



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

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### WHITE ANNOUNCES FAMILY READING NIGHT SET FOR NOVEMBER 16TH

**SPRINGFIELD** — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is encouraging Illinois families to spend time together reading on the evening of Thursday, November 16th to celebrate the Secretary of State's annual Family Reading Night.

“This special event is a night when families are encouraged to turn off the television, computers, video games and other forms of entertainment and spend time reading together,” White said. “One of the greatest gifts an adult can give a child is to spend time together reading. An adult who makes time to read to a child sends a strong, loving and powerful message that they care about that child. Studies have shown that children from families who read together are also better prepared for success in school.

“Reading together make families stronger, creates a positive learning environment, and helps children develop a love for reading that can last a lifetime. I hope all Illinois families will make time November 16th to read together and celebrate the special joy and unity that comes from family reading.”

This is the 15th year in which the Secretary of State's office and Illinois State Library have worked with libraries, schools, educational associations, publishers, literacy programs, community organizations and others to sponsor Family Reading Night. White said the target audience for Family Reading Night is pre-kindergarten to 6th grade children and their families. The theme for this year's Family Reading Night is "Celebrate Reading—Family Style!" The Illinois State Library distributed colorful Family Reading Night posters and bookmarks to several thousand public libraries, school libraries, literacy programs and other agencies to promote and celebrate the event.

White identified some of the creative ways participants are taking part in Family Reading Night this year:

- Family Reading Night marks the kickoff of the 10<sup>th</sup> annual three-day Illinois Authors Book Fair at the Illinois State Library. Mike Anderson will tell stories and award-winning author Marion Dane Bauer will read. Costumed characters including Dora the Explorer will also read to children.
- Christopher House in Chicago will be using a pirate theme, where families will hear a pirate story and engage in a treasure hunt. Each family will receive a treasure chest with books for each child, a reminder that “reading is the greatest treasure of all”.
- Germantown Public Library will host a pajama party/bedtime story hour. Patrons are encouraged to wear their pajamas and bring a favorite pillow, blanket or stuffed animal. Milk and cookies will be served, and families will have a chance to check out books that they can take home.

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- Libraries in Shawneetown, Rosiclare and Harrisburg are also conducting pajama parties featuring storytellers and offering door prizes that include family tickets to college basketball games and theater productions.
- The Norris City Library is working with White County literacy staff to present “Puppy Tales” featuring Clifford the Big Red Dog. Each child will receive a Clifford book to take home, and cookies and other refreshments will be served.
- The Blue Gargoyle Adult Learning Program in Chicago will wind up its Read-a-Thon fundraiser on Family Reading Night. Students found sponsors and have been reading, and the sponsors have pledged a certain amount of money per page of reading. On Family Reading Night, pledges will be collected and the top readers will receive prizes.

“Reading enriches and enhances all of our lives, and I applaud adults who take the time to regularly read to children,” said White. “Family Reading Night is a special way to spotlight the benefits of reading, and I look forward to another successful evening November 16<sup>th</sup>.”

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