



SSLA Awards and Bursary Recipients

John G. Wright Award Recipient

John G. Wright Distinguished Service Award 2011 Recipient – Maureen Erlendson

The *John G. Wright Distinguished Service Award* honours those individuals who have made outstanding and worthy contributions to school librarianship in Saskatchewan.

I am delighted to present the *John G. Wright Distinguished Service Award* to my very good friend and long-time colleague, Maureen Erlendson. Unfortunately, Maureen is unable to be with us today as she is in Portugal on a month long holiday with her husband.

In June of last year, Maureen superannuated as the Coordinator of Curriculum and Learning for the Prairie Valley School Division. During her 12 years in the central office, Maureen advocated tirelessly for the important role of the teacher-librarian and effective school library programming. I would like to share some of the highlights that took place as a result of her leadership.

- Maureen believed in dreaming big. She believed that every school needed a teacher-librarian. And every school in the Prairie Valley School Division was given dedicated teacher-librarian time. This was quite a feat for a twice amalgamated school division. One of the three legacy divisions had a long-standing tradition of teacher-librarians—two did not. As a result of her vision, the newly formed school division chose the path less travelled.
- Maureen embraced change and swept people up with enthusiasm. Under her direction, Prairie Valley School Division automated all of its libraries and created a centralized cataloguing department.
- Although not a teacher-librarian, Maureen embodied all of the competencies of an exemplary teacher-librarian. She believed so strongly in the role that she convinced me to attend a CASL summer short course in Victoria and from that we developed six training modules for teachers new to the role of teacher-librarian.
- Maureen was a true collaborator. She partnered with Regina Catholic Schools to design a website for teacher-librarians. The website—*Teacher-Librarians...Supporting Student Learning*—was the recipient of the Canadian School Library Association *Angela Thacker Memorial Award* in 2006.
- She was also instrumental in partnering with Regina Public and Catholic Schools to provide professional development opportunities for the combined 100 plus teacher-librarians.

- Educators from around the province valued Maureen’s expertise and knowledge that had both breadth and depth. She always had the time to answer telephone and email queries. She also provided workshops on every topic imaginable and for any grade level from Pre-K to Grade 12.
- This passion for education and life-long learning has not gone unrecognized:
 - In 2005, Maureen was the recipient of the SSLA *Art Forgay Award of Recognition of Administrators*.
 - I’ve already mentioned the 2006 CASL Award.
 - And just last year she received the President’s Award by the Saskatchewan Middle Years’ Association.

I know that Maureen will be honoured by this new award and will continue to contribute to school libraries and Saskatchewan education in her busy “retired” life.

Submitted by Joanne Beltramini