

ILLINOIS LITERACY DAY

SPRING
2017

Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

This past November, in association with the Illinois Literacy Foundation, I had the great pleasure of celebrating Family Reading Night at the Evanston Public Library reading to a group of children accompanied by their parents. Events like this allow us to continue to stress the importance of reading and the associated benefits that this skill provides to everyone regardless of age. In this issue you will read about how other literacy programs throughout the state celebrated this special night.

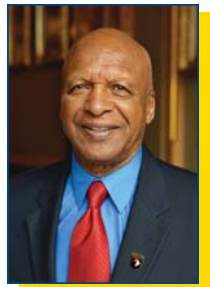
I have stated on numerous occasions that volunteer tutors are the backbone of literacy programs in Illinois. One volunteer wrote a book about his special experience helping an adult improve his reading ability. I invite you to take the time to locate a local literacy program during National Volunteer Week and give of your time to help someone learn to read or speak English.

My office continues to provide access to resources to aid literacy practitioners, so please browse the list of electronic resources available on my website. The list has recently been updated to include resource links for those who work with persons affected by Autism.

Thank you for your continued interest in advocating for literacy in Illinois.

Jesse White

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Secretary of State and State Librarian



Secretary White and the Illinois Literacy Foundation celebrate Family Reading Night

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the Illinois Literacy Foundation celebrated Family Reading Night (FRN) by encouraging parents and caregivers to read with their children at the Evanston Public Library (EPL).

"Reading increases a child's vocabulary and allows them to perform better in school," says White. "I encourage all caregivers to read with their children as it increases their love for learning."

During Jammie Story Time, hosted by the EPL, Secretary White read a book to children ages 2 through 9. Neighborhood children and their parents participated by reading with White. Attendees enjoyed a variety of stories and songs.

"We celebrate reading and families every day at the Evanston Public Library. We are grateful to State Librarian Jesse White for visiting our library with stories and books for the children," expressed Evanston Public Library Director, Karen Danczak Lyons.

The Illinois Literacy Foundation donated over 200 books to participants in attendance. Titles included: "Guess How Much I Love You" by Sam McBratney and Anita Jeram; "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault; "Eating the Alphabet" by Lois Ehlert; and "Are You My Mother?" by P.D. Eastman.

The Illinois Literacy Foundation's mission is to enhance literacy awareness and support literacy



Secretary White during the FRN event at the Evanston Public Library.

programs throughout Illinois. The foundation focuses on Pre-K learning and early education. For additional information about the Illinois Literacy Foundation, visit <http://www.theillinoisliteracyfoundation.org>.

FRN activities at literacy programs

Asian Human Services, located in Chicago's West Ridge neighborhood, held an FRN event that included three different literacy stations for children to rotate through during their visit. The first station was sight word bingo; the following station was Olympic Mad Libs and word searches; the final stop was a storytelling station with special guest readers. The stations were designed so that an entire family could participate together in each activity. As a way of promoting attendance, all children who brought a parent to the event were eligible to enter a gift card

(Cont. on pg. 2)



Asian Human Services



Asian Human Services



Aquinas Literacy Center

raffle. "We had a great time as a community celebrating this special evening," stated Jermaine Primus of Asian Human Services.

Aquinas Literacy Center in Chicago's McKinley Park neighborhood, with the support of ten volunteers, held a program centered on the children's book "Ladybug Girl and Bumblebee Boy" by Jacky Davis. In addition to a storyteller who read the book, children made ladybug and bumblebee finger puppets. Families enjoyed games, such as Scrabble, Boggle and Banagrams. Young learners played Memory, Candy Land and Chutes and Ladders. To add even more excitement to the games and activities, a face painter



Aquinas Literacy Center

brightened the faces of the children. At the conclusion of the evening, children went home with prizes consisting of books, flashcards and school supplies. Aquinas Literacy Center has proudly hosted Family Reading Night activities since 2006.

Lewis & Clark Community College's family literacy program in Alton chose to focus their activities on the book "Toddlerobics" by Zita Newcome. Before reading the interactive book, the families made rattles by filling empty water bottles with a variety of items, such as beans, rice, beads and salt. As the book was read, everyone acted out the scenes. The children were enjoying themselves so much that they requested the book be read again and the actions repeated. Each participant was given an opportunity to make a gold medal as an award to keep as a memory of the night's events. Along with the medal, each family was given a copy of the book and all of the props that were made to add to their library at home.

For 25 years, the Secretary of State's office has sponsored Family Reading Night. It is held annually on the third Thursday of November. This year's theme was "Read – For the Win!"

Volunteer pens book on his experiences as a tutor

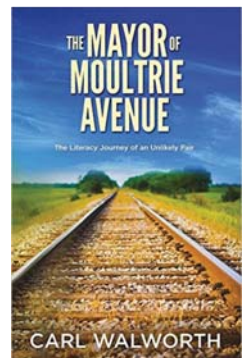
Starting as a volunteer years ago, Carl Walworth never imagined he would still be tutoring 25 years later. He also never dreamed that he would develop a relationship with an adult learner that would become a life-long friendship. This serves as the backdrop of his book "The Mayor of Moultrie Avenue," which chronicles his experiences as a tutor and provides the story of how he and his adult learner developed a friendship beyond that of teacher and student.

Walworth, a former newspaper reporter, describes his experiences as well as those of his adult learner from their initial meeting, the time spent together as tutor and learner, their accomplishments, their trials and their continued friendship once tutoring ended. The

book provides an intimate view from the perspective of a tutor and also that of an adult learner.

"I was very pleased to hear that Carl was planning on writing a book on his tutoring experience," says Pat Hemmet, the literacy advisor at Lake Land College's Project Pal where Walworth volunteered. "Carl's book is excellent, an easy read and a helpful story for those who are currently tutors or are planning to become a tutor."

Mr. Walworth has donated a copy of his book to the Illinois State Library and it is now part of the Illinois Author's Collection.



Celebrate Service
NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK
April 23 – 29

Contact the Illinois Adult Learning Hotline at **800-321-9511** to locate the nearest literacy program.

Story kits available to literacy programs

Is your family literacy program having difficulty with new ideas for parent and child together learning activities? The Illinois State Library Literacy Office offers free story kits to help literacy programs provide these activities.

Story kits are a packaged, participatory program and activity for parents and children to do together and are based on children's literature that focuses on reading strategies. Each story kit provides multiple copies of one children's book and a majority of the needed materials to implement a facilitated, literature based literacy activity for the family groups. The kits also contain a Facilitator's Guide that describes how to plan for and implement the family activity step-by-step.



"Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse" Story Kit

Story kits can be borrowed from the State Library free of charge and delivered to your local library upon request. The kits are loaned out one at a time for a period of one month. When you have finished your activity, simply return the kit to your local library and it will be sent back to the State Library for other programs to borrow.

Information on the story kits, including a complete list of titles and descriptions with specific instructions on how to borrow a kit, can be found under Literacy Services Offered by the State Library on the Literacy Office's Web page located at <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/home.html>.

Electronic resource list updated

The electronic resource list for adult literacy practitioners has been updated to include relevant resources for those working with individuals who fall on the Autism Spectrum Disorder. Please visit the resource list located at http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/pdfs/literacy_resource_list.pdf. The following are examples of the new additions to the list:

Advice from Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder to Teachers Regarding Literacy Instruction

<https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Advice-from-Adults-with-Autism-Spectrum-Disorder-to-Teachers-Regarding-Literacy-Instruction>

This article provides tips from adults on the autism spectrum with suggestions to teachers about helping current students with literacy development.

Autism, Literacy, and Libraries

https://inclusivelibrariesforchildren.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/2n2_akin.pdf

This publication advises librarians on how to best serve children with autism. The authors explain the autism spectrum, provide techniques and programming suggestions along with activities that can be employed to serve autistic children.

Why Everyone Benefits From Including Students with Autism in Literacy Classrooms

<http://www.losbanosusd.org/view/26.pdf>

This article touts the unique gifts and interests that autistic students can bring to a classroom. Their responses can serve as an early warning system for pedagogical problems that are happening in the classroom as a whole.

SOS online tutor training updated

Helping adults improve their literacy and English language skills is an important task that requires appropriate training. The Secretary of State's Literacy Office launched an online tutor training outlet in 2009 to provide literacy programs in Illinois with a web-based alternative to face-to-face training. In January the training program received the first in a number of planned updates.

The recent update to the program includes interactive learning checks at the conclusion of each lesson that allows prospective tutors to answer questions online while receiving automatic feedback for incorrect answers. The original version of the training did not allow learners access to learning check results and did not include any interactive features. Additional updates to the training will include incorporating video lessons and other interactive learning exercises that will make the training more efficient for both potential tutors and tutor trainers.

The Secretary of State's office requires 12 hours of initial training for volunteer tutors before they are allowed to work with adult learners. In many cases, time constraints become an obstacle for those who would like to become a volunteer tutor. Attending 12 hours of classroom and face-to-face training prohibits many individuals from becoming a tutor. The online tutor training offers a self-paced and convenient pathway for prospective tutors to meet these requirements.

If you are interested in exploring whether adult literacy volunteer tutoring is right for you, please visit <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/literacy/oltt/home.html>. If you decide to pursue becoming a volunteer tutor, it is critical to establish a close working relationship with a local adult literacy program. A complete listing of Adult Literacy, Family Literacy and Workplace Skills Enhancement programs funded by the Secretary of State Illinois State Library is provided in the [Directory of Illinois Adult Education/Literacy Projects](#). Please contact the Literacy Office with questions at 800-665-5576, Ext. 3.



IACEA conference scholarships awarded

The Illinois State Library's Literacy Office gave individuals who work for literacy programs the opportunity to apply for scholarships to attend the Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association conference held in March in Naperville. Each award covered the registration fees, lodging for two nights at the conference hotel and a one-year membership to the IACEA and the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE).

Applications for the scholarships were received from literacy programs across the state and covered a wide range of staff positions and organizations. Scholarships were awarded to:

- Renuka Sharma, Indo-American Center, Chicago
- Susan Wilson, C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation, Effingham
- Nancy Young, Lewis & Clark Community College, Godfrey
- Kang Hee Hong, Regional Office of Education #33, Monmouth
- Elizabeth Marsch, World Relief, Wheaton
- Sabrina Poulin, Aquinas Literacy Center, Chicago
- Abraham Celio, Universidad Popular, Chicago

The conference provided literacy program staff professional development opportunities as well as the opportunity to meet and network with fellow literacy practitioners from around the state. Many programs are unable to send staff to conferences due to limited budget funds. Each winner would not have been able to attend this worthwhile conference without the scholarship.

ON THE HORIZON

- April 9-15 – National Library Week, www.ala.org
- April 23-29 – National Volunteer Week, www.pointsoflight.org
- May 1-7 – Children's Book Week, www.bookweekonline.com
- June 13-15 – CASAS Summer Institute, Orange County, CA, www.casas.org
- June 22-27 – American Library Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, www.ala.org
- July 15-17 – International Literacy Association's Annual Conference, Orlando, FL, literacyworldwide.org

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

**To subscribe to *Illinois Literacy*,
call 217-785-6921 or 800-665-5576 (Illinois only), #3.**

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