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Letter to the Editors

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Letter to the Editors

We encourage your letters in response to what you have read in the MRJ. Were you inspired to try a new teaching strategy? Are you in a quandary over a topic recently featured or a current issue in literacy? Is there something in the journal that you haven't seen that you want us to address? Let us hear from you.

Dear MRJ Editors and Readers,

Two years ago a group of MRA past presidents and officers initiated the concept of an endowed fund to encourage philanthropic investment in selected future literacy-related efforts not normally funded through Michigan Reading Association. This group established the Past Presidents' Legacy Fund (PPLF) in the spring of 2006 with a PPLF Advisory Committee as its governing body. The MRA Board of Directors agreed at its spring meeting that year to be the fiscal agent.

The vision of the PPLF is to provide charitable grants that enhance professional involvement and leadership in MRA. The mission of the fund is to assist in the following ways:

- (a) to provide some financial assistance for one or more educators new to a professional role related to literacy improvement in the last two years to attend the annual MRA Conference for the time;
- (b) to enhance leadership development for MRA Board members to understand the organization, its history and policies, and current organizational goals and responsibilities;
- (c) to host forums or summits to increase understanding of professional issues of common concern through interaction between MRA representatives, legislators, other national and state policy makers and representatives from other professional associations.

I invite you to think of the MRA Past Presidents' Legacy Fund (PPLF) in relationship to MRA as you would the *Friends of the Library* or the *Friends of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra*. The PPLF exists to enhance and support special future literacy-related efforts. It has an affiliation with MRA but is not a committee of MRA.

Contributions by a wide range of donors to a permanent endowment are the primary source of financial support for the PPLF so far. The fund has generated \$6,050 in donor contributions from 31 one-time donors and 6 repeat donors in the past year and one-half. In addition, the PPLF Advisory Committee generated \$1,000 through a fundraising effort at the MRA 2007 and 2008 Annual Conferences for operating expenses. While this modest beginning is encouraging, more must be done if the PPLF is to be able to address its mission in any significant way.

Therefore, the PPLF Advisory Committee asks your help to support this endowed fund so we can provide charitable grants for years to come. We need the support of individuals, MRA members, past and present MRA officers, local councils and special interest councils, and businesses. You can make donations at any time during the year with a minimum of \$50. You may wish to contribute in honor or in memory of someone. Donations are held in a separate fund balance that will remain intact, and only the interest will be distributed. Contributions may be tax deductible.

You are important to the future success of the MRA Past Presidents' Legacy Fund in its ability to fulfill its mission. For more information and a donor form, please contact the MRA office or visit the MRA Web site at www.michiganreading.org. Please consider donating today and giving a gift that gives forever.

Sincerely,

Nancy (Wiseman) Seminoff, Chair
MRA Past Presidents' Legacy Fund Advisory Committee