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NEWS

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White Announces Family Reading Night Set For November 15th

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is encouraging families in Illinois to spend time together reading on the evening of Thursday, November 15th to celebrate the Secretary of State's annual Family Reading Night.

"This special event is a night when parents and children are urged to turn off the television, computers, video games and other forms of entertainment and spend time reading together," White said. "Reading together makes families stronger, creates a positive learning environment, and helps children develop a love for reading that can last a lifetime."

The theme for this year's Family Reading Night is "Celebrate Good Times—Read Together!" This is the 16th 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 Illinois State Library has distributed thousands of colorful Family Reading Night posters and bookmarks to public libraries, school libraries, literacy programs and other agencies to promote and celebrate the event.

White identified a few of the creative ways participants throughout Illinois are taking part in Family Reading Night this year:

- The Family Literacy Program at Carl Sandburg College in Carthage is partnering with Carthage Public Library to host Family Reading Night. Children and parents will read books together, make holiday wreaths, create Thanksgiving artwork or cards, listen to stories and enjoy a snack.
- Christopher House in Chicago is focusing on the family tree and immigration. Families will spend time writing and illustrating their family tree. Older children will take their family name and create a heraldic seal for their family. Christopher House received a donation of approximate 400 copies of the children's book "The Tiny Seed" by Eric Carle to distribute to families on Family Reading Night.
- Germantown Public Library is planning a Pajama Party/Bedtime Story time with a storyteller, milk and cookies. Families are encouraged to wear their pajamas and bring a pillow, blanket or favorite stuffed animal.

- The Alton Area Family Literacy Project Even Start Program will partner with Hayner Library Alton Square Mall Branch to enjoy literacy-based activities that encourage parents and children to learn and play together. The event will include a family meal, and each child will receive a piece of quality children's literature to begin or add to their home library.
- The Monroe/Randolph Counties Regional Office of Education is collaborating with Sparta Public Library, Sparta Primary Pre-School, Tilden Pre-School, and Sparta Head Start for activities that include various games, reading and craft activities. Each child will receive a book, sticker, and bookmark.
- Southeastern Illinois College in Harrisburg is planning "An Evening with Clifford, the Big Red Dog." The popular children's character will join staff in reading Clifford stories. Door prizes and snacks will be served.

"Reading enriches and enhances all of our lives, and I applaud adults who take the time to regularly read to children," said Secretary White. "Family Reading Night is a special way to spotlight the benefits of reading, and I look forward to another successful evening November 15th."

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