National Library Week in April

Libraries are the educational cornerstones of Illinois communities and serve as integral partners to every literacy program in the state. Help celebrate the role these libraries play April 12-18 during the American Library Association’s (ALA) National Library Week. First sponsored in 1958, this national observance is to recognize libraries and the communities they serve while promoting library use and library users.

The theme for this year is “Unlimited possibilities @ your library.” Honorary chair of National Library Week 2015 is best-selling author David Baldacci. Baldacci’s novels have been translated into more than 45 languages and have been adapted for film and television. More than 110 million copies of his books are in print worldwide. In addition, Baldacci is involved with several philanthropic organizations, including his family’s Wish You Well Foundation®, which fosters and promotes the development and expansion of literacy and educational programs. National Library Week provides an excellent opportunity to partner with your local library and other community organizations to build programs that support literacy students and their families. In Illinois, Mount Prospect Public Library will host the Community Organizations Fair on Tuesday, April 16. The fair will feature more than 20 community organizations offering information on their services that are available to the community. In California, the Salinas Public Library is turning public transit into bookmobiles by offering “book bags” for circulation on their public transit buses. More programming ideas can be found on the A.L.A. website at http://www.ala.org/conferences/events/national-library-week-programming-ideas.

April 12-18 – National Library Week, www.ala.org
April 12-18 – National Volunteer Week, www.pointsoflight.org
April 17-18 – PTA State Convention, Peoria, IL, www.illinospta.org
April 18 – LVI On The Road to Literacy Conference, University of Illinois Chicago, Chicago, IL, www.livi.org
May 4-10 – Children’s Book Week, www.bookweekonline.com
July 18-20 – International Literacy Association Annual Conference, St. Louis, MO, www.reading.org
August 13 – Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration, Metcalfe Center, Chicago, IL, www.icvca.info

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

ON THE HORIZON

This past November, literacy programs, libraries and schools statewide hosted events for Family Reading Night centered on the theme “Reading Rocks.” Fun and creative programs were held by these organizations to encourage and inspire families to read and learn together. I want to thank everyone for making Family Reading Night 2014 another huge success.

Volunteers are a big reason why the Adult Volunteer Literacy Program continues to successfully improve the lives of many adult learners. I encourage all programs to utilize National Volunteer Week, April 12-18, to recognize the volunteer tutors in your program. Volunteer tutors selflessly give up their time to help adult learners educate themselves. In this issue, we feature an adult learner who has greatly improved her English capabilities with the assistance of a volunteer tutor from Literacy DuPage. National Library Week coincides with volunteer week and is a great time to celebrate your local public library.

I commend all of you for your commitment to improving the lives of Illinois citizens through literacy services. While the accomplishments are outstanding, the need continues to grow. With your assistance, my office will continue to provide these services to all those in need. Keep up the great work!

Jesse White
Secretary of State & State Librarian

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http://iteslj.org/Articles/
http://americanenglish.state.gov/materials-teaching-english

This site contains information on tutor guidelines and training used at Portland Community College in Portland, Oregon. The site also provides numerous links to other adult literacy information and resource sites.

This site contains a large collection of articles and research papers on the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL). Included are articles from all over the world on a wide range of topics concerning ESL instruction.

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To subscribe to Illinois Literacy, call 217-785-6901 or 800-665-5574 (Illinois only), #3.
Produced by the Communications Department.
Literacy programs, libraries and schools around the state celebrated Family Reading Night last November with the theme, “Reading Rocks.” Family Reading Night is celebrated each year on 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 work together to promote Family Reading Night. The 2015 Family Reading Night celebration will be Thursday, November 19. For materials including posters and bookmarks, please complete the form at http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf/publications/da142.pdf.

Here are some highlights from the 2014 Family Reading Night events:

**Aurora Public Library, Aurora** – The library held its event at the Aurora Regional Fire Museum. Children made their own fire hats on arrival and were led by a library staff member in reading about brave firefighters. The evening ended with the families making fire engine crafts and touring the museum.

**Howard Area Community Center, Chicago** – Staff created several stations for parents and children to explore things related to this year’s theme, “Reading Rocks.” The stations included: making guitars, maracas and rattles, making rock candy, painting rocks, listening to music and reading books related to rocks.

**Southwestern Illinois College, Venice** – In conjunction with Venice Public Library’s annual “Read Men Read” program, families came to the library to read with local male role models from the community and experience the importance of reading.

**Fishes & Loaves Outreach, Springfield** – Participants were greeted by a room decorated with musical instruments, books illustrating the theme “Reading Rocks” and colorful posters. Records and albums were designed with labels depicting titles such as “Read Around the Clock” and the Jackson Five’s “ABC,” with families dancing to the music and singing the modified versions of the songs.

**Instituto del Progreso Latino, Chicago** – Families enjoyed an event with activities, discussions and readings about nutrition and healthy lifestyles. The event ended with Zumba dancing to rock music to encourage families to exercise.

**Lewis & Clark Community College, Godfrey** – Going along with this year’s theme, the event was a night of reading, clapping and tapping for the families attending. The book, “Saturday Night at the Dinosaur Stomp” by Carol Diggy Shields, was chosen to share with the families. This book has such a rhythm reading beat that children became engaged almost immediately. Printable dinosaurs were available for the families to cut out and paste onto craft sticks creating their own set of dinosaur puppets. Play dough and objects to make fossils were available at another station for the families to enjoy. Each participant went home with a new book for their personal library and a Family Reading Night bookmark.

**Albany Park Community Center, Chicago** – Families worked their way through a storytelling station, arts and crafts station, and a dance station during the night’s festivities. At the end of the night, children were able to shop for and pick out their own books with each family leaving with a large stack of new books.

**C.E.F.S., Effingham** – The family literacy program joined Effingham’s Helen Matthes Library at the Effingham Performance Center for Family Reading Night activities. Lorax mustaches were provided to all of the children — and one staff. A free-ticket drawing gave one winner a Dr. Seuss Lorax pop-up book. The night continued with magicians, glow-in-the-dark activities and lots of reading.

**Bensenville Community Public Library, Bensenville** – Families from the library program, as well as others from the community, gathered at the library for a night of read aloud sessions next to the library’s fireplace. The library then created “cozy corners” throughout the library with cushions and books for families to sit and read together.

**Summer reading ideas**

Summer is just around the corner, so plan to promote summer reading to adult learners and family literacy participants to help avoid summer learning loss, also known as “summer slide.” The benefits of summer reading are clear, as national research shows that individuals who participate in summer reading programs achieve higher scores on reading tests at the beginning of the next school year than those who did not participate. Develop your own theme and incentives to encourage summer reading or tap into statewide or nationwide initiatives.

Local libraries around the state host summer reading programs. The Illinois Library Association’s iREAD committee has selected “Read to the Rhythm” as this summer’s theme. Encourage families to get ready to sing, dance and read this summer. Summer reading programming includes activities, graphic novels, crafts, reading lists, incentives and much more for children, teens and adults. Contact your local library to see when they are kicking off their summer reading program or visit http://www.ireadprogram.org for a listing of potential activities.

Another idea for promoting summer reading includes Scholastic’s “Reading Under the Stars” booklet. Books for all ages are offered on this list and can be accessed at http://www.scholastic.com/summer. Encourage adults and children to grab a book, head outdoors and create fun reading adventures outside.

Summer reading will not only expand our knowledge but also our minds; we need to pick up a book to start our journey.

**Helpful Links**

Below are three organizations that can be utilized to recruit volunteer tutors:

**Volunteer Match**
http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/

**Altrusa**
http://www.altrusa.com/Who-We-Are.aspx

**Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)**
http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/rsvp

**Tutoring helps learner overcome fears**

For many people, public speaking is their number one phobia. If that is the case, imagine how much courage it takes to speak in front of people when English isn’t your first language.

When a learner joined her husband in America five years ago, she was fairly confident of her ability to read and write in English. She was a good student back in Northern India, earning a master’s degree in Science. However, when it came to speaking with her children’s teachers, neighbors and store clerks, she found herself leaning on her husband for support.

“When my husband and I went to the Westmont Public Library, we noticed a poster about an English conversation group. After I joined the group, they gave me information about Literacy DuPage,” she said.

Through Literacy DuPage, the learner was paired with a tutor with whom she formed a very tight bond. “She learns by rote memorization,” says her tutor, “She can read fairly well, but idioms are challenging, as well as subject-verb agreement and using the correct tense in a sentence. Grammatically, we have so many exceptions to the rules, yet she worked hard to learn English to build her conversational confidence.”

When they started their tutoring sessions, the two met weekly at the public library. To better accommodate her busy schedule as the mother of two young children, the two started meeting at the learner’s apartment two years since the tutoring began, this learner has advanced four levels in the literacy program. In the process, she has become much more confident about speaking up.

“Now our get-togethers are more conversational,” says the tutor, “she is curious and inquisitive; I am able to explain our American customs and address the questions she has as she acculturates to a new country.”

In addition to progressing through the literacy workbooks, their discussions often include real-life issues like navigating her son’s school website for information, reviewing park district activities and questioning the doctor about her daughter.

This learner has advanced so quickly that simple conversations are no longer a challenge. Instead of limiting herself to small-group conversations, she now has enough confidence to speak in front of an audience. This year, she was the featured speaker for Literacy DuPage’s Annual Recognition Luncheon, which is no small accomplishment for someone who was too nervous to converse with her neighbors a few short years ago.
Summer reading ideas

Summer is just around the corner, so plan to promote summer reading to adult learners and family literacy participants to keep their interest. This summer the library’s goal is to encourage reading in the comfort of their own home, in a cozy spot. Reading outside can also be a fun way to enjoy the weather. Consider starting a family summer reading program and encourage families to participate. Here are some ideas:

- **Summer Reading Program at the Library:** Libraries around the state are offering summer reading programs. Encourage families to participate in these programs, which often include real-life issues like navigating their child’s school website for information, reviewing park district activities, and questioning the doctor about their child’s health.

- **Reading Challenges:** Set up reading goals for the summer. Families can track their progress and earn rewards for meeting their goals. Libraries often offer incentives like free books, gift cards, or entry into a prize drawing.

- **Family Reading Night:** Organize a Family Reading Night at your library. Invite families to bring their books and share stories. Libraries often host special events like magicians, glow-in-the-dark activities, and lots of reading.

- **Literacy Programs and Schools:** Encourage families to participate in literacy programs and schools around the state. These programs often offer summer reading opportunities to keep children engaged with books.

- **Scholastic’s “Reading Under the Stars” Program:** Scholastic offers a summer reading program called “Reading Under the Stars.” Encourage families to participate and receive books and incentives for reading.

- **Public Speaking:** For many people, public speaking is number one phobia. If that is the case, imagine how much courage it takes to speak in front of people when English isn’t your first language. For many people, public speaking is their number one phobia. If that is the case, imagine how much courage it takes to speak in front of people when English isn’t your first language. If that is the case, imagine how much courage it takes to speak in front of people when English isn’t your first language.

- **Literacy Program milestones:** Encourage families to set literacy program milestones to mark their progress. For example, when a child advances four levels in the literacy program, as well as others from the community, gathered at the library for a night of read aloud sessions next to the library’s fireplace. The library then created “cozy corners” throughout the library with cushions and books for families to sit and read together.

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ILLINOIS LITERACY SPRING 2015

Celebrate volunteers during National Volunteer Week in April

In Illinois, volunteer tutors play an important role in literacy programs by providing their unpaid time to improve the lives of adult learners and their families through education. Last year, 7,982 volunteer tutors provided 370,049 hours of tutoring to 18,675 students. Thank your volunteer tutors for all they do during National Volunteer Week, April 12-18. For more information, check the Points of Light website at www.pointsoflight.org (click events).

Volunteer tutors can also be recognized through the Spotlight on Service Awards event held annually at the State Library Linda Buechting (center) of John Wood Community College in Quincy was one of 10 Spotlight on Service Award winners recognized at the 2014 event. This year’s awards ceremony will be held May 13 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 D’Afflinois of the Illinois Press Association in presenting volunteer tutor Linda Buechting with a 2014 Spotlight on Service Award last May.

ON THE HORIZON

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Send correspondence to Illinois Literacy, 417 57th St., Champaign, IL 61821. Phone: 217-244-9440. E-mail: illinoisliteracy@伊利诺伊州秘书和州图书馆

LITERACY JESSE WHITE Secretary of State & State Librarian

SECRETARY OF STATE Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian

Anne Craig, Director, Illinois State Library

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