

Texas Association for Literacy Education Newsletter

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

Editor: [Sara Ranzau](#)



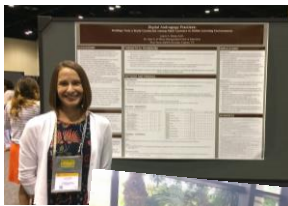
INTERNATIONAL
LITERACY
ASSOCIATION

Mission Statement:

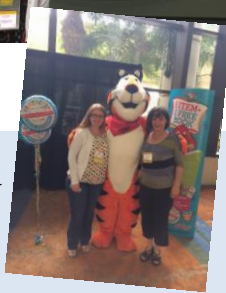
The mission of the Texas Association for Literacy Education is to promote literacy that will enhance the lives of all Texas citizens personally, socially and economically.

Credit: Sara Ranzau

Top: Laurie Sharp presents a poster at ILA 2017.



Bottom: Sara Ranzau & Melinda Butler meet Tony the Tiger at ILA 2017.



A Message from Our President – [Laurie Sharp](#)

I am so excited and honored to serve as President of TALE for the 2017-2018 fiscal year! Since 2012, TALE has had phenomenal leadership and active members who have established us a growing and thriving literacy organization. I look forward to the upcoming year and encourage all members to support TALE's mission and vision by:

- Encouraging others in your personal and professional network to become TALE members,
- Becoming an active TALE committee member,
- Reading about literacy research and strategies in TALE's publications and reflecting on how they may improve your professional practice, or
- Attending the 2018 TALE Conference to engage in 1 1/2 days of professional learning and networking.

As we begin the new fiscal year, I would like to thank Robin Johnson for her leadership as the 2016-2017 TALE President, Robbie Raymond as Past President, as well as Karen Sykes and Mary LaFleur for their service as Board Members. Your commitment and dedication has strengthened TALE and promoted our positive growth. Thank you so much!

I would also like to welcome Malene Golding as TALE's Vice President, Kamshia Childs and Julie Teel-Borders as Board Members, Sara Ranzau as the newsletter editor, and Matt Panozzo as the Community Involvement Director. Welcome to your new roles!

One important update for TALE is related to our affiliation with the International Literacy Association (ILA). In January, ILA officially transformed from their founding organization, the International Reading Association. After much deliberation, TALE's Board decided to remain fully affiliated with ILA. We will continue to provide members with updates and changes as they become available.

In closing, I encourage you to stay connected to TALE! Please ensure we have your current email on file, follow @TXLiteracyEd on Twitter, and like [@texasreaders.org](#) on Facebook.

Thank you for being an important and valued member of TALE!

Inside

Conference Information

February 23-24, 2018 in Canyon, TX

Registration begins: August 28, 2017

Registration ends: February 2, 2018

TALE Member Spotlight

Sonja Gaddy and
Amanda Swearingen

Committee Reports

Advocacy Development

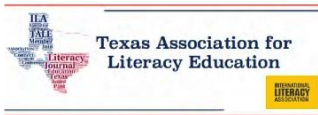
Communication Committee

Strategic Planning

Membership Development

Community Involvement

Educator Empowerment



Save the Date

2018 TALE Conference: February 23 & 24, 2018



Connections in the Community

FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH LITERACY

Event Date: February 23 - 24, 2018

Location: West Texas A&M University - Canyon, Texas

Conference Email: taleconference@gmail.com

Conference Chairs: Dr. Laurie A. Sharp & Mr. Brad Womack

Conference proposals are accepted March 27, 2017 - August 7, 2017.
Visit TALE's website for more information: texasreaders.org

The Texas Association for Literacy Education (TALE) is the Texas affiliate of the International Literacy Association. The mission of TALE is to promote literacy that will enhance the lives of all Texas citizens personally, socially, and economically.

Our annual conference will offer professional learning for professionals who serve all levels of learners.

For more information please visit:
ILA: literacyworldwide.org
TALE: texasreaders.org

TALE has partnered with West Texas A&M University's College of Education and Social Science and Department of Education to host this event.



Social Media:
[TALE Facebook Page](#)



[TALE Twitter](#)
[@TXLiteracyEd](#)



TALE Website
www.texasreaders.org

Publications:
[TALE Journal](#)
[TALE Yearbook](#)

Contacts:
talemembership@gmail.com
taleconference@gmail.com

Join us!

2018 Conference! Join us at West Texas A&M

The 2018 Conference will be held on the West Texas A&M Campus in Canyon, TX. This year's organizers, President Laurie Sharp and President-elect Brad Womack have been working very hard to put together another wonderful program including a variety of workshops, exciting keynote speakers, and special guest authors. To see details about the conference as they unfold over the next few months, visit www.texasreaders.org. Be sure to register early to take advantage of special ticketed events!

Registration will officially open on August 28, 2017! This year members can register either online or via paper for those needing to pay by check or money order. Registration fee discounts for undergraduate and graduate students are also available!

If you aren't sure where to stay, be sure to visit the conference website for a list of hotels. The closer you are able to stay to the campus, the more ways you can participate in all the activities and networking opportunities available!

Don't Miss It!

Special Ticketed Events: Consider participating in the Read-a-Thon or Write-a-Thon during the 2018 TALE Conference! Participants will travel across the Panhandle Plains to experience literacy together. This special ticketed event also includes lunch.

When: Friday 8:30 AM - 12 PM
Cost: \$50

Guest Authors: [Ruth Culham, Ed.D](#) (@WritingThief); [John R. Erickson](#); [Van G. Garrett](#) (@vanggarrett1); [Kimberly Willis Holt](#); and [Dr. René Saldaña, Jr.](#)

TALE Member Spotlight!



Want to
contribute to the
newsletter?

Book Reviews:

Send book reviews no later than
November 21, 2017.

Additional Submissions:

Member Spotlight and Original
Works poetry, short stories, and
art work submission due dates
below.

TALE Member Spotlight:

Nominations due no later than
December 21, 2017.

TALE Member Original Works:

Original poems and short stories
due no later than December 21,
2017.

EMAIL SUBMISSIONS TO:
talnewsletter@gmail.com

Use newsletter section as subject
line.



Sonja Gaddy

What is your occupation?

Administrative

Asst., Center Excellence in Teaching
and Learning (Texas Wesleyan
University); graduate student (first
semester of Ed. D. program)

What degrees do you hold? B.S.
Elementary Education, minor in
Mathematics from Texas Woman's
University; Master of Education,
Concentration: Reading and Writing
from Texas Wesleyan University

How are you involved with TALE?

Co-Director of the Advocacy
Development Committee

What is your literacy vision? I believe
all students can learn to read.
However, if we stop at only teaching
them how to read well, we have
robbed them of one of the greatest
pleasures and opportunities available.
Reading is for enjoyment and
necessity.

**What is something in your life you are
most proud of?** I am very proud of
my family. They are an awesome
group of people! My husband and
children were very supportive of me
returning to graduate school after
twelve years of homeschooling.
Returning to school gave me an
opportunity to burn the midnight oil,
reading and studying, along with my
two older children who were also in
college. It was tough for all of us,
and there were lots of sandwiches for
dinner. The greatest day was
celebrating graduation together. I
graduated with a master's degree in
Reading as my two older children
graduated with their bachelor's
degrees in Electrical Engineering and
Business Administration on the same
day! It was glorious.

See Sonja's Words of Advice to
Literacy Leaders here:

goo.gl/gXvoly



Amanda Swearingen

What is your occupation?

I'm a Ph.D. student in Second
Language Education at the
University of Minnesota. I also
teach linguistics and teaching methods in
the undergraduate Teaching English to
Speakers of Other Languages
(TESOL) program at UMN.

What degrees do you hold?

I hold a B.A. in Latin American Studies
from Tulane University, as well as an
M.A. in Teaching English as a Second
Language from the University of Texas at
San Antonio.

How are you involved with TALE?

I'm a relatively new member of TALE. I
attended and presented three times in
Corpus Christi.

What is your literacy vision?

I'm interested in the social, emotional,
cultural, and linguistic demands of
literacy education for English language
learners. I strongly believe that "literacy"
should be broadly defined to include a
multitude of literacy practices, even if
unconventional. I'm an advocate of
addressing the affective dimensions of
literacy so that pre-emergent and
emergent second language readers learn to
love literacy. By attending to students'
affective needs, we can help them persist.

What is something in your life you are most proud of?

I'm incredibly proud of my
work with the [Reading Education
Assistance Dogs \(R.E.A.D.\)](#) program and
its affiliates. My dog, Leeloo, and I
volunteer to read with struggling
elementary school readers. During the last
school year, I introduced this program
into the San Antonio Independent School
District, and received a grant from the
City of San Antonio to build a bilingual
library for the R.E.A.D. teams in San
Antonio. Overall, my organization,
[PAWS for Service](#), has helped more than
100 struggling readers.

See Amanda's Words of Advice to
Literacy Leaders here:

goo.gl/y7EDSu

Committee Reports

Advocacy Development

Summer Book Bag

Summer is a perfect time for winding down and catching up on professional and personal reading. We encourage our students to make reading a priority and so should we. Overwhelmed with an abundance of literature on a plethora of topics, new educators are often curious about what is in your book bag. Let us mentor one another by sharing the contents of our book bags and making reading contagious!

ILA Advocacy Award Recipient

The International Literacy Association (ILA) Literacy Leader Awards were presented on July 16 at the annual conference in Orlando, Florida. TALE, along with several other state organizations, received the 2017 Advocacy Award for demonstrating how the council worked to affect educational policy and legislation through advocacy at the local, state/provincial, and/or national levels. Melinda Butler, co-director of the TALE Advocacy Committee, accepted the award for TALE. Watch her here: goo.gl/dM8HA6

Texas Legislature Special Session

On July 18, Governor Greg Abbott called the 85th Legislature back for a maximum 30-day special session. Issues pertinent to educators under discussion include vouchers for special education students, the “bathroom bill”, payroll deduction for dues for teacher organizations, teacher pay, and TRS retirement costs. Check for updates on the [Advocacy Committee](#) web page.

Send items of interest to the committee at taleadvocacydevelopment@gmail.com.

Communication Committee

The TALE Yearbook will be published electronically in October 2017 and will be accessible online on the TALE website. Be sure to follow TALE on all our social media sites: Twitter (@TXLiteracyED), [Facebook](#), and of course our website www.texasreaders.org.

Strategic Planning

TALE committee directors are currently working with their committee members to complete their strategic plans for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Strategic planning efforts will conclude on August 31, and committee directors will present their final plans to the TALE Board on September 6.

Membership Development

Last year, we had a goal of increasing membership by 10%. We increased membership during 2016-17 by 29%, exceeding our goal! Membership in TALE is \$5 annually and is effective one year from the date you enrolled. Returning members click the “Members” tab from www.texasreaders.org to renew. If you select auto-renewal, please keep the credit card on file current. Many members are moving to **past due** because their credit cards expired. **NEW** members click the “Join” tab from www.texasreaders.org to enroll.



Want to Know More?

If you are interested in finding out more about what our committees are working on or joining one of them, follow the links below or email the committee chair!

[Advocacy Development](#)

Directors: Sonja Gaddy and Melinda Butler – taleadvocacydevelopment@gmail.com

[Communication Committee](#)

Director: Alida Hudson
Alida.hudson13@gmail.com

[Community Involvement](#)

Director: Matthew Panozzo
talecommunityinvolvement@gmail.com

[Educator Empowerment](#)

Director: Kathy Stephens
drksteph@gmail.com

[Membership Development](#)

Director: Jackie Ingram
talemembership@gmail.com

(Committee Reports Continued)

Community Involvement

Leaving Literacy Footprints across Texas 2017-2018

The Community Involvement Committee is excited to leave literacy footprints across Texas this year! To do this, we will continue our work in creating Little Free Libraries for communities in need. Thanks to generous donors, we have one in San Antonio and Corpus Christi. Our goal is to continue adding cities each year to promote children and young adults to become lifelong readers. For more information, please visit our [Literacy Projects](#) page. In addition to the Little Free Library project, the Community Involvement Committee wants to support parents and teachers by expanding our resource pages to best suit their needs.

Also, do you know of a public, charter, or private school that has an exemplary reading program? Consider nominating them for ILA's Exemplary Reading Program award! Applications must be postmarked by November 15th. Our committee will be reviewing Texas applicants and announce the winner during our annual TALE conference. For more information, visit ILA's [website](#) or view their [application guidelines](#).

If you're interested in leaving your own literacy footprints, email Matt Panozzo at talecommunityinvolvement@gmail.com. We would love to have you on our committee!

Matt Panozzo
Director of Community Involvement

Stephanie Jenkins, Robbie Raymond, Meghan Sankowski, and Brittany Vaughn
Members

Educator Empowerment

Members of the Educator Empowerment Committee met at the annual conference and have talked by email to make plans for our upcoming new year. The primary goals of the committee are to "empower TALE members in ways that develop voice, ownership, and leadership of their professional literacy landscape". We will be focusing our efforts with pre-service teachers, beginning teachers, experienced teachers, literacy leaders, and Teacher Educators (higher education faculty who prepare teacher candidates). Plans include welcome packets for our newest teachers attending the 2018 conference, sharing of online resources, and recognition of recent teacher candidate graduates.

If you would like to join our committee, please contact us at drksteph@gmail.com. If you have ideas of ways we can continue to work to empower educators and TALE members, please email us. If you are a pre-service or beginning teacher who could use some empowerment, email us!

Regardless of which level classroom you are leading or learning from, have a wonderful 2017-2018 school year.

“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.”

Albert Einstein

Original Works

“100 Sheets, 200 Pages”

An Original Short Story by Alison Capasso
Member from The Colony, TX

Upon inspection, the tattered U-Haul box seems too ordinary to contain anything more important than bubble wrapped dishes. Its presence at the back of my craft closet suggests a forgotten sewing machine. Perhaps an old Circuit they don't make new cartridges for anymore. And then, it is opened. My life pours out.

Over 70 compact, miraculous memory receptacles lie in wait. Each bears its own theme. Pain, joy, the awkward uncertainty of my early 20s, the marathon madness of my first year of teaching. For the last 10 years, I have committed to a page a day, describing my existence. I have stapled countless mementos onto the pages as a reminder of daily events. I have doodled, written poetry, made lists, and dreamed into the pages of simple composition journals for the simple purpose of remembering where I've been and how I was.

Finish the story: goo.gl/mRzxs9

Untitled

By Katharine Covino-Poutasso
Member from Fitchburg, Mass.

A fleeting feeling,
the smallest pause,
a twinge.

Something missing.
Something wrong.

Scanning the bright glare of the
water,
sure that your head will pop up,
white teeth and a salty smile.

So many other children,
rushing, swimming, splashing,
yelling.

So many, but not you.

Finish the poem: goo.gl/Kao4FE

Want to contact our Original Works Authors?

[Alison Capasso](#) – “100 Sheets, 200 Pages”

[Katharine Covino-Poutasso](#) – Untitled Poem

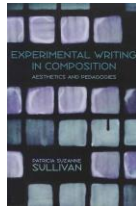
ISSUE 1 – Summer 2017

TALE

Texas Association for
Literacy Educations
www.texasreaders.org

Board Members:

Robin Johnson, Laurie Sharp,
Brad Womack, Malene Golding,
Michael Kessner, Jill Culmo,
Codi Freeman, Sandra Munillo-
Sutterby, Sonja Gaddy, Jackie
Ingram, Kathy Stephens, Alida
Hudson, Kamshia Childs, Julie
Teel-Borders



Patricia Suzanne Sullivan, former director of the First Year Writing Program at Northeastern University, uses aesthetic and avant-garde theoretical frameworks to analyze how arguments concerning alternative and innovative forms have shaped the field of composition and rhetoric. In her first book, *Experimental Writing in Composition: Aesthetics and Pedagogies*, Sullivan explores the connection between traditional and unconventional composition and how avant-garde art has generated both new possibilities and new problems.

Read the full review:
goo.gl/jeCRM3

What are you reading??

Reviewed by [Regina Chanel Rodriguez](#),
PhD
West Texas A&M
University



Reviewed by
[Melinda Butler](#)
Sam Houston State
University

When I began reading this
book on a Friday evening,

I had no idea that I would not sleep until I finished it early Saturday morning. The book title was intriguing, but I had no idea. I just had no idea...

This excellent, but disturbing work of historical fiction takes place in Germany during the Nazi regime. Lida is a nine-year-old, recently-orphaned girl from Ukraine, who, along with her little sister and local villagers, is captured by Nazi soldiers. Shortly after their seizure, Lida is separated from her sister and transported by cattle car from Ukraine to Nazi Germany, where she quickly learns that she is no longer “Ukrainian.”

Read the full review:
goo.gl/S8x8VT