



LASL Newsletter

Volume 23, Issue 1

Fall 2002

In the Current: Intellectual Freedom Symposium features Young Adult Author Chris Crutcher

By Deloris Wilson

Inside this issue:

President's Message Page 2

Kimberly Holt coming to Gonzales Page 3

LASL minutes Pages 4-5

EBR awarded literacy grant Page 6

Follett increases grant Page 6

Membership application info Page 8

The Ouachita Parish Public Library Young Adult Department and the University of Louisiana at Monroe sponsored an intellectual freedom symposium on Thursday, September 26, 2002 as part of the nationally observed Banned Books Week.

Chris Crutcher, a best selling author of books for teenagers and a family therapist, was spokesperson for the free-for-all discussion. Crutcher has authored six novels and one book of short stories.

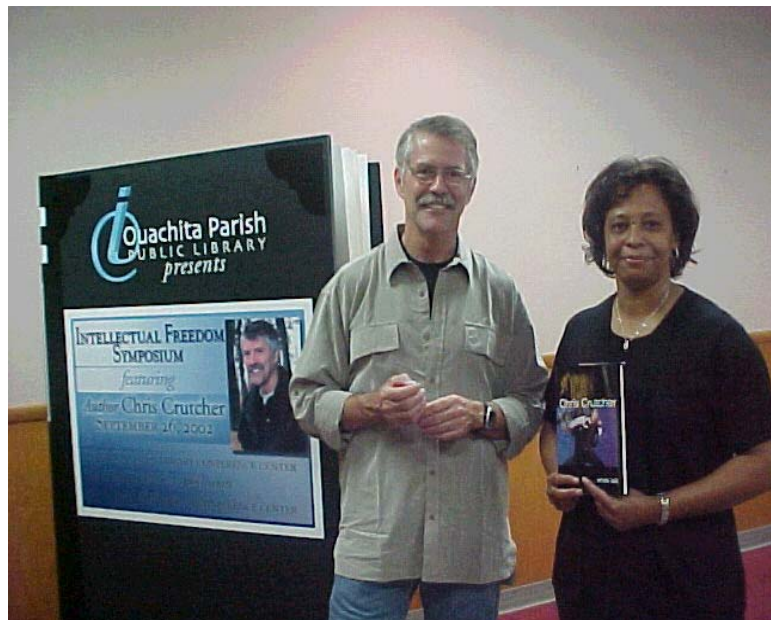
He has won the National Intellectual Freedom Award, Best Books status by the American Library Association, and the Margaret A. Edwards Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to young adult literature.

Crutcher's latest book is *Whale Talk*. Young adults and the public attended sessions at the ULM Library Conference Center and the Ouachita Parish Public Library.

Through stories about his life experiences, Crutcher moderated the open-to-the public symposium about banned books.

Crutcher brought to the floor his insight as a writer who has been both celebrated and censored over the last twenty years. Crutcher writes from a realistic perspective on the issues that teens face everyday. He explained to the audience that his stories get banned because he writes about real-life experiences. "Story is the place to share real-life experiences", said Crutcher. "I have on thing to say to the censors. Shut up."

Students and the public expressed their views about free speech, censorship, and the role of literature. The symposium was a major opportunity for the public to see itself, speak its mind, and grow. "Intellectual freedom is about having a safe place to discuss issues that many people tend to sweep under the rug and don't want to talk about," Crutcher said.



YA author Chris Crutcher (left) poses with school library media specialist Deloris Wilson at the Sept. 26 intellectual freedom symposium held at UL-M in Monroe.



Because student achievement is the bottom line.

President's Message

Welcome to the new year. Hopefully, everyone is back to normal after the events of the last very weeks and the visitations from Isidore and Lili.

This looks to be an exciting year for us. We had over 400 participants for the LAMP tour. The LLA Conference will be March 18–20, 2003 in Gonzales. The theme is *Louisiana Libraries: Priceless*. Kimberly Willis Holt will be the LASL luncheon speaker.



LASL is only as good as we make it. Our membership is currently 300 main members and 31 secondary members. Please join or renew your membership and become active in your profession.

We do make a difference in “the bottom line.”

Jeri Woodson
LASL President



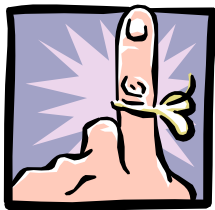
Louisiana Association of School Librarians

Vol. 23

No. 1

Fall 2002

The LASL Newsletter is published three times a year by the Louisiana Association of School Librarians, a section of the Louisiana Library Association.



Professional Leave Heads-UP

2002-03 LLA Conference
March 18, 19, 20, 2003
Lamar-Dixon Expo Center
Gonzales LA

Tentative LASL Workshops for the LLA Conference:

- Best Books for Children/Young Adults
- National Board Certification: A High School Perspective
- The Partnership of School Libraries and Early Literacy: A Priceless Connection
- Collaborative Planning and Information Processing Skills: Creative ways to collaborate, plan, and teach to enhance student achievement.
- Bulletin 1134 Revision: Standards and Guidelines for Media Programs in Louisiana Schools
- Books and Benchmarks: Using books to reinforce and teach state content standards and benchmarks.
- Get Carried Away ...Read: Programs to promote reading through the Media Center
- Motivation in the Middle: Priceless programming will transform middle readers into lifelong learners
- Louisiana Young Readers Choice Award Books

President
Jeryllyn Woodson

1st Vice President
Linda Lingfelt

2nd Vice President
Linda Holmes

Secretary
Jennifer Lovitt

Parliamentarian
Marvene Dearman

Newsletter Editor
Terry Thibodeaux



Mark your calendars for March and **KIMBERLY WILLIS HOLT**

By Linda Lingefelt, 1st Vice President

Kimberly Willis Holt will be the guest author for the LASL Author Luncheon that will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2003, in Gonzales. Her first novel, for the middle grades, won the *Boston Globe-Hornbook* Award for fiction (among other awards). She then published *Mister and Me*, a chapter book for younger readers, followed by National Book Award children's novel winner *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*. Her latest novel is *Dancing in Cadillac Light*.

Praised for their endearing, quirky characters and fine-tuned depictions of mid-20th century, small-town life in the American South, each of her novels has spent time on various "best" lists, including the American Library Association's Notable Children's Books and Best Books for Young Adults.

She has worked in the news and sales departments of a radio station, among other jobs. Once she turned her attention to crafting novels, she has met with quick success: she won the National Book Award after only five-and-a-half years of dedicated writing. Kimberly Willis Holt states that the first seeds of her inspiration come from her own life. She now lives and writes full time in Amarillo with her husband, Jerry, and daughter, Shannon.

She is the daughter of a retired Navy chief from Forest Hill, Louisiana. Her childhood was spent in places like Paris and Guam, but her Louisiana roots are strong with her family having been in Louisiana for seven generations. She claims that she's "always felt like" she was from the South, even though she didn't live in the South most of her growing up years because of her parents and relatives who were still living in Louisiana. She said her parents made her say "Yes, ma'am" and "No, ma'am" even when it wasn't cool to do that in Washington State." Her parents' hometown of Forest Hill was to become the (fictionalized) setting for her first novel, *My Louisiana Sky*.

Mister and Me grew out of the stories that her dad had told her about the sawmill town, Longleaf, Louisiana, where his two grandfathers had worked. She was intrigued by the setting and visited with people who had lived or worked there. When she went back to Texas from that Louisiana trip, it was as if Jolene were telling her the story. All she had to do was write the words. The story is not about what the people she had interviewed told her, but their stories help to breathe life into Jolene's story.

Holt's *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town* was the winner in the National Book Award young people's literature category in 1999. Set in the Texas Panhandle, it tells a 13-year-old boy's story of friendship and loss, and manages to be very sad and funny at the same time. *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town* was from an incident that happened to her when she was about 13 years old. She said that she had paid \$2 at the Louisiana State Fair to see the fattest boy in the world. Holt admits that she didn't know that she was going to grow up and write a book about it, but that image remained very strong in her mind. A few years after she had seen that young man, a friend of hers had befriended him. He was parked in their shopping center near their work where she worked. She would pay \$2 every day



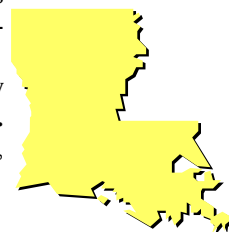
Louisiana writer Kimberly Willis Holt poses in front of this Cadillac. She will be in Gonzales this March. (Reprinted with permission from photographer Shannon Holt.)

and eat her lunch and visit with him. She made friends with him. Says Holt: "I was really impressed by that. I thought that was... it was interesting because I was kind of like one of the characters in the book. And I was very nosy and asked all sorts of questions. I remember thinking when she told me about her friendship with him that I had not reacted the same way."

Dancing in Cadillac Light is probably the most autobiographical of her books. The sisters' relationship reminds her of the relationship she and her sister had, even though we aren't like the characters. The grandfather is a composite of both of her grandfathers as well as of her imagination.

One important aspect of the story stems from a conversation she had with her parents about their humble childhoods in Louisiana: "After my father talked about being poor, my mother said, 'Well, we were poor, too. We just didn't dwell on it!' To which my dad replied, 'Oh, ya'll always thought you were better than us because you lived on a blacktop road!' I loved that! Here were two families who were both poor, but they still had class distinctions. And it had to do with tar!" Holt says the hardest part of being an author is trying not to eat M&M's when she is writing.

For more information on Kimberly Willis Holt go to the www.kimberlyholt.com for links, writers tips, biography, teacher's guide, books and inspiration.



Your Association in Action



Minutes of LASL Executive Board Meeting September 21, 2002 Lecompte, LA

Members present:

Jeri Woodson, Linda Lingefelt, Marvene Dearman, Linda Holmes, Jennifer Lovitt, Lynzie Boudreaux, Brenda DeWolf, Donna Pierce, Kathryn Arrington, Phyllis Heroy, Mary Kelly, Janet Lathrop, Pat Tatum, Dorothy Grimsley, Melissa Elrod, Annette Williford, Elizabeth Dumas, Annie Miers.

President Jeri Woodson called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM.

President Woodson made a motion for the approval of the agenda and the motion passed. Introductions were made. Kathryn Arrington's mother was there as her guest.

Secretary Jennifer Lovitt stated that the minutes from the previous board meeting had been revised and approved by the members via email correspondence.

AASL Affiliate Assembly Report

Phyllis Heroy

The assembly was held in Atlanta. The Friday agenda was mainly devoted to candidate speaking. Maggie McNeely from the U. S. Department of Education spoke on grants to school libraries. The deadlines were June 24th. The grant monies can only be applied for by school districts and not individual school libraries. The school districts do have to meet certain poverty guidelines.

LAMP Tour report

Phyllis Heroy, Annie Miers, Elizabeth Dumas

This year's LAMP tour dates were September 10, 11, and 12 in Monroe, Alexandria, and Baton Rouge respectively. Attendance totals were as follows: Monroe, 83; Alexandria, 104; and Baton Rouge, 237. Evaluations were positive. Popular workshop topics were booktalks, collaboration, and information literacy. Dr. Perritt was an excellent speaker as always. Dates were discussed in relation to so many other "opening school year" tasks also taking place during the same week in September that keep some librarians from being able to attend the tour. Ms. Heroy stated that the vendors are in charge of setting the dates and that they also must work around the schedules of several states. She would inquire about the dates with them. Total donations at each site were as follows: Monroe, \$86.00; Alex-

andria, \$22.77; and Baton Rouge, \$246.01

LLA & Budget Report

Jeri Woodson

This year's conference will be held March 18th through the 20th in Gonzales, Louisiana, at the Lamar Dixon Expo Center. The theme will be "Louisiana's Libraries--Priceless." LLA is trying to balance the budget. A three-year tiered increase will be voted on in the near future. Fees have not been increased other than a \$5.00 increase last year. The current budget deficit is \$12,000. Effective October 1, non-member fees would increase on workshops. The total membership in LLA as of the meeting's date was 938. License plates with the library READ symbol and READ printed on them are being sold by the various sections for \$10.00 with a dollar of the price being given to the section that sells the plate. As there will be no awards luncheon this year, awards will be given during the first general session. There will be no official post-conference workshops this year, although LASL may have some workshops on their own on Friday afternoon.

Our current account balance is \$2033.00. Our projected conference expenses are \$1,505.00. The featured author for this year's conference graciously offered to waive her honorarium and so LASL will only be responsible for her expenses. Ms. Dearman stated that the Nottoway Plantation in White Castle sells a book entitled, The White Castle of Louisiana, which is published by LLA. The projected income from these sales is \$12,000. She stated that if members knew anyone going there they should encourage them to purchase one of the books. They can also purchase them through the plantation's web site.

Louisiana Libraries Liaison

Susan Cheshire

Ms. Cheshire was not in attendance but Ms. Woodson stated that Ms. Cheshire is always looking for well written articles pertaining to libraries in Louisiana.

LLA Conference Committees

Author Luncheon

Linda Lingefelt

Ms. Lingefelt stated that this year's guest author will be Kimberly Willis Holt. Ms. Holt considers Louisiana her home and some of her books enjoy Louisiana as the setting. Her book, *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*, was a National Book Award finalist. She is the author of *My Louisiana Sky*, *Mister and Me*, *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*, and *Dancing in Cadillac Light*. Phyllis Heroy made a motion that, due to her

gracious offer to waive her honorarium, Ms. Holt be paid a flat fee of \$1,000 instead of LASL only covering her stated expenses. This would hopefully help cover incidentals that usually couldn't be claimed as expenses. Ms. Dearman seconded the motion and it passed.

Workshops – Linda Holmes

Ms. Holmes stated that she had emailed a questionnaire out to find out what topics members would like to see presented at the conference. "Best Books" continues to be a top choice. Mary Jo Kelly is going to present "Books & Benchmarks." Presenters are still needed for reading motivation techniques. Other suggested topics were managing technology, collaboration, and information literacy. It was also noted that more presentations need to be geared towards middle and high school library programs. Ms. Holmes asked that any middle and high school librarians with ideas to contribute contact her to present at conference. A list of tentative LASL workshops follows.

- Best Books for Children/Young Adults
- National Board Certification: A High School Perspective
- The Partnership of School Libraries and Early Literacy: A Priceless Connection
- Collaborative Planning and Information Processing Skills: Creative ways to collaborate, plan, and teach to enhance student achievement.
- Bulletin 1134 Revision: Standards and Guidelines for Media Programs in Louisiana Schools
- Books and Benchmarks: Using books to reinforce and teach state content standards and benchmarks.
- Get Carried Away ...Read: Programs to promote reading through the Media Center
- Motivation in the Middle: Priceless programming will transform middle readers into lifelong learners
- Louisiana Young Readers Choice Award Books

Committee Reports

Newsletter

Terry Thibodeaux

Terry was not in attendance but Ms. Woodson stated that the deadline for submissions is September 27th.

Constitution & Bylaws

Melissa Elrod

The last revision of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Louisiana Association of School Librarians was in March of 2001. An addition of information for the Elizabeth Bruns Award will need to be added to the Bylaws and Official Policies. Information from the ad-hoc committee appointed during the 2001-2002 term will be used to address the addition.

Projects

Elizabeth Dumas & Annie Miers

The projects committee set up a display area at the 2001-02 LLA Conference to seek librarians to submit lesson plans and to volunteer as presenters at future LASL events. They had

two librarians to sign up as presenters and three to say they would submit lesson plans. They will again be asking for lesson plans at conference this year. They are also asking the librarians in their district to submit lesson plans.

School LMS

The chair of this committee resigned. LASL is in the process of finding a replacement.

Standards – Phyllis Heroy

Ms. Heroy reported on the status of Bulletin 1134. The Department of Education recently moved to a new building and this delayed the bulletin's progress. October 28th is the next meeting date. A committee will review the bulletin in relation to how it is aligned with the content standards. After the meeting, if approved, it goes to the BESE Board for approval. Ms. Heroy stated that she still gets a lot of inquires regarding Bulletin 1134 from public and private schools. She thanked all of the members involved in the process of drawing up the bulletin.

Student Relations

Ms. Woodson stated that she had spoken to Mary Royston and Ms. Royston stated that Ruth Blanchard should be chair of this committee. Susanna LeBeouf will be asked to be the third member.

Sue Hefley

Betty Brackins

No one was present from this committee.

Unfinished Business

Melissa Elrod stated the Liz Bruns Award application from last year should be acceptable for this year. Guidelines need to be a point under the bylaws and added to the newsletter so that it can be voted on. It is ready to be sent to Terry. Ms. Elrod moved that we add a standing committee of the Elizabeth Bruns Award to our committees in our bylaws. The motion passed.

Ms. Woodson inquired as to whether the board felt the need for an LASL logo. The board agreed that there wasn't really a need for a logo at this point.

New Business

Ms. Woodson stated that she would be utilizing email instead of paper copies whenever possible. She asked for all members present to check their information on the roster for corrections regarding their address, phone numbers, and email addresses. She also stated that a calendar of events would be posted to the LASL web site in the near future.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted by

Jennifer Lovitt

LASL Secretary



EBR awarded *Improving Literacy through School Libraries Grant*

The East Baton Rouge Parish school system was awarded one of the 94 national grants designed to improve literacy through school libraries. In the grant, recommended at \$ 245,122, East Baton Rouge Parish School System proposes to serve 10 schools, targeting at least two grades within each school. Teachers and library media specialists will receive professional development in collaboration and inquiry-based teaching units. Library media specialists will work with students on the steps of the research process and design a collection development plan for resource acquisition.

The grants were announced by the US Department of Education on September 27. The new program is designed to improve the literacy skills and academic achievement of students by providing them with access to up-to-date school library materials; technologically advanced school library media centers; and professionally certified school library media specialists.

The Improving Literacy through School Libraries (LSL) program promotes comprehensive local strategies to improve student achievement by improving school library services and resources. The LSL program is one component of the Department's commitment to dramatically improve student achievement by focusing available resources, including those of school library media centers, to ensure that no child is left behind. School library media centers have an important role to contribute to the success of local improvement plans especially in the literacy area by increasing collaboration between instructional and school library media center staff, providing additional instructional materials and resources, and extending hours of operation during non-school hours.

The program provides competitive one-year grants to districts in which 20 percent of the students are from families with incomes below the poverty line.



Follett Library Resources increases AASL National School Library Media Program of the Year Award to \$10,000



The American Association of School Librarians (AASL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA) is now accepting applications for the 2003 National School Library Media Program of the Year (NSLMPY) Award, the most prestigious and longest-standing award presented by AASL. The application deadline is January 3, 2003.

Now in its fortieth year, the National School Library Media Program of the Year Award has been increased to \$30,000 in cash prizes by Follett Library Resources, the sponsor of the award since 1995. The award recognizes exemplary school library media programs in three categories: large school district (over 10,000 students), small school district (under 10,000 students), and single school. The winners in each of the three categories will now receive \$10,000, plus the crystal obelisk. The winners will be announced at the ALA Annual Conference, held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, held from June 19-25, 2003.

Established in 1963, the National School Library Media Program of the Year Award honors school library media programs practicing their commitment to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. The award emphasizes the

importance of the school library media program as an integral part of the instructional process and encourages the development of library media programs that are the result of the collaborative efforts of all those responsible for student learning. As of 2002, there have been fifty-seven programs and schools that have won this honor.

For a copy of the 2003 application, contact the AASL office or go to the AASL Awards Web site at <http://www.ala.org/aasl/awards.html>. The Web site also includes a list of past winners. For more information about applications and award eligibility requirements, or to request a list of past winners, contact AASL, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611; 800-545-2433, ext. 4381; or e-mail kchaney@ala.org.

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) is a division of the American Library Association (ALA). AASL promotes the improvement and extension of library media services in elementary and secondary schools as a means of strengthening the total education program. Its mission is to advocate excellence, facilitate change, and develop leaders in the school library media field.

From ALA

50 Ways To Use Your Library Card

**Libraries aren't what they used to be. They're better.
Here are just 50 ways your library can enrich your life.
Visit your library, and you'll see the limitless opportunities that await you.**

- Get to know your librarian.
- Browse your favorite Web site(s)
- Plan your next vacation.
- Find a list of daycare centers in your area.
- Learn about local candidates for office.
- Learn how to lower your taxes.
- Reserve the latest mystery.
- Pick up a video.
- Listen to a classical CD.
- Trace a friend through an out-of-state telephone book or on the Internet.
- Learn to navigate the Web.
- Prepare your resume.
- Get new ideas for redecorating your house.
- Get a list of community organizations.
- Attend a lecture or workshop.
- Hear a local author reading his/her latest novel.
- Join a book discussion group.
- Attend preschool story hour with your child.
- Get homework help.
- Look up all kinds of health information.
- Research the purchase of a new car.
- Trek to another planet in a Sci-Fi novel.
- Call the reference desk if you have a question.
- Research your term paper.
- Learn about the history of your city or town.
- Decide which computer to buy using a consumer guide.
- Check your stock portfolio.
- Read a newspaper from another country.
- Borrow an audiobook for your next roadtrip.
- Use the library's resources to create a new business plan.
- See a new art exhibit.
- Volunteer as a literacy tutor.
- Find a new recipe.
- Ask for a recommended reading list for teens.
- Make photocopies.
- Get a book from interlibrary loan.
- Enroll your child in a summer reading program.
- Take a computer class.
- Hear a poetry reading.
- Take out the latest fashion magazine.
- Enjoy a concert.
- Trace your family tree.
- Take an Internet safety course.
- Check out a legal question or issue.
- Find out how to file a consumer complaint.
- Get nostalgic by looking at old magazines.
- Borrow some sheet music.
- Learn how to use a database or computerized catalog.
- Find the latest romance paperback.
- Find a quiet spot, curl up with a book and enjoy.

Quotable Facts: America's Libraries

- Americans go to school, public and academic libraries more than twice as often as they go to the movies.
- Federal spending on libraries annually is only 54 cents per person.
- A 1998 poll conducted by Gallup for the American Library Association found that nearly all respondents expect libraries to be needed in the future, despite the increased availability of information via computer.
- There are more public libraries than McDonald's — a total of 16,090, including branches.
- Americans spend more than three times as much on salty snacks as they do on public libraries.
- Americans check out an average of seven books a year. They spend \$23 a year in taxes for the public library — much less than the average cost of one hardcover book.
- Public libraries are the number one point of online access for people without Internet connections at home, school or work.
- 95% of public libraries provide public access to the Internet.
- Research shows the highest achieving students attend schools with good library media centers.
- Americans spend seven times as much money on home video games (\$7 billion) as they do on school library materials for their children (\$1 billion).
- School library media centers spend an average of \$7 per child for books — less than half the average cost of one hardcover school library book.
- Students visit school library media centers almost 1.5 billion times during the school year — about one-and-a-half times the number of visits to state and national parks.
- If the cost of gas had risen as fast as the cost of academic library periodicals since 1990, it would cost \$3.00 a gallon to put fuel in your car.

Online Membership Information and Applications



<http://www.laonline.org/membership.htm>

AASL Web Sites



<http://www.ala.org/aasl/indy/index.html>

AASL Tenth National Conference and Exhibition

November 14-18, 2001 • Indianapolis, Indiana



<http://www.ala.org/ICONN/index.html>

ICONnect includes online courses, student and family activities, as well as online tours to prepare school librarians for leadership roles