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SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**White Encourages Participation in 11th Annual
Family Reading Night November 21st**

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is encouraging families to plan time to read together during the evening of Thursday, November 21st as part of the Secretary of State's 11th annual Family Reading Night.

"The Secretary of State's office is proud to work with libraries, schools, literacy programs, community organizations and others to sponsor Family Reading Night, as a way to celebrate the tremendous benefits of family reading," White said. "I invite all Illinois families to celebrate Family Reading Night Thursday, November 21st, and make reading together a regular part of family life.

"One of the most special gifts an adult can give a child is sharing your love of books and reading. Studies have shown that reading regularly to children improves vocabulary and listening skills and enhances the bond between parents and children. Children from families who read together are better prepared for classroom success. The earlier we begin reading to children, the better the chances the child will develop a lifelong love for reading."

White said the theme for Family Reading Night is "Read Together, Grow Together." He said the Illinois State Library has distributed almost one million posters and bookmarks, in both English and Spanish, to schools, libraries, literacy programs and other organizations to promote Family Reading Night.

"Every year Family Reading Night celebrations take place across the state of Illinois," White said. "Participants are extremely creative in celebrating this important event. Celebrants have held contests at schools and local libraries where children win prizes, and parades where children dress up as characters from popular books. Many grandparents

enthusiastically participate in Family Reading Night.

"From early to late in life, reading can educate, enlighten and enrich all of us. I congratulate all adults who take the time to read to children, and I look forward to another successful Family Reading Night November 21st."