A PROFITABLE CONFERENCE IN THIS ECONOMY?
The New York State Reading Association Pulls It Off
by Cindy Wells

Blending the charm of the Two Sisters, charisma of Kelly Gallagher, entertainment of Steven Layne, solid advice in writing process provided by Ralph Fletcher, strategies for developing automaticity that bolsters fluency from Tim Rasinski, internet connections with Donald Leu, insights into successful implementation of RtI by Donna Scanlon along with countless other professionals, the New York State Reading Association saw an extremely profitable conference this past April. Participants from all around New York State, neighboring states, and Canada converged to connect with various professionals to learn more about the effective promotion of literacy at all levels.

Notable events at the conference included an author tea with Ellen Potter and Anne Mazer which featured their new book, Spilling Ink, and an author dinner which included several prominent authors who shared their journey toward connecting literacy to their lives. A special event at the Author Dinner was the honoring of the 2010 Charlotte Ballot winners and the unveiling of the 2011-2012 Charlotte Ballot. This is a unique book award program in which winning books are chosen by the students in classrooms from around New York State.

Leading up to and during the annual conference the reading association strives to support literacy outreach either nationally or internationally. This year puzzle quilts were crafted incorporating the book jackets from the New York State 2009-2010 Charlotte Award nominee books at the primary, intermediate and young adult levels. The proceeds from the raffle of the quilts were sent to the Village of Hope in Ghana, West Africa which were used to purchase school supplies and – of course, books!

A Children’s Literacy Fair was a popular event which was held in partnership with the local library in Saratoga Springs, New York. Cookie Mouse warmly welcomed children and their families to this event which featured visits with authors, games, storytelling and free books.

Our secret to success? Along with making sure that current topics and timely presentations were offered, a great deal of effort went into making sure the conference was promoted through many venues. We connected with professionals via social networking, a video sharing conference highlights was posted on our website (www.nysreading.org), announcements were placed in Reading Today and other prominent publications, The Empire Reading Scene Newsletter was sent to our membership and every school district in New York State and communication with our State Education Department was frequent. Collaboration was established with phenomenal sponsors and exhibitors who supported our efforts and helped spread the word of the conference offerings and dates. Teamwork was the essential ingredient that provided the foundation for this profitable endeavor!

Cindy Wells is an Instructor at the Undergraduate and Graduate Levels for the State University of New York at Potsdam and also works as a Literacy Consultant, dwells5@twcny.rr.com.

Notable events at the conference included an author tea with Ellen Potter and Anne Mazer which featured their new book, Spilling Ink, and an author dinner which included several prominent authors who shared their journey toward connecting literacy to their lives. A special event at the Author Dinner was the honoring of the 2010 Charlotte Ballot winners and the unveiling of the 2011-2012 Charlotte Ballot. This is a unique book award program in which winning books are chosen by the students in classrooms from around New York State.

Leading up to and during the annual conference the reading association strives to support literacy outreach either nationally or internationally. This year puzzle quilts were crafted incorporating the book jackets from the New York State 2009-2010 Charlotte Award nominee books at the primary, intermediate and young adult levels. The proceeds from the raffle of the quilts were sent to the Village of Hope in Ghana, West Africa which were used to purchase school supplies and – of course, books!

A Children’s Literacy Fair was a popular event which was held in partnership with the local library in Saratoga Springs, New York. Cookie Mouse warmly welcomed children and their families to this event which featured visits with authors, games, storytelling and free books.

Our secret to success? Along with making sure that current topics and timely presentations were offered, a great deal of effort went into making sure the conference was promoted through many venues. We connected with professionals via social networking, a video sharing conference highlights was posted on our website (www.nysreading.org), announcements were placed in Reading Today and other prominent publications, The Empire Reading Scene Newsletter was sent to our membership and every school district in New York State and communication with our State Education Department was frequent. Collaboration was established with phenomenal sponsors and exhibitors who supported our efforts and helped spread the word of the conference offerings and dates. Teamwork was the essential ingredient that provided the foundation for this profitable endeavor!

Cindy Wells is an Instructor at the Undergraduate and Graduate Levels for the State University of New York at Potsdam and also works as a Literacy Consultant, dwells5@twcny.rr.com.