

## LITERACY FOCUS 2007-2008



The Literacy Team is strategizing a plan to support linking our balanced literacy initiatives together so that we can dive deeper and ensure that literacy-related instructional strategies are palpable in every classroom. By focusing on responsive practices tailored to meet the needs of each student individually, we can make a positive difference for every single student.

At the center will be attention to *Before, During, and After* strategies that underpin our “I do-we do-you do” instructional design. This gradual release of responsibility assures opportunities for modeling and small group guided practice before students are required to demonstrate ability to perform independently.

Supporting implementation of best practices will help teachers meet the challenge of the array of needs that typify every classroom.

## May 31st Poetry Gala Features a Performer from Each School

Join us for a celebration of poetry. The First Annual Cleveland Heights-University Heights Poetry Gala will be held at Wiley Middle School on May 31, 2007 from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Student representatives from each of our schools will present original or published poetry. The performers are: Tomechiea DeBardelaben-Boulevard, Brendan G. Nichols-Canterbury, Solomon La Piana-Coventry, Phoebe Lammert-Fairfax, Nicole Collins-Gearity, Lauren Lumpkin-Noble, Malcolm White-Oxford, Silvia Iammarino-Roxboro, Rolanda Carter-Monticello, Jakisha Bell-Roxboro Middle, Emmanu-Evette Adjei-Wiley, Monique Johnson-Bellefaire, Chris Monroe-Legacy, Darius Steen-Mosaic, Reginald Lewis, Jr.-Pride, Jeanniece L.L. Jackson-REAL, Allie Heeter-Renaissance, and Paris Snipes-Transition. The youngest student performer is a first grader, and two student performers are in the twelfth grade. We have several adult poets who will also share poetry throughout the evening. A special surprise guest will join us via video. Amanda Halaby, a solo violinist from Monticello, will set the mood in the foyer before the performances begin.

## Summer Reading Book Sale

Severance Town Center

**BORDERS**

July 6th and 7th

Receive a 10% discount  
when you use a  
Benefit Day coupon

## SUMMER READING LIST GROWS TO INVITE STUDENT CHOICE

We are in the process of transitioning to an improved summer reading program for students K-12. Our two-fold goal is to increase the rigor of our summer reading while simultaneously providing increased opportunity for student choice in multiple genres.

Media specialists and literacy coaches met with key stakeholders and invited teacher input to organize summer reading around a grade level ban theme related to Civility to provide coherence across the district and an over-arching theme to encourage student choice. The following sub-themes for specific grade level spans are as follows:

- K-2: *Celebrating Differences*
- 3-5: *Caring About Others*
- 6-8: *Friendship*
- 9-12: *Making a Difference*



## Karen Heinsbergen Receives Literacy Specialist Endorsement

Karen Heinsbergen, CHUH district literacy coach, has the distinction of being a member of the first cohort in the nation to earn the post graduate "Literacy Specialist" endorsement. The development of this certification was informed by the standards for literacy coaching identified by the International Reading Association. Seven higher education universities collaborated in the design and delivery of the program. Additionally, Ohio added a "research standard" to assure that successful candidates complete an action research project during their internship. Certificates of endorsement were distributed to 21 successful candidates by State Superintendent Susan Zelman at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Literacy Specialist Conference on May 4, 2007.



Dr. Cathy Rosemary and Dr. Kathleen Roskos, professors at John Carroll University share Karen's excitement

State Superintendent Susan Zelman described the first cohort of graduates as an important step in realizing her vision of at least one literacy coach for every school building in Ohio. It also matches with the Achieve report's target of differentiated roles and responsibilities for teachers in order to position students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

At the celebration, Professor Kathy Roskos challenged newly inducted literacy specialists to reflect on three key questions that need to guide the work of teacher leaders: 1.) How do you provide evidence that teachers know more after the professional development session than they did before they attended? 2.) How do we measure that "knowing" translates into "doing?"

3.) Most importantly, to what degree is professional development impacting student learning?



Kay Milkie, another CHUH literacy coach, congratulates Karen. Kay is a field faculty professor who was on the ground floor of the Ohio Literacy Project which celebrated its seventh year at the May 4<sup>th</sup> celebration.

## Tackle a Good Book at Rox Mid



In February the students of Rox Middle were challenged by Mrs. Bloomberg and Mrs. Radke-Litten to read 549 books, or one book each. As a reward, kids were treated to footballs, prizes, pictures on fliers that hung in the hall and ultimately, a trip to Tommy's for shakes and conversation. The top 10 readers will be chosen to play a flag football game against the staff on Wednesday, May 23rd. Any student who read at least one book would be invited to attend and cheer their favorites on to victory. Little did we know that the kids would actually.....READ!!

Kids were excited to drop off summaries and to check out books. By the second week, Room 110 was loaded every morning with kids waiting to get prizes. When the total number of books read was counted, 431 books had been read. Over 35 kids were eligible to go to Tommy's and about 141 kids are eligible to attend the football game. Roxboro Middle School is proud of their students!

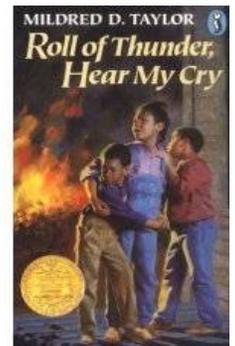
## Monticello Student Connects with Literature

Three Monticello sixth grade Honors Language Arts students won awards on Saturday, April 28th at the annual *Letters About Literature Awards Ceremony* at the main branch of the Cleveland Public Library. Earlier this school year, students wrote letters to an author who has greatly impacted their way of thinking. Mary O'Keefe and Lindsey Harvey wrote to Mildred D. Taylor regarding the impact *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* had on their lives. Dymond Lockhart wrote to Louis Sachar about *Holes*.

With over 1300 students competing, Mary O'Keefe won first place in the Level I (grades 4-6) Competition in Ohio. Mary now goes on to compete in the national competition with her letter. Lindsey Harvey and Dymond Lockhart were named as runners-up. Mary won \$100 cash, a \$50 gift card from Target, and a \$50 gift card from Joseph and Beth Booksellers. Lindsey and Dymond won five books of their choice, a notebook, a wallet, a calculator, and a bag.

In addition to having a catered lunch, these girls also heard Shelley Pearsall speak about what it is like to be an author. A book signing by Pearsall was the culminating event.

Hats off to these sixth graders! We are all rooting for Mary to win at the national level!



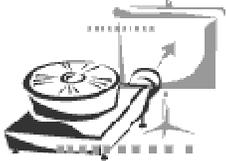


## Champ Camp 2007

Noble Elementary School will host Champ Camp this year from Monday, July 30 to Friday, August 17.

Campers are kindergarten students who will be first graders in the fall. Students will be invited to attend camp based on their spring ELA assessments and kindergarten teacher recommendation. District elementary teachers provide instruction for the campers. Camp begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 12 noon. Busing will be provided to and from each elementary school and there is no cost to families. This opportunity is funded through Title I. Students actively engage in many educational activities related to all aspects of literacy. This year the classes will enhance and extend each week's theme by enjoying a visit to the Noble Neighborhood Library every Friday. In addition, each class will enjoy time in the computer lab with new exciting reading programs! A parent orientation will be held at Noble School on Thursday, July 26, 2007, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Children and families can look forward to another positive camping experience.

## Technology Supports Literacy



Wiley Middle School students in Miss Reid's 5<sup>th</sup> period class take their learning into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by incorporating the PRS (Personal Response System) to enhance their understanding of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade English curriculum. Miss Reid uses a smart board, lap top computer, and LCD projector to make

the learning process an interactive, high tech experience. Students feel like they are contestants on *Jeopardy* because each has a personal transmitter that they "click" at the screen to signal their response to a multiple choice question. After reading a brief informational article, students answer each question. They verbally justify their choice based on the text, and explain how they eliminated other options. Miss Reid is able to give the students immediate feedback on their responses and can even provide the results in the form of a bar graph displaying the class's selections.

Miss Reid discovered that by using this type of classroom technology, students were more engaged and their reading of the article was more critical thus increasing their comprehension. The software is relatively easy to use and provides instantaneous feedback for both the student and teacher. These devices can be utilized in all content areas and are a time-saving tool to implement short cycle assessments. Investigate the possibility of using them in your classroom!



## Mary Hogan Visits Roxboro Middle

Mrs. Bloomberg, media specialist at Roxboro Middle School, invited author Mary Hogan to meet with about 120 students. During her visit, Mrs. Hogan talked to the kids about how to become an author and what it is like being an author. She shared her experiences of life in Los Angeles, California working as an editor for *Teen Magazine*. Mrs. Hogan's books include: *The Serious Kiss*, *Perfect Girl*, published in April 2007, and readers are awaiting the U.S. edition of *Susanna Sees Stars*. Students were able to ask questions they really love asking like, "How much do you make?" and "Do you like what you do?" All really enjoyed meeting a famous author. Mrs. Hogan even gave the kids her business card and invited them to e-mail her with questions or comments about her books. This opportunity was well received by the students.



## Monticello Celebrates the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celebrity Read-In

On Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> Monticello Middle School hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celebrity Read-In. The students and staff invited their friends, family, and community members to join them in celebrating the joy of reading. Invited guests were asked to bring their favorite book to share with the students and to discuss the impact reading has on their daily lives.

In past years, Monticello has hosted NBA and NFL sports figures, city mayors and council members, police chiefs and officers, doctors, engineers, ministers, entrepreneurs, school board members, district administrators, professors, parents, grandparents, and celebrity teacher readers.

The event began as part of the National Young Reader's Day celebration in 2004. The staff and students enjoyed the Celebrity Read-In so much that they decided to make it an annual event.

## Oxford News

The Oxford Literacy Committee has been presenting the new vocabulary strategies at every staff meeting. The committee convenes prior to our staff meeting and the members decide what strategies are well-suited to their grade level, the *Treasures* series, and our science and social studies curriculum. Sometimes this means that the teacher adapts the graphic organizer for the age of the children and/or the curriculum. The teachers want their colleagues to be able to immediately incorporate the ideas into their instruction. After the short presentations and distribution of adapted copies, other staff members often contribute additional ideas. This has been an effective way to roll out these strategies and put them into use!

In the past few weeks the Oxford poets have emerged as students have sharpened their oratory skills for the Oxford Poetry Slam. The students first presented their introductions and poems to their classroom teachers. The teachers then selected their classroom winners. These semifinalists next appeared before a committee of judges and were assessed using the poetry rubric. The first place winner was Malcolm White, a first grader, who recited an original poem about LeBron James. He will represent Oxford at the District Poetry Gala on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Kirsten Cooper and Kristin Gustafson, fourth graders, tied for second place. The winner and semifinalists will present their poems at our volunteer appreciation tea on May 30<sup>th</sup>.



**Oxford Finalists for Poetry Gala**

## Poetry Power



In preparation for the Poetry Gala, Roxboro Middle School students have worked diligently to become poets. For the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade REAP project, the school invited Mr. Salinger, a nationally renowned poet and advisor for the Greater Cleveland Poetry Slam. He taught a workshop on poetry and creative writing for four days. The kids learned a lot about literary language, poetry structure, and presentation. Poems were compiled and poetry journals are in the process of being constructed for the entire 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The sixth graders created awesome poetry journals of their own in language arts classes. Mrs. Bloomberg and Mrs. Bradley were wowed when the students read some of their poems aloud in the *Rocket Zone*. It was wonderful to have such a huge turnout of finalists for the Poetry Gala auditions.



## Foldables: Provide Support for Literacy Learning

Foldable Fever is spreading at Heights High thanks to Melissa Egbert, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher in the P.R.I.D.E. School. Melissa explained to her staff members how foldables can be used across content areas in high school classrooms. Using foldables combines research based literacy strategies within the *before*, *during* and *after* framework. Students fold paper in various styles: hamburger, hot dog, shutter, flips, and flaps that they use to take notes, learn vocabulary words, summarize key points, or use as a resource on tests. Foldables can be used

alone or in combination to enhance learning and memory. Students love not only the novelty of this technique, but also its potential to support learning. Foldables help students organize information in an easy way. They appeal to different learning styles and can be a quick assessment for the teacher. Students like that their note-taking space is limited as they learn to be specific and concise. Mrs. Egbert credits Dinah Zike, the guru of foldables, as the source of her inspiration. She had the opportunity to learn from her at a math conference and sees the positive impact it has had on her students' participation and achievement. Try one in your classroom!

