



Reader's Advisory Round Table (RART) Committee- Board Report End of Year Report 2011

Steering Committee

We brought on new steering committee members at the beginning of 2011, Jennifer Larson of St. Paul Public Library system and Angela Smith of Washington County Library. Then we had members Karla Businaro of Carver County Library system and Barbara Pierce of St. Paul Public Library agreeing to stay on for another 2 year term.

2011 RART Spring Retreat

At our 2011 "Reader's Advisory Round Table (RART) Retreat: A Return To Spring With YA Reading" we were lucky to have librarian Jody Wurl, from Hennepin County Library, share her 2011 presentation on speculative fiction. She used works such as the sci-fi novel *Old Man's War* by John Scalzi, and the horror novel *Heart-Shaped Box* by Joe Hill, to the fantasy novel *Curse of Chalion* by Lois McMaster Bujold to give a history and background on this interesting sub genre.

We also had with us local author Rachel Gold for discussion on YA literature and her new ground-breaking YA novel, "Being Emily" which features a transgender heroine.

Though the group in attendance was small, it did allow for us to have intimate conversation. We delved deep regarding confusion with speculative fiction and talked openly about gender issues in literature and the news/pop culture. Which was a great segue into discuss emerging genres (and sub-genres) like steam punk, manor punk and dysfunctional fiction.

Titles shared that day included: *The Witch's Boy* by Michael Gruber, *Soulless* by Gail Carringer, *Fledgling* by Octavia E. Butler, *House of Night* by P. C. Cast, *Girl 15* series by Sue Limb, *Tam Lin* by Pamela Dean, *Bimbos of the Death Sun* by Sharon McCrumb, *Native Tongue* by Suzette Haden Elgin.

MLA 2011 Conference Recap

RART "did" the [MLA 2011 conference](#) in Duluth. You couldn't go anywhere without us doing something. Here is a brief recap if you missed it.



- **50 in 60 Book Blast:** This a reprise of the past few year's popular conference session. Five librarians tackle booktalking 50 books in the new 60 minutes. We brought some new voices on this year, thanks to Joan, Stephanie, Jennifer! We covered great reads for nordic mysteries and thrillers, contemporary women writers, fantasy and science fiction, things that go bump in the night, and last but not least, YA titles. Next year we need to make sure we have a larger room as we had standing room only- some even chose to sit in the hallway!
- **Book Clubs:** Hands On To Hands Off. This insightful panel gave us lots to ponder on starting book clubs or working with the ones we have going. We were given tips on how to start online book clubs, information on how to make book clubs more exciting or enticing, as well as some brilliant resources to check out.
- **E-Books:** What's All the EXCITEMENT About? Well it was/is about a lot apparently. Many of conference goers attend this session that was more of an ideation session with a panel of library experts. Discussion ranged from the impact e-books are having on our collection, resources and troubleshooting, to the more philosophical another change in publishing and what that means for the future.
- **Genres You Can't Cope With:** To Boldly Go: The Fantastical Universe of Science Fiction Readers' Advisory. You wanted information on Sci-Fic? Then you should have attended this fact and title filled session. Always engaging SPPL Librarian Melissa Gray gave a fabulous tutorial on the past, present and future of Sci-Fic. If you can take a look at her handout on the conference page! <http://mnlbraryassociation.org/2011-handouts/>
- **One Book, One Conference:** *The Stormchasers* by Jenna Blum. This session was a real treat. Ms. Blum came prepared with a power point presentation and was one of the most honest and animated authors I think we have ever had. No topic was off limits- except for what her new book was going to be about, but in explaining that, we got a wonderful glimpse into the mind of a writer. Highly recommend either of her two books, the second title being *Those Who Save Us*.
- **RART Happy Hour** extravaganza in partnership with Minnesota mystery writers. This was a fun event that would not have happened without author Erin Hart and past MLA president Kathleen James. Erin using her Sister's in Crime connections (it was also that group's 25th anniversary as a writing club) was able to get a diverse group of authors to some and speed talk their titles. We sat at tables and the authors came to us! Here's a just a few of the authors you missed if you didn't attend: Wendy Webb, Jennifer LeClair, Monica Ferris, Christopher Valen.



- **RART (Business) Meeting** open to all not just steering committee or round table members. This was a great discussion. First various questions were asked regarding MLA and/or RART, like when RART conf. session handouts would be online. Then we moved on to author visits by different libraries. Spring Grove had Saloma Furlong the week of conference and Rochester is having Paula McLain on Sunday, January 8, 2:00 p.m.

We brainstormed topics for a retreat and conference. For the retreat a focus on historical fiction might be nice to consider. And the conference, a session on training the librarians on cont'd RA practices. Two speakers were suggested we could tap Kim Edson from Rochester PL and Sarah Nagle from Carver CL. And to further that, a breakdown of other areas for RA: Non-fic, fic, and children's (partnering or asking CYP to do something with/for us?). And should there be some training for support/paraprofessional staff, or is that an issue for each system to decide?

We also discussed the need for continued dialogue on "e-books", both with e-books and e-audios. The idea came up to maybe do an e-book petting zoo session- or have it more than a session. Jody Wurl has hooked us up with someone from Best Buy to start the conversation.

And it was suggested to have a listener's advisory session on audiobooks...

November we will put putting out a call for new RART Steering Committee Members, with a vote to come in December.

We have received our feedback from attendees of our sessions at conference. All sessions did very well, though overcrowding in some was an issue. And we received some great comments and things to ponder for the next year.

We have ended the year with trapping, I mean finding, some great new steering committee members. Here's to 2012, MLA and RART!