



## Together We're Molding Lifelong Readers, Learners and Library Users

**A**s the new editor for the Library Connection column, I bring some unique perspectives. Since I am an English teacher turned Young Adult librarian, I understand both sides of working with teens, books and reading—in the classroom *and* in the library. I also have a philosophy that libraries are extensions of classrooms, envisioning libraries as “lifelong learning labs.” With this in mind, I believe that young people who not only make the best of their school experiences but also extend themselves through their library experiences often go on to be lifelong readers, learners and library users. I have repeatedly seen and heard the proof of this from many teens themselves, who are now adults. It is one of the big benefits of staying at the same job for so long, being able to see its long-term results!

I am hoping through this column to present inspiring and useable ideas to help teachers and school/public librarians connect to each other and the teens with whom they work. The importance of school, libraries, books, reading, writing, and teens—and how they mesh—will be the focus.

I would like to hear from teachers and school librarians about effective ways in which you have incorporated libraries into curriculum and/or have partnered with local public libraries. I would also like to hear from public librarians who would be interested in describing unique, creative success stories about connecting with schools. In addition, any other interesting perspectives that fit the focus of this column would be welcome! If you have something to share, please consider contributing an article.

Would you like an example of an exciting and unique topic? Here is a little preview of the Library Connection column for the next issue of *The ALAN Review*:

Every year, teachers, school and public librarians wait anxiously for the results of the Printz, Newbery and various other awards bestowed upon the books and authors comprising the latest and greatest of young adult literature. Although teens may be asked for some opinions and input, generally adults—teachers, school and public librarians, and others—select the winners of these awards. Even in award programs with “young reader” voting, the adults who coordinate the programs are at the root of the nomina-

tions. What if teens *nationwide* were given an opportunity to *nominate and choose* their top ten favorite books of the year? Does it sound like a dream that is way too complicated and could never be real? Well, think again, and tune in next issue, because you will find out how teens *are* meeting the challenge and really making this happen!

Get the idea? I am looking forward to hearing from you!

*Diane Tuccillo has been Young Adult Coordinator at the City of Mesa Library in Arizona since 1980. Diane served on the ALAN Executive Board from 1999-2002, has presented at ALAN Workshops and other professional conferences, and is active in the Arizona Library Association and YALSA. She has written articles for The ALAN Review, VOYA, Kliatt and other publications, serves as a book reviewer for School Library Journal and VOYA, and is a member of VOYA's editorial board. Diane has been elected to the 2005 Printz Award Committee. Her forthcoming book for Scarecrow Press is Teen Library Advisory Groups: a VOYA Guide. You can contact her at City of Mesa Library, 64 East First Street, Mesa, AZ, 85201 or at [diane.tuccillo@cityofmesa.org](mailto:diane.tuccillo@cityofmesa.org).*