

LITERACY

SPRING
2013

ILLINOIS

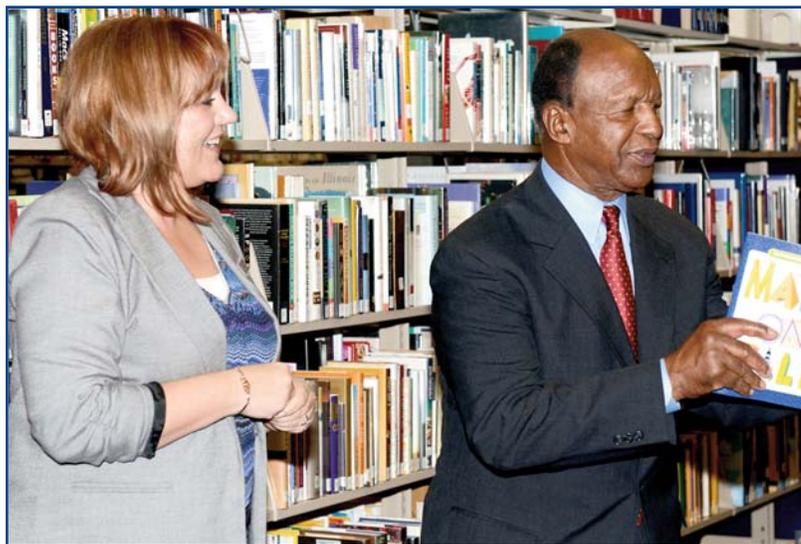
Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

Each year, my office sets aside the third Thursday of November as Family Reading Night so families in Illinois will remember how important it is to read together. In addition to encouraging families to spend time reading, I encourage agencies that receive Secretary of State funding to plan special events to focus on family literacy. In this issue, you will read about programs from Family Reading Night 2012, where refugees new to Illinois learned songs of American childhood such as "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." Another program had parents and children dress up as storybook characters and listen to Mother Goose rhymes, while other families observed the theme "One World, Many Stories" with various cultural activities. I am proud to see the commitment to family literacy and reading that these programs demonstrate. I hope these special events inspire you in planning events for Family Reading Night 2013 as well as others throughout the year.



Jesse White

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Secretary of State & State Librarian



**COMMITMENT TO
COMMUNITY —**

Secretary of State Jesse White looks at books at the Rochester Public Library with library director Janet McAllister. Secretary White presented a 2012 Commitment to Community Award to the Rochester Public Library in December.

Family Reading Night 2012 — "One World, Many Stories"

Schools, literacy programs and libraries throughout the state celebrated Family Reading Night last November with the theme, "One World, Many Stories." Family Reading Night is sponsored annually by Secretary of State Jesse White and the Illinois Center for the Book on the third Thursday in November. Following are highlights from Family Reading Night 2012. For more information on Family Ready Night 2013 on November 21, please visit <www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/public/frn.html>.

wind chimes. Books also were given away to families for their home libraries.



Midwest Asian American Center, Chicago

Participants chose a plastic egg that contained a topic to write about such as their experience of learning a new language or their transition to this country. They divided into small groups to read the same storybook and relate in their own words what they read. Participants also wrote sentences on different topics such as the happiest day of their life, the worst food they have eaten, the best restaurant they have eaten at, or spending time at their children's school.

Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Chicago

A story time was held featuring the children's librarian from the Chicago Public Library Bezazian Branch. Adults participated in a Home Safety workshop and younger children painted

Instituto del Progreso Latino, Chicago

Using the Family Reading Night theme, "One

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LEFT: Families made edible cornucopias as part of their Thanksgiving-related activities at the DeKalb Public Library. RIGHT: A preschooler at the Church of Peace decided that reading three books is even more fun than one!



A mom and son listen to a children's book on tape in their native language, Russian, at Howard Area Community Center.



A family at Marion Carnegie Library reads Mother Goose rhymes together.



John Mangahas, children's librarian at the Chicago Public Library Mayfair Branch, shows families how to make bookmarks.

World, Many Stories,” families read books related to various cultures at a pajama party.

Kaskaskia College, Centralia

A Hollywood stylebook signing was held where families walked the red carpet to meet Barbara Elliot Carpenter, a local author of the Starlight Trilogy books. Carpenter shared her experience as a writer living in a small central Illinois town and signed two sets of her trilogy, giving away one to a family in attendance. Families also created and shared their own short stories.

Kishwaukee College, Malta

At the DeKalb Public Library, parents and children enjoyed a reading of *Arthur's Thanksgiving* by volunteers of the Kishwaukee College Literacy Program. Families made edible cornucopia centerpieces by filling waffle cones with frosting, green coconut and edible treats for their Thanksgiving Day tables.

Black Hawk College, Moline

The Family Literacy program housed at the Church of Peace in Rock Island partners with graduate students enrolled at St. Ambrose University. The graduate students along with their professors provided a potluck meal of traditional American foods to share with refugee families. They also donated more than 100 books so each family could take at least two books home with them. Several graduate students brought musical instruments and taught families songs such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and “The Wheels on the Bus.” Reading together, singing and dancing were enjoyed by all.

Howard Area Community Center, Chicago

Families gathered to read culturally relevant stories, including books in a variety of different languages representing their heritage. Highlights included an adult student from Haiti reading a book aloud in French and a young child reading a book aloud in Spanish. Families created a quilt by painting their country's flag or another country's flag, and wrote a word in their language on their individual squares. Music from various cultures was played while families worked together on the quilt.

John A. Logan College, Carterville

The college held an event at the Marion Carnegie Library where a staff person portraying Mother Goose told stories. Children and adults dressed up as storybook characters and sang songs. Mother Goose became a wonderful reality to everyone involved with the important message to “read to your children.”

Albany Park Community Center, Chicago

Families explored different continents of the world. For example, the Africa room displayed numerous African tales, and families learned to dance to an African call-and-response song. They also listened to a story about a little boy who grew up in an African tribe. Families enjoyed pizza while they watched a play written by an

AmeriCorp volunteer. The children's librarian from the Chicago Public Library Mayfair Branch led families in making bookmarks. More than 500 books were donated by community members and local bookstores so families were able to take home about 10 books each.

Macon County Family Literacy, Decatur

Family reading events are held after adult basic education classes. Each adult learner received a book for their home library. Parents learned the importance of reading to their young children by talking about what they see on each page of the book. They were encouraged to have their child point to objects and count items on the page, building literacy and familiarity with books.



A mom takes a “picture walk” through a book, talking about what she sees on the pages with her daughter.



Illinois Reads

Secretary of State Jesse White joined the Illinois Reading Council in March in launching Illinois Reads, a statewide reading program to span all generations.

“Illinois Reads is an exciting new program that we believe will truly engage the interests of citizens throughout Illinois by encouraging them to read books by authors with Illinois connections,” said Secretary of State Jesse White, who serves as honorary chairman of Illinois Reads.

The eight-month initiative highlights 35 books in six age groups. The project focuses on promoting reading and connecting residents from across the state through books. The Illinois Reads campaign will culminate in a statewide celebration of literacy on Secretary White's Family Reading Night, Thursday, November 21, 2013.

“These books range from read-to books for infants to read-aloud books for home-bound seniors and everything in between,” said

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Volunteer Resource Center created at Decatur Public Library

When the head of the Decatur Public Library decided to move Project READ's small, crowded literacy office to a spacious 5,500-square-foot location, staff members were overjoyed. But that joy soon turned to concern. With limited resources, how would they transform the huge, open area into a warm, inviting literacy center?

The answer? Volunteers creatively recycled, repaired and repurposed donated and inexpensive materials. When a store remodeled, bookcases were rescued from destruction to become the core of the program's library and to create walls. Bookcases donated from someone's home made up another wall. Local businesses donated used office equipment and furniture, and volunteers found bargains at thrift shops and garage sales.

Volunteers also sorted through piles of donated room dividers and constructed cubicles for private tutoring sessions. Staff rummaged through the storage area at Richland Community College and found tall cabinets that could be arranged to define a meeting room. Hundreds of inexpensive shoeboxes from a store's going-out-of-business sale were used to organize supplies.

The result? “Our staff and volunteers put in hundreds of hours, but we ended up with a useful, professional-looking space for our students and tutors — and we did it with minimal financial investment,” said Julie Pangrac, Project READ coordinator.



An adult learner (left) works with a volunteer tutor on math at the Volunteer Resource Center at the Decatur Public Library.

Illinois Reads (continued from page 3)

Tammy Potts, president-elect of the Illinois Reading Council. "There is a pleasant mix of hard covers and paperbacks, with several Spanish-language titles and science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related books."

For a list of Illinois Reads book titles and to connect with other participants through virtual community conversations, webinars, author interviews, book reviews, book trailers and artwork, visit www.illinoisreads.org.

WWW



Summer reading suggestions

www.readingrockets.org/calendar/summer

Many resources and articles about summer reading as well as great activities to encourage learning and links for parents, teachers and librarians. Summer book lists also are available.

<http://school.familyeducation.com> (search Summer Learning)

Many resources and activities for all ages to keep learning throughout the summer months.

www.scholastic.com/summer

A wealth of free activities for all ages as well as links to help teachers, parents and librarians to promote reading during the summer.

ON THE HORIZON

April 21-27 – National Volunteer Week,
www.pointsoflight.org

April 28-30 – National Conference on Family Literacy,
Louisville, KY, www.famlit.org/conference

May 6-8 – 8th Biennial National Adult Learner
Leadership Institute, Washington, D.C.,
www.valueusa.org

May 13-19 – Children's Book Week,
www.bookweekonline.com

June 11-13 – CASAS National Summer Institute,
San Diego, CA, www.casas.org

June 19-22 – Conference on Volunteering and
Service, Washington, D.C.,
www.volunteeringandservice.org

June 27-July 2 – American Library Association
Annual Conference, Chicago, ala13.ala.org

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

For more information on how you can support literacy efforts in Illinois, visit www.illinoisliteracyfoundation.org.

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