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A Newsletter from the Illinois State Library — Jesse White, Secretary of State & State Librarian

January/February
2012

Opportunity Online grant program wrap-up

In spring 2009, the Illinois State Library contacted eligible public libraries in the state with an invitation to participate in the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Opportunity Online Hardware Grant Program. The program helps public libraries and their communities build long-term capacity for supporting free computer and Internet access in public libraries. The initiative focuses on libraries that are unable to adequately serve their patrons' technology needs, as well as high-poverty communities with limited access to computers and the Internet. Eligibility is based on economic need and age of computers.

The program has now concluded in Illinois and has been an overwhelming success. The State Library awarded \$1,012,050 in Opportunity Online grant funds provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. A total of 109 Illinois library agencies representing 120 library buildings successfully completed all the requirements for the program. One of the key components of the program required grantees to raise matching funds equal to or exceeding the partial value of the computers donated. The required match was a useful tool in building local partnerships and practicing advocacy. Participating libraries took part in "Turning the Page," an advocacy-training program provided by the Public Library Association to build

confidence and skills for raising the matching funds.

Libraries successfully raised a total of \$583,778 in matching funds, including:

- \$189,577 from public funds,
- \$45,298 from foundations or corporations, and
- \$348,903 from fundraising activities and general donations.

Using a combination of grant dollars and matching funds, 690 new public access

computers were purchased and installed for the benefit of library users in communities across Illinois. These computers, with e-mail and Internet access, are vital tools to help people find jobs, further their education, conduct research and share ideas.

A list of Illinois libraries that participated in the program is available at the WebJunction Illinois Web site at il.webjunction.org.



FAMILY READING NIGHT 2011 — A large and enthusiastic group of parents and kids took part in Family Reading Night events organized by Shiloh Community Unit School District #1 in Hume. Libraries, schools, literacy programs and other organizations across Illinois took part in Family Reading Night on Nov. 17, 2011. The event is sponsored annually in November by Secretary of State Jesse White. See more Family Reading Night photos on page 2.

Try-It! Illinois wrap-up

Thanks to everyone who made the 2011 Try-it! Illinois free database trial a big success. More than 112,000 users accessed the databases between October 1 and November 30. A special thanks to all the vendors who took part in the free trial:

ABC-CLIO
Accessible Archives
Alexander Street Press
Ambrose Video Publishing
AtoZdatabases
BioOne
BizMiner
Cambridge University Press
Capstone Publishers/Heinemann
Raintree
Career Cruising
CollegeSource Inc.
CQ Press
Credo Reference
Dun & Bradstreet
EBSCO
Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.
Facts on File
Financial Ratings Series - Weiss & the
Street Ratings
FINTEL
Gale-Cengage Learning
Geographic Research, Inc.
Gleeditions LLC
Grolier Online from Scholastic Library
Publishing
Heritage Microfilm, Inc.
infoGroup
LearningExpress
LexisNexis
Marshall Cavendish Digital
Morningstar, Inc.
Naxos of America, Inc.
NewsBank
OCLC FirstSearch
ORS Publishing
Oxford University Press
p4A.com, Ltd.
Plunkett, Ltd.
ProQuest
Record Information Services, Inc.
Recorded Books, LLC
Rosen Publishing, Inc.
Scholastic, Inc.
Standard & Poor's
Taylor and Francis, LLC
The World and I Online
Value Line, Inc.
Visual Thesaurus
World Book, Inc.
World eBook Library

Family Reading Night 2011

RIGHT: Kayla and Azalea Alvarado celebrated Family Reading Night at Iroquois West Elementary School in Thawville.



BELOW: Julian Rodriguez of Aurora shows off the craft he made during a Family Reading Night event in Aurora.



ABOVE: Zoe Dawson took part in Family Reading Night events at Mill Street Elementary School District #203 in Naperville.

LEFT: At Northfield School in Fairfield, families read and played inside a portable planetarium called "Starlab" for the evening.

WebJunction Illinois update

To address the rapid changes in Web technology and user suggestions for improvements, WebJunction Illinois is moving its content to a new platform and streamlining the design. The migration to the updated format will involve weeding outdated content, removing features and tools that are no longer useful, and refocusing on topics most relevant to the 21st-century library professional. WebJunction will add a news feature with timely articles and links to current events in the library world. A space for users to share stories of how their library is helping to transform their community also will be created.

When visiting www.webjunction.org, in addition to nationally (and internationally) relevant resources, you will find a special section for content and programs offered by the Illinois State Library. With this change, access to self-paced courses will take place in dedicated space designed especially for partner-affiliated members to build and manage a learning plan.



Emerging Writers Competition winners

Secretary of State Jesse White has announced the winners of the 7th annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition. The competition was created by Secretary White to promote creative writing and encourage Illinois writers, while providing a unique opportunity and outlet for recognizing new literary talent.

"I am very proud to congratulate these talented writers whose works add to our state's long and rich literary heritage," said White. "These awards are named in honor of two of our state's literary giants — Gwendolyn Brooks and James Jones. Their poems and short stories continue to inspire readers, and I hope that the works of this year's winners also inspire readers and encourage more writers to enrich our lives with their works."

The Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award honors the Pulitzer Prize-winning former Illinois Poet Laureate. The James Jones Short Story Award honors the Illinois-born author of such classic novels as *From Here to Eternity*.

Winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award are:

- 1st place: **Christine Pacyk** of Arlington Heights for her poem, *Postcards from Paris, Valdosta*
- 2nd place: **Jonathan R. Veach** of Carbondale for his poem, *A Death in Baton Rouge*
- 3rd place: **George Tanner** of Yates City for his poem, *A mercy killing*.

Winners of the James Jones Short Story Award are:

- 1st place: **Paul Heinz** of Elmhurst for his short story, *Water Music*.
- 2nd place: **Irene Sedeora** of Morton for her short story, *Arenal*.
- 3rd place: **Camille Bromley** of Bloomington for her short story, *The World is Made of Hello and Goodbye*.

Winners received cash prizes and their works are being submitted for review and possible publication in the following Illinois literary magazines: *Downstate Story*, *Ninth Letter*, *Quiddity*, *RHINO*, and *Springfield Poets and Writers*. The final judges of the competition were Illinois Poet Laureate Kevin Stein for the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award, and Ray Elliott, James Jones Literary Society past president, for the James Jones Short Story Award. Winning poems and short stories are posted at illinoiscenterforthebook.org/projects/projectsb.html.

State employee outreach

The State Library has an ongoing campaign to make state employees aware of the many services provided by the library that can help them do their jobs more effectively. State Library staff members arrange meetings at state agencies to explain State Library programs. As a result of these outreach efforts, from July through December 2011, a total of 897 state employees signed up for State Library cards. To schedule a presentation or for more information about ISL programs, please contact Debra Aggertt at dagger@ilsos.net.



New Project Next Generation sites

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White has announced that three libraries — two new locations and a returning site — are joining his Project Next Generation (PNG) program. Project Next Generation is conducted at public libraries, where young people learn important technology skills and life training from qualified mentors.

The two new sites are Four Star Public Library District in Mendon and Mississippi Valley Library District in the Fairmont City Library Center. The returning site is Lincoln Library, the public library of Springfield.

Other PNG programs are located in Alton, Beardstown, Bloomington, Carbondale, Centralia, Champaign, Danville, Decatur, Elmwood Park, Freeport, Harrisburg, Joliet, Kankakee, Peoria, Richton Park and Sparta. Learn more about Project Next Generation at www.finditillinois.org/nextgen/.

"On the Front Lines" March 12-14

The highly acclaimed "On the Front Lines" conference will return for an eighth year March 12-14 at the University of Illinois Springfield. Sponsored by the State Library, the event is designed to equip and enlighten front-line library staff members with training, exposure and techniques to enable them to deal effectively and efficiently with their day-to-day activities. Conference sessions will focus on topics of interest to all types of libraries. Conference agenda is available at www.librarylearning.info/?&month=2&year=2012.

Open Meetings Act training update

Public Act 97-504, effective Jan. 1, 2012, amends the Illinois Open Meetings Act to require each sitting elected or appointed member of a public body affected by the Act, which includes public library and library system trustees, to successfully complete electronic Open Meetings Act training. Updated training is available on the Illinois Attorney General's Web site at <http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/Default.aspx>.

Current trustees who are in office on January 1 must successfully complete the training within the year in order to comply with the new law. Those who take office after January 1 have 90 days after assuming responsibilities as a trustee to complete the training. Questions may be addressed to the Attorney General's hotline at 877-299-3642.

State Library staff news

Cheryl Johnson, staff member of the Talking Book and Braille Service, marked 15 years of service with the Secretary of State's office in December.

Cathy Hobart was named Secretary of State Employee of the Month for December. Cathy is an electrician with the Secretary of State's Department of Physical Services but works at the State Library Gwendolyn Brooks Building.

H. Neil Kelley, library systems and trustee education consultant, retired at the end of 2011 following 23 years of service with the State Library. Congratulations Neil!

Donna Brown, Technical Services, retired following 28 years at the State Library. Congrats, Donna!

Illinois Blue Books available

2009-2010 *Illinois Blue Books* are still available by contacting: Secretary of State, Communications Department, 471 Howlett Bldg., Springfield, IL 62756, 217-785-8234. The *Blue Book* also is available online at www.cyberdriveillinois.com (click Publications, State Government). Previous *Blue Books* also are available upon request. The new 2011-2012 *Illinois Blue Book* will be available by request in March 2012.

SAVE THE DATE

March 2

Talking Book & Braille Service Grand Reopening
Illinois State Library

March 12-14

"On the Front Lines" Conference
University of Illinois Springfield

April 12

Illinois State Library Advisory Committee
Videoconference

April 17

Library Systems Directors and Boards Meeting
Illinois State Library

**The Illinois State Library will be closed
the following state holidays:**

Monday, February 13 — Lincoln's Birthday
Monday, February 20 — Presidents Day



Insight
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