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NEWS

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WHITE ANNOUNCES FAMILY READING NIGHT SET FOR NOVEMBER 20TH

SPRINGFIELD – Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is urging families in Illinois to spend time together reading on the evening of Thursday, November 20th to celebrate the Secretary of State's annual Family Reading Night.

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

In this year when the Olympic Games were held, the theme for Family Reading Night is "Go for the Gold—Reading Together is a Winner!" This is the 17th 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.

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:

- At Southeastern Illinois College in Harrisburg, participants will embrace the "Going for the Gold" theme when SEIC's Falcon athletes are guest readers. They will be dressed in their uniforms to read books about basketball or baseball.
- At Albany Park Community Center in Chicago, parents and children will read a favorite book together. The child will then retell a version of that story while the parent writes it down in English or their native language. This retold version will become a book with the child's name on the front. Families will also do crafts and listen to stories, and each family will receive children's books to continue reading together in their homes.
- Family Reading "Knight" at the Carbondale Public Library will have storytelling by a "Knight In Shining Armor", with tales of honor, chivalry, courage and dragons. Princesses, knights and their parents will make a medieval craft together to take home.

- The Robert L. Jones Library in Coal Valley will host a program about snakes, presented by “Gary the Snakeman”. Parents and children will learn which snakes make good pets, how to take care of snakes and how to tell one snake from another.
- At Lincoln Library, the Public Library of Springfield, a scavenger hunt will lead participants through history and horror, through animals and animation. At the end of the night, both children and parents will know what’s available from the library, how they can find it and what to do with library materials when they have them in hand.
- At the Uptown Center lending library in Chicago, there will be games, raffles, story time led by celebrity readers live music by local musicians, and time for families to read together. Everyone will take home a new book.

"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 Family Reading Night November 20th."

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