

## A Message From Past President Joanne Arellanes

We have welcomed 2009, celebrated Valentines, the Lunar New Year and the presidents. Now S.A.R.A. invites you to celebrate yourselves and your students! Throw off the burdens of gloom-and-doom budget predictions and take some positive steps forward that cost next to nothing.



On April 16th S.A.R.A. will be celebrating student authors at our annual Writer's Showcase. Do you or your colleague next door have even one student poem, report, or other piece of writing that deserves to be displayed at our event? Don't say, "But I teach Kindergarten, and my students really don't write." There is no specific word or length requirement for submitted writing, and primary through high school students are eligible for awards. Last year we even displayed pieces written in Spanish! Your young writers will enjoy refreshments and a visit with author Linda Joy Singleton and receive her book about some kids on California's own Mt. Shasta. After her talk, Linda will be happy to autograph each child's book. Schools may submit up to six pieces of writing by March 30th. Don't miss this opportunity to spread some pride and joy in your classroom. See the flyer in this newsletter for more information.

And while we're thinking about spreading joy, what about putting yourself or someone you know in the spotlight with an application or nomination for one of the S.A.R.A./California Reading Association awards? I know there are award winners out there among our membership and our community.

### THE MARGARET LYNCH AWARD EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD -

This award is given to any CRA member in our area who has made outstanding contributions in the field of reading.

### CELEBRATE LITERACY AWARD -

Any S.A.R.A. member or member of the community, including businesses or civic organizations who has demonstrated service and support to literacy in our council area is eligible for this award.

### THE NANCY WHISLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

This award is presented to a teacher-in-training to enable him/her to experience the benefits of attending the CRA conference. The recipient will receive \$500 toward expenses and a complimentary registration at the next CRA Conference.

### THE ESTHER MACK SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

provides a \$500 scholarship to enable any person who is enrolled in a Master's or Doctoral degree program in reading or a closely related field.

### THE WRITE ON WITH READING AWARD-



This award is my favorite, as it is awarded to students in grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 who submit an essay on Why I Love to Read. K-2 and 3-5 papers are limited to 250 words and grades 6-8 and 9-12 to 500 words. Essays may be handwritten or typed. The winning and runner-up essays are published in The California Reader. Winners also read their papers at the 2009 CRA Conference.

Take a moment to reflect on who might be eligible for any of these awards. Maybe YOU, your friend, your student or child, or a business in your neighborhood are deserving of recognition, a thank-you, or a scholarship. One thing is for sure. None of them will be recognized or rewarded if no one nominates them! The nomination procedures are not time-consuming. For more information and nomination forms, go to the CRA website at [California reads.org](http://California reads.org). If you have questions, contact me at (916)635-6007 or [arellanesr@csus.edu](mailto:arellanesr@csus.edu). What a way to part the clouds of educational uncertainty with the sunshine of positive action! We're waiting to hear from you!



## WRITERS SHOWCASE 2009!

Sacramento Area Reading Association (SARA) will once again be conducting our annual spring writing event to showcase excellent examples of creativity, inspiration, or style in writing. We will exhibit poetry, mysteries, creative writing, historical fiction and other pieces of "published" writing by individual elementary school students.

### TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WRITERS SHOWCASE:

Start saving work now and set aside some staff meeting or collaborative time to choose your school's six entries. The showcase and reception will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2009, at 5:30 p.m. in the Smythe School cafeteria at 2781 Northgate Boulevard in Sacramento. Entrants, their teachers and family

members, as well as school administrators are all invited to this SARA event designed to acknowledge talented students.

In addition to being honored with an award and recognition, every student entrant will receive a book by a local children's author Linda Joy Singleton who will make a presentation and personally hand an autographed book to each of the showcase authors. Cookies and juice will round out the festivities.

## DO THE LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE

Those words jumped out at me this rainy morning as I read a seasonal e-mail. You are probably like the 90% of us who are absolutely sure we can't do one more thing! Jobs, families, and many obligations fill our days. S.A.R.A appreciates your membership in our local reading council and our state association. But our council is only as vibrant and active as its members. At this time of year we put forth our call for nominations to our S.A.R.A. board. Could you help collate and put labels on our newsletter? Would you be able to make a flyer advertising one of our events? Would you make a phone call to reserve a venue? Are you someone who could type our quarterly newsletter? These are the kinds of "little things" board members do. We work together, and what's more we have fun!

In addition, we are looking for members who would like to serve as Council Officers. Kathy Davalos will serve as our 2009-2010 president, but there are openings for Vice-President and Recording Secretary, and our Membership Chairperson would welcome a co-chair. Please call or e-mail our Nominating Committee Chairperson, Connie Strand, if you think you could help us continue to be an effective reading association. Connie can be reached at [cstrand@sanjuan.edu](mailto:cstrand@sanjuan.edu) or at 916-663-3004. And what does Connie do on our board? She is currently working on honoring student writers for our Writers Showcase, and she takes great photos at S.A.R.A. events. We need everyone. Come join our board!

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For those of you who attended S.A.R.A.'s poetry presentation last September, you will be excited to know that we are working with the San Juan Teachers Association on developing a series of seminars on practical and engaging teaching activities for next fall. If you have some effective, fun, and/or easy to implement teaching strategies you might like to present, please contact me at [arellanesr@csus.edu](mailto:arellanesr@csus.edu) or [vschwalbach@sanjuan.edu](mailto:vschwalbach@sanjuan.edu). We may have a single presenter or a team of presenters. Don't hide your light under a bushel. Now is the time to illuminate classrooms with ideas!



#### DR. BARBARA SCHMIDT LIGHTHOUSE FOR LITERACY AWARDS

In keeping with this newsletter's theme of recognition and awards, we invite you to nominate an educator or librarian for a Lighthouse for Literacy Award. These awards are presented each year to those who instill in children a love of reading and writing. The nomination form appears in this edition of our newsletter. Surrounded by an environment of "pink slips", furloughs, and lay-offs, now is the time to allow some hardworking and dedicated colleague, principal, or .... enjoy a shining moment in the educational firmament! Each Lighthouse honoree will be honored at a dinner on May 14 at the Casa de los Ninos. It is beautiful and inspiring evening as we reflect on each person's story.