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From the MRA President's Desk

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From the MRA President's Desk

New Ideas and New Energy

BY JULIA REYNOLDS

It is wonderful to start 2008 with new ideas and new energy for writing. There is nothing like the rejuvenation of a new year to help me think about my goals and to include *writing* as one. OK, you might be asking—*writing*? Yes, that's what I mean and what I hope everyone could set as a goal, especially when I know that everyone has information to share, connections to make, and maybe just needs some encouragement to sit down and start.

If you are like me, you need time to have your ideas “marinate” in your head for a while before you actually sit down. Do I mean *procrastinate*? Some could look at it that way, but you are not procrastinating when you think about something continuously for a few weeks, months even, and plan, revise, and delete in your mind several times before even turning on your computer. That happens to me often when I wake up at 4 a.m. and wonder what I would write that anyone would actually want to read. (Are you reading this? Thanks.)

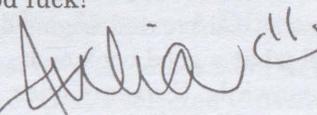
Others write down notes over time on almost anything they can find—sticky notes, scraps of paper, backs of receipts, etc.—in order to keep their ideas somewhere. Once these writers sit down to compose, they put the pieces of paper all over the table/desk/floor and begin to organize their thoughts. It works and, even though it is not my style, writing in this way can certainly create something fascinating for people to read.

Then there are those who are able to sit down at a computer, write a few notes to organize their ideas (and uses any notes that have already been written), and then start writing. They might write in small sections but they are able to think, plan, write, and revise all at the same time. I wish I could do that but I would not even know what to write if I did not have the *marinating* time for my ideas. Nevertheless, this

style of writing can definitely bring ideas to life for readers.

My point is that ALL of us are capable of including *writing* as one of our goals to accomplish in 2008. Look through this issue of the *Michigan Reading Journal* (or any past issues) for inspiration. You don't have to feel like an “expert” or write in a certain style in order to become a published writer. Your ideas are important and the teachers and students of Michigan need your energy and ideas.

Good luck!



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