

**AASL National Conference & Exhibition Report**  
Northern Lights Library Network Scholarship  
Connie Jones

Being able to attend the **AASL National Conference & Exhibition** in Minneapolis was a real treat on many levels. From the keynote speakers, the concurrent sessions, the Author Banquet, to the informal conversations over meals – it was all informative and inspiring.

Nicholas Carr, Pulitzer Prize winner for his book, *The Shallows; What the Internet is Doing to Our Brain*, kicked off the conference with his keynote talk. While Carr spoke about the research for his book, his comments about how we learn now have strong implications for the classroom and how we teach. While all the little distractions of web pages, online videos, e-mail, and texts erode our ability to pay attention, I was relieved to hear him say that our brains are malleable through the course of our lives and that certain circuits in our brains can be emphasized and de-emphasized. It will be our work to teach students what to pay attention to and how to construct meaning from the experience.

Buffy Hamilton session was filled with the theory behind transliteracy – the ability to read and write many different kinds of texts, as well as specific examples of how to teach using Stripling's Model of Inquiry. I plan to research some of these ideas she mentioned: KWL using a Google form, mind-mapping software, use Google moderator to develop and list questions about a topic, LibGuides, speed-dating research, netvibes, Rigorous Learning with 21st Century Technology, Unquiet Librarian blog, the Embedded Librarian blog.

A session of QR Codes, Prezi Reader & School Tube by Sarah Searles offered some ideas for using tools to enhance the love of reading. Programs that I need to investigate mentioned at this session include Weebly (the education version) and School Tube (reported by Searles to be better than TeacherTube).

Knock 'Em Dead: Using Book Trailers to Get Students Reading and Researching was presented by librarians Kerri Smith, Mary Peters, Jeanne Conner from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Their well-organized session provided ideas on how to use Animoto, Photostory, MovieMaker, and PhotoPeach to make book trailers. Hand-outs provided at the AASL web site have concise directions for the programs that I have already shared with a faculty member.

The Author Banquet was delightful as Pat Mora, Andrea Davis Pinkney and Joan Bauer all spoke. (Autographed copies of *Sit-In* and *Bird in a Box* by Pinkney and *Close to Famous* by Bauer were wonderful free gifts from vendors the next morning.) Although all three authors were interesting to hear, Joan Bauer is a favorite of mine and her talk was inspiring. She spoke of trying to find the hero in each of her books.

I spent some conference time at the vendor displays, getting information about new books and book series, teacher materials, and talking to other librarians. Many vendors gave away

advanced reading copies which I share with others here at Concordia.

Thank you to the Northern Lights Library Network for providing the funds to attend this great conference. I found many new programs to experiment with, new books to read, and even new friends at the events.

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