

ILLINOIS LITERACY

SPRING 2014

Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

Literacy projects around the state really outdid themselves this past November for Family Reading Night. With the theme of "Read Across Illinois," libraries, literacy projects and schools offered creative programs from Chicago to Carterville, inspiring families to read and learn together. Thank you once again for making Family Reading Night such a huge success!



This spring, I encourage you to use National Volunteer Week, April 6-12, as an opportunity to recognize the volunteer tutors in your program. The contributions our dedicated volunteer tutors make in changing the lives of adult learners is vital to the success of our Adult Volunteer Literacy program. In this issue, you will read of one such volunteer tutor from the Dominican Literacy Center, Chicago, who has made a lasting impression on her student. Let's let all of our tutors know how much we appreciate them during this special week of recognition.

I thank each of you for your extraordinary commitment to improving the lives of Illinois citizens through literacy services. In FY13, there were 1,138 tutoring sites across the state that provided one-on-one tutoring. While the work we are accomplishing is outstanding, the need continues to grow. Keep up the excellent work!

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Recognize volunteers during National Volunteer Week in April

Literacy programs throughout the state rely heavily on volunteer tutors. The perfect time to thank your volunteer tutors for all they do is during the 40th anniversary of National Volunteer Week, April 6-12. For more information, check the Points of Light website at www.pointsoflight.org (click Events).

Another opportunity to recognize volunteer tutors is the Spotlight on Service Awards event held annually at the Illinois State Library. Cheryl Stolz (right) of C.E.F.S. Literacy Center in Effingham was one of 10 Spotlight on Service Award winners recognized at the 2013

event. This year's awards ceremony will be held May 15 in Springfield. Look for photos and

stories of this year's winners in the summer issue of *Illinois Literacy*.



Secretary of State Jesse White joined Dennis DeRossett of the Illinois Press Association in presenting volunteer tutor Cheryl Stolz with a 2013 Spotlight on Service Award last May.

Celebrate Volunteers!
40th Anniversary

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK
April 6-12



Instituto del Progreso Latino, Chicago



Black Hawk College, Moline



Fishes & Loaves Outreach, Springfield

Libraries, literacy programs and schools throughout the state celebrated Family Reading Night last November with the theme, "Read Across Illinois." Family Reading Night is celebrated annually the third Thursday in November. The Secretary of State's office, the Illinois Center for the Book and the Illinois Reading Council's Illinois Reads initiative collaborated to promote Family Reading Night. Following are highlights from the 2013 Family Reading Night events. The 2014 Family Reading Night celebration will be Thursday, November 20. For materials including posters and bookmarks, please complete the form at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/public/frn.html.

Asian Human Services, Chicago — Families read books from the "Illinois Reads" website and then created finger-paint images of the favorite parts of their books.

Instituto del Progreso Latino, Chicago — A pajama party featured reading together, playing games and completing projects based on Spanish/English poems. Each family received a book and tickets to Brookfield Zoo.

Black Hawk College, Moline — Graduate students from an occupational therapy class collected books to read to families and also played guitars and sang songs together. A variety of foods were made so the families could try foods from different cultures. Each child received a book to take home.

Albany Park Community Center, Chicago — Parents and children joined teachers, volunteers and the Mayfair Branch librarian for three sessions of stories, rhymes, singing and movement. Each child enjoyed reading and sharing a free book with their family.

Fishes & Loaves Outreach, Springfield — Participants were encouraged to wear pajamas and bring their favorite stuffed animal for family reading time. The Springfield High School cheerleaders performed a R-E-A-D cheer with audience participation, and guest performers provided entertainment and story time.

Aquinas Literacy Center, Chicago — A night of fun and games included Scrabble, Boggle, Banagrams and Uno. A storyteller read *The Popcorn Book* and popped popcorn for participants.

Frontier Community College, Fairfield — Four stations were set up representing different areas of the state: Cahokia Mounds, Chicago, Metropolis and Springfield. Each station had crafts and activities plus food to represent that location. Activities included making baseballs out of paper plates and yarn, dream catchers, headdresses, Abe Lincoln hats and Superman necklaces.

Howard Area Community Center, Chicago — Participants read books relating to agriculture in Illinois. Stations highlighted what grows in Illinois and included tasting fruits from Illinois farmers,



Asian Human Services, Chicago



Albany Park Community Center, Chicago

making a recipe using a key Illinois crop, and making a collage of Illinois foods.

John A. Logan College, Carterville — A magician showed how reading takes you places across Illinois. Families checked out books and read them together.

South Suburban College, South Holland — Two local authors spoke about their experiences as published authors and read excerpts from their books. Reader scripts were used with the children to promote reading as a group and to show that reading can be fun.

Township High School, Dist. #214 Community Education, Arlington Heights — Rotary Club members read to the children in both large and small groups and helped with literacy activities. Parents helped their children stuff a bear pillow pal and then read together with their newly created reading buddies.

West Chicago Public Library District, Chicago — Costumed characters including Pet the Cat, Olivia and Fancy Nancy read stories to the group. Character-themed crafts to go along with the stories were available.

Volunteer tutor helps adult learner read, earn citizenship

Yuritzi Moreno joined the Dominican Literacy Center three years ago and was matched with volunteer tutor Lenore Hrejsa. Yuritzi was a young mother of four children all under age 6 and worked full time outside the home at a factory. Lenore taught Yuritzi English, supported her throughout all her ups and downs and worked with her on preparing for the U.S. Citizenship test. On the day of the test, Lenore accompanied Yuritzi to the federal building in downtown Chicago and helped her celebrate when she passed the test on her first try!

During her time at Dominican Literacy Center, Yuritzi got a new job at a school where everyone spoke English, had another baby and became a new U.S. citizen. On her last day of tutoring, Yuritzi had many happy and sad tears. Her time at the Center was over but her life had taken many new and positive turns. In her speech, Yuritzi said she will always remember the very important part that her tutor, Lenore, played in her life. Without her tutor's help, she would not have gotten to where she is today.

According to the American Community Survey 2008-12 five-year estimates, Illinois has a 1,768,305 foreign-born population. Of those, 54.6 percent are not U.S. citizens.

The Secretary of State's office funds 76 Adult Volunteer Literacy programs and 37 Penny Severns Family Literacy programs that offer English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. To find an ESL program, check the *FY14 Guide to the Secretary of State Literacy Effort* booklet or call the Illinois Adult Learning Hotline at 1-800-321-9511. A good resource for literacy programs is the *Civics and Citizenship Toolkit* offered through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



Celebrating passing the U.S. Citizenship test are (left to right) volunteer tutor Lenore Hrejsa, adult learner Yuritzi Moreno, and Sr. Jane Ann Beckman from the Dominican Literacy Center, Aurora.



Summer reading ideas for parents, tutors, teachers, learners

- “Paws to Read!” at www.ireadprogram.org.
- California Library Association at www.cla-net.org (click Summer Reading).
- Reading Rockets at www.readingrockets.org/reading-topics/summer-reading.
- Visit your local library for other summer reading activities.

FY13 Adult Volunteer Literacy tutoring sites

Secretary of State-funded FY13 Adult Volunteer Literacy programs provided 867 tutoring sites outside of Cook County. Chicago literacy programs had 152 tutoring sites with an additional 119 sites in Cook County for a total of 271 sites in Cook County. Throughout the state of Illinois, 1,138 tutoring sites were provided by the Adult Volunteer Literacy programs.

WWW



www.mcgruff.org

Click “Parents & Educators” for a multitude of safety tips geared toward children, teens, parents and seniors. Games, videos and free downloads also available.

www.englishmaven.org

Free online English lessons and exercises to improve knowledge of the English language.

www.literacycenter.net

Free, professionally designed materials for beginning readers in English and Spanish.

ON THE HORIZON

April 6-12 — National Volunteer Week, www.pointsoflight.org (click Events)

April 12 — On the Road to Literacy Conference, Chicago, www.lvillinois.org

April 13-19 — National Library Week, www.ala.org

May 10-12 — International Reading Association 59th Annual Conference, New Orleans, www.reading.org

May 12-18 — Children’s Book Week, www.bookweekonline.com

June 16-18 — National Conference on Volunteering Service, Atlanta, GA, www.volunteeringandservice.org

June 17-19 — CASAS Summer Institute, San Diego, CA, www.casas.org

June 26 – July 1 — American Library Association Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV, www.ala.org

August 14 — Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration, Chicago, www.icova.info

More literacy event information is available at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/home.html (click Calendar of Literacy Events).

For more information on how you can support literacy efforts in Illinois, visit www.illinoisliteracyfoundation.org.

Illinois Literacy is a publication of the Secretary of State, Illinois State Library Literacy Office.

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Produced by the Communications Department.

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