

President's Message

Whoa little doggies! Wouldn't it be great if we could slow down time with that simple statement the way that cowboys of yesteryear were able to slow down the herd!

With all of the excitement, and normal rush that we, as educators, find ourselves caught up in at the beginning of the school year, it can be a little overwhelming. We find that there are more things to do than hours in the day, and begin to set things into "the holding corral" to be dealt with at a more convenient time, only to find that there really isn't one.

Usually the first thing to be put to the side is our individual needs. As educators, our most pressing concerns are meeting the needs of our students. Have I sent out progress reports? Have I filled out all of my mandatory paper work? Are my lesson plans complete? The litany of "to do" lists flow freely and seldom come to completion as quickly as we would like, and at the end of the day we wonder how we will get it all in. In looking back over our collective "to do" lists, we might notice that one thing that is missing is the opportunity to grow as a professional within our field. Professional organizations begin to be looked upon as "one more thing to do," and in an effort to make better use of our time, we consider not participating as we have in the past. Luckily, the members of the El Paso Reading Council don't feel that way about their council and realize the importance of continuing to grow as professionals.

I was overcome with pride (and a bit of panic) as I took the podium on September 23 to welcome over six hundred members of the El Paso Reading Council to our first "Reading Round-Up" of the year. The featured speaker for the evening was Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs, and those members present can tell you that she provided an interesting, sometimes comical, and thought provoking look at the role that reading plays in all aspects of the curriculum.

Speaking of reading, The El Paso Reading Council is a professional organization dedicated to the mission of continuing to provide information, support, and service to educators, researchers, parents and other persons concerned with the promotion of the development of literacy at all levels through quality professional development, and networking opportunities. The members of your executive board met for a leadership retreat September 24-25 to look at ways to meet the changing needs of our council, and I feel confident in saying that we are prepared to meet that challenge. I invite you to read and enjoy this issue of The Lectern as it is full of items of interest, including information on the November 11 dinner meeting at the El Paso Hilton with author Rick Riordan. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the LARGEST READING COUNCIL IN THE STATE OF TEXAS! I look forward to seeing all of you at our next "Round Up"!

Denise J. Sowers
President



Denise and Heidi Hayes Jacobs

November Dinner Meeting

Librarians' Night

Submitted by Norma De La Rosa

About Rick Riordan

Rick Riordan (pronounced Ri ' -er-dan) is known to his students as a teacher who makes stories come alive in the classroom. He is known to adult readers as a multi-award-winning mystery novelist. In June 2005, his first children's book, *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, will be published by Miramax/Hyperion Books.

For the past fifteen years, Riordan has taught English and history at public and private middle schools in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Texas. In 2002, Saint Mary's Hall honored him with the school's first Master Teacher Award.

His adult fiction has won the top three national awards in the mystery genre - the Edgar, the Anthony and the Shamus. He has presented workshops for such organizations as the California Association of Independent Schools, the Texas Council for Teachers of English, the Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute and the Texas Library Association. His short fiction has appeared in *Mary Higgins Clark Mystery Magazine* and *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. In 2003, he was inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters.

His forthcoming *Percy Jackson* series features a twelve-year-old dyslexic boy who discovers he is the modern-day son of a Greek god. The novels draw on Riordan's experience teaching Greek mythology and his interaction with students who have learning differences. The novel has been optioned for feature film to Twentieth Century Fox.

Rick Riordan now writes full-time. He lives in San Antonio with his wife and two sons.



Menu

Fresh Garden Salad
Blackened Chicken
Twice Baked Potatoes
Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower
Dinner Rolls
Chocolate Raspberry Cheesecake
Iced Tea, Coffee

EPRC Dinner Meeting
Nov. 11, 2004 at the Airport Hilton
Social Hour 5:30 p.m.
Dinner at 6:30

Tickets are \$26.00 for members
\$50.00 for nonmembers

Deadline for reservations Nov. 4, 2004
Reservations must be secured through
your building representative.

Mr. Riordan's appearance is courtesy of EPRC.

“Rounding Up” Reservations

by Sylvia Carrillo & Kristen Navarro

We wanted to thank all of our building reps. for a successful Bosses' Night. We encourage you to continue to use e mail to secure your reservations. On our web site (www.elpasoreading.us), on the Welcome Page simply scroll to the bottom of the page and “Click here for reservations form.” This allows you a place to e mail us your reservations for the November dinner meeting. It's simple, painless, and fast! There is even a text box for you to write comments.

We are trying to become “glitch free,” however, we must be very strict with deadlines and financial responsibilities. No additions, deletions, or changes can be made after Nov. 4, 2004. We are currently taking reservations now through Nov. 4th.

Because seating arrangements are made in advance, we would ask that you respect the placement of schools and not move placards or place settings as the caterer sets the tables by groups of ten.

If you are unable to e mail us your reservations, remember our fax number is 757-8073. We would remind you again that only building representatives are to place the reservations.

Building representatives also please remember to secure reservations and payment prior to the dinner meeting. All reservations must be paid for as we have a financial responsibility to the facility.

Decorations

by Carol Leonard & Lisa Medina

Remember there will be “deputies” at the exits, so please do not remove the table decorations. At our last meeting in April you will have a chance to secure the hat of your choice. Thank you!

Calling All Kids & Parents

by Frank Noriega

Come to Barnes & Noble (east & west) or The Bookery in Socorro on Nov. 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to hear your favorite teacher, dressed as a book character, read his or her favorite book. There will be some give-a-ways!

Readers Wanted:

Help us celebrate National Children's Book Week on Saturday, November 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, east and west locations and The Bookery in Socorro.

Volunteers will dress up as their favorite book character and read to the kids from their favorite book at one of the locations. If you can help out, please call Frank Noriega at 779-7105, leave your name, school, phone number, which location you would like to read at, and a time you would be willing to volunteer to read.

New on the Web

by Debbie McClain

The next time you visit the EPRC web site you will notice that under “Membership” there are new categories. One is “Retirees” and the other is “Members.” These two subcategories are “under construction” at the moment. I will be entering the data for all of our current members to include names and e mail addresses. This will allow you to access even more information in the future.

For those of you without internet access, think about an inexpensive service such as NetZero. Also most internet providers have introductory offers that start as low as \$9.95 a month for dial up service.

Reading Awards



Outstanding Progress in Reading

Submitted by Phyllis Sully
EPRC Awards Chairperson
September Winners

The Outstanding Progress in Reading Award winners for September 23, 2004 dinner meeting were David Cordova and his nominating teacher Mrs. Aidee Sanchez.

David is a 4th grade student at Ernesto Serna Two Way Dual Language School. He struggled with his reading and comprehension skills since second grade. Through the support of his parents, family members, and teachers he has made tremendous academic gains.

The deadline for the November dinner meeting is October 22, 2004. Copies of nomination application may be picked up from your building representative. Please fax your application to Phyllis Sully at 851-7580 or mail them to her at 1736 Victor Lopez, El Paso, Texas 79936.

Letters from Previous Winners

May 20, 2004

Dear El Paso Reading Council,
I would like to thank you for the wonderful honors at the last dinner meeting for my student Georgina Munoz and myself. I cannot express how much of a positive impact was made in the lovely presentation along with the surprise financial gifts. I especially thank Phyllis Sully for

the wonderful job she is doing for the organization. The night of honors and recognition for making a difference in teaching reading will always be remembered.

On behalf of Georgina and myself I would like to extend heartfelt gratitude and appreciation.

You are the best! Thank you!

Ruth Pandy
EPRC/IRA Campus Representative
Clark Middle School

Dear EPRC,

I want to thank you for the recognition for my success in reading. Thanks to you my parents are very proud of me. I also want to thank you for the \$50.00. I haven't spent the money yet, but I will. Thank you for the lovely dinner, plaque and power point presentation. I'll always remember that wonderful night. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Georgina Munoz

Texas Young Writers Competition

Hello to all!

The deadline for entries is December 1, 2004. Each member may submit one entry in each level of the competition. The entries I have received so far are phenomenal, and I am hoping that even more are on the way. Please encourage ALL of your members to take advantage of this unique opportunity to honor the talented young writers of this great state.

Check out the EPRC web site for more detailed information about this contest or contact Phyllis Sully at psully@elpasoreading.us
Happy reading and writing,
Kristi Piper

“Rounding Up” Members

by Jana Rivera

Fall is in the air and so is the abundance of membership applications. Thank you to all our campus representatives for turning in your membership applications at the first dinner meeting. An announcement of our campus winners is set for the November 11th dinner meeting. As a special thank you to our campus reps, we will be having a Meet the Author Reception & Autograph Party with Rick Riordan on November 10th at the Vista Hills Country Club. Be on the look out for your invitations. If your school currently does not have a campus rep please consider volunteering. EPRC could not be what it is today without our campus reps.

IRA & TSRA International Project

by Margaret Clark

The EPRC/TSRA Committee's goal is to continue to promote literacy. This year we plan to donate books to the Benito Juarez Orphanage in Juarez, Mexico, to help their established library grow. We already have a collection of books to donate and are awaiting a definite date to make it happen. At our dinner meetings in November and January we are asking willing members to feel free to donate used and unused books in both English and Spanish (all levels). We would like to make a second visit in the Spring. A box will be posted outside each meeting for your donations. Thank you for your support and generosity!

Behind the Scenes: “A Snapshot of our President”

Denise graduated from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies; Elementary Education. She began her teaching career in December 1996 at the School For Educational Enrichment then moved on to Our Lady of Assumption Catholic School where she taught until June 1997. From 1997 through May of 2004 she taught at Pebble Hills Elementary School in the Ysleta Independent School District.

During her teaching career at Pebble Hills she pursued and completed her Master of Education as an Instructional Specialist in Reading at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Her current duties include the supervision of Literacy with the Canutillo Independent School District. She has mentored new teachers, presented numerous workshops at IRA conferences, been the chairperson of the Campus Educational Improvement Council at Pebble Hills, and the list goes on! She is also affiliated with Kappa Delta Phi, an educators' honor society.

Here's Denise enjoying EPRC's recent retreat in Cloudcroft, New Mexico.



El Paso Reading Council
P. O. Box 372010
El Paso, TX 79937-2010
"A Reading Round Up!"



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We're on the Web
www.elpasoreading.us

Change of Address Form

Name _____

Address _____

School/District _____

Phone # _____

E Mail Address _____

Mail to EPRC ATTN: Change of Address
P. O. Box 372010
El Paso, TX 79937-2010
or e mail to dmclain@elpasoreading.us