the literacy capacity of our people may increase.

- The Caribbean Centre for Excellent Teacher Training (CETT) (A Literacy project) is one of the Projects piloted in six of our schools. They are off the ground and are still in the preliminary stage of equipping schools and the Teachers Training College with the necessary resources needed to implement the Programme. Some of GARLAND members are a part of this Project.
- There is also the Basic Education Access
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(Guyana continued)

Management Programme (BEAMS). This is another Literacy Programme and some of our members are involved in the training programme. This Programme has a cascade model approach. The FIVE BIG IDEAS are emphasized in this Program. Guyana is divided into ten Administrative Regions and all the teachers were trained to implement this Program come September, 2006.

- For International Literacy Day (Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>)- Master Trainers attached to the BEAMS Program will implement the DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) strategy in all schools of Guyana.

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## JAMAICA

President, Joan Hay

P.O. Box 470 Kingston Town, Jamaica WI

[jdolphyhay@yahoo.com](mailto:jdolphyhay@yahoo.com)

The Jamaica Reading Association's Reading Tea Party has been one of the most popular and well attended events. The main purpose is to raise funds for the diverse activities of the Association. However, it seems to publicize JRA, to bring members together, especially those in the parishes of Kingston, St. Andrew, and St. Catherine. It also sustains the interest of students, parents, and everyone in reading. Ideally the planning should commence one year before, but often less time is used.

Our council has partnerships with Heart Trust/NTA, Jamaica Library Service, Jamaica Teachers' Association, National Association of Teachers of English, and CETT.

For National Reading Week, the last week of April, JRA promotes literacy by holding national church services recognizing the importance of reading. Storytelling sessions and forums are also planned. The JRA's very important annual general meeting is held at the end of this week.



## ST. CROIX, US VIRGIN ISLANDS

President: Janice Ferdinand

[maubi@hotmail.com](mailto:maubi@hotmail.com)

The St. Croix Reading Council's **Make and Take Workshop** is the fall kick-off activity. Members are provided all materials needed with detailed instructions on how to make a literacy learning center that may also build curiosity about a book for a young reader. Members are aware that all the materials that are needed for a project is available complements of the council. As a general rule, participants are not allowed to leave with materials unless it has been snipped, folded or bent into a project.

For a small entrance fee, members are able to make a variety of story game boards, theme-related books/journals, recyclable instruments, or learning centers/folders for immediate use. The Make and Take Workshops are most desired by our members. Equally important, we attract new members who often register to join the council on-site.

The March 2006 St. Croix Conference "**Promoting Literacy through Imaginative Stories**", was the first conference to re-establish its Young Authors' contest. The keynote speaker was professional story teller, Brett Dillingham from Alaska and former Alaska IRA state president. Mr. Dillingham also provided a one week in-service working with fourth grade students while teachers observed his methods. All were delighted with cultural stories from Alaska while learning to create their own Caribbean cultural stores. Hopefully Mr. Dillingham will return next year and perhaps also work in our sister island of St. Thomas.

## ST. THOMAS, United States Virgin Islands

Linda Perez, the Caribbean Chairperson for the IRA International Development Committee, is looking for interested professionals to re-establish the St. Thomas Reading Council. Anyone interested please contact Linda Perez [Lperez@pennswoods.net](mailto:Lperez@pennswoods.net) for more information.

CONGRATULATIONS: Caribbean members presented at the IRA conference in Chicago. Linda Perez & Veronica Prescott from St. Croix, Marsha Frett from British Virgin Islands, & Eulalie Semper from Antigua presented "ePublishing Culturally Relevant Books for the Classroom". We need more presenters to share their wonderful teaching methods to the rest of the world.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Website: [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)

President: Lynette Noel

13-15 Chrysanthemum Drive, Morvant, Trinidad, W.I.  
868 626- 6722 (Home) or 868 678- 1566 (Mobile)  
[lyntn8@yahoo.com](mailto:lyntn8@yahoo.com)

Trinidad and Tobago ... on fire for Reading!

Our next focus will be on **International Literacy Day** September 8, celebrations. Members, teachers, parents, children and Ministry officials will join in the Walk for Literacy. Members will visit hospitals to introduce new mothers to the joy of reading. The annual tea party will be held on September 10.

Plans are underway for our Easter Conference 2007. The theme is "**Exploring Literacy through Arts-based Learning**". International and local educators will facilitate this two-day literacy event. We extend an invitation to educators and other interested persons to avail themselves of this wonderful opportunity for professional development and congeniality.

November – Books Come Alive--- Dramatic presentations of calypso as poetry is a yearly event. Students from throughout Trinidad and Tobago prepare dramatic calypso presentations, inviting parents and the public. This is an exciting and well attended event.

Other events we sponsor are: Read-In Chain--- Women in the Caribbean, I.R.A. magazines as a source of best practice

Meetings

Meetings are usually held every third Saturday at our new office, Room B201 Professional Centre, Wrightson Road., from 10-12 noon.

## ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

President: Eulalie Semper [semperp@candw.ag](mailto:semperp@candw.ag)

This is the newest Caribbean affiliate. We hope to hear a lot from them for the next newsletter. President Semper attended her first IRA conference in Chicago and also presented!

Many IRA affiliates in the Caribbean are just getting re-established after suffering from catastrophic hurricanes in recent years. If you are from a Caribbean Nation and would like help to re-establish your IRA affiliate/council please contact Linda Perez, IRA Caribbean Chairperson. Be a part of a professional organization interested in promoting literacy locally throughout the Caribbean.

Some things to remember..

1. Anyone from a developing nation can become an IRA member at reduced fees of only \$12.50 (US) including one IRA magazine. (regular rates \$36.00)
2. IRA members from developing nations may apply for a grant to promote a literacy project. Grants are available for up to \$2,500 (US)
3. Research grants and travel grants (to attend an IRA conference) are also available. Check them out at [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)
4. All affiliates and councils may send information about conferences and events to the IRA webmaster to be posted on the IRA website.



The IRA Caribbean Committee at their recent meeting in St. Croix at the Carambola Resort. Front row left to right: Linda Perez-St. Croix USVI, Michele Warrick-Grenada, Marsha Frett-Williams-British Virgin Islands, Ameenah Ahad-Bermuda, Barbara Richards-Guyana. Back Row left to right: Ann Fergusson-Barbados, Dr. Jim Wile-IRA International Director, Lynette Noel-Trinidad, Joan Hay-Jamaica, Janice Ferdinand and Carol Franks-St. Croix USVI.

The next Caribbean Committee meeting will take place at the IRA Conference in Toronto, Canada, in May, 2007.