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A Newsletter from the Illinois State Library — Jesse White, Secretary of State & State Librarian

INSIGHT

Secretary White awards "Live & Learn" Construction Grants

Secretary of State Jesse White recently awarded grants to 17 Illinois public libraries through the "Live & Learn" Construction Grant Program. The competitive grants assist public libraries in paying for the cost of projects such as remodeling for handicapped accessibility, new carpeting, interior or exterior painting and, in some cases, new construction or additions to existing facilities.

"Many of our public libraries simply don't have sufficient funds to pay for these essential capital improvements on their own," said Secretary White. "Our public libraries are cornerstones of our communities, and they have never been more important than they are today. More and more citizens are using their local libraries during these difficult economic times. I am pleased to be able to award these grants to help maintain our public libraries as the best resources for information available to the people of Illinois."

Libraries receiving construction grants are:

- Benton Public Library District-\$16,600
- Prairie Trails Public Library District in Burbank-\$26,000
- Carmi Public Library-\$17,400
- Chester Public Library-\$25,000
- Coulterville Public Library-\$25,000
- Freeburg Area Library District-\$125,000
- Hanover Township Library-\$50,000
- Mahomet Public Library District-\$125,000
- McCoy Memorial Library in McLeansboro-\$24,000
- Mt. Carmel Public Library-\$21,000
- Nokomis Public Library-\$24,975
- Norris City Memorial Public Library District-\$24,220
- Reddick Public Library District in Ottawa-\$24,561
- Pekin Public Library-\$24,864
- Elwood Township Carnegie Library in Ridge Farm-\$17,400
- Vienna Carnegie Public Library-\$25,000
- Wayne City Public Library-\$25,000

Big response to LSTA grants

Based on the large number of FY10 LSTA grant letters of intent received by the State Library, the grants are going to be very competitive this year. More than \$13 million has been requested from 640 letters of intent. About \$3.5 million will be available for grants. Following is the breakdown of the types of grants and dollars requested in the letters of intent:

- In Sync With Technology — 236 requests totaling \$6,555,056
- READ: Reading for Education & Development — 244 requests totaling \$3,415,413
- Dreamcatcher — 108 requests totaling \$1,619,471
- Digital Imaging — 52 requests totaling \$1,693,571

LSTA grant recipients will be announced in September.

May/June
2009



“ESSAYS ABOUT LINCOLN” WINNERS — Secretary of State Jesse White hosted an awards ceremony at the State Library for winners of the “Essays About Lincoln” contest. The contest was sponsored by the Illinois Center for the Book along with the Illinois State Library, the State Archives and the State Board of Education as part of Abraham Lincoln Birthday Bicentennial celebrations. Students were to compose a modern-day version of Lincoln’s *Gettysburg Address* in 300 words or less. Pictured with Secretary White are the nine student winners: (back row) Evan R. King, Bryce Peters, Teresa Cooper, Emiko Gomez, Kate Pond, (front row) Grace Elizabeth Moran, Sara Serritos, Summer Wu and June Kreml.

Secretary White salutes Illinois libraries

“National Library Week shines a well-deserved spotlight on our libraries, and I am proud to be part of the outstanding Illinois library community.”

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White saluted Illinois librarians and other members of the library community during National Library Week, April 13-19.

“As State Librarian I am extremely honored to be associated with so many outstanding men and women in the Illinois library community,” said Secretary White. “I enjoy visiting our libraries throughout the state and seeing firsthand that librarians and library staff are some of our most dedicated, hard-working and knowledgeable public servants. Our libraries are very important to our communities, and I always urge citizens who use and enjoy libraries to thank their local librarians and library staff for all their good work.

“Illinois has a strong network of more than 5,000 academic, public, school and special libraries and regional library systems that are unquestionably the finest in the nation. Whether they are looking for books, magazines, videos, CDs, answers to reference questions or free Internet access, library users know they can count on librarians who have the training and skills to meet their needs.”

Letters About Literature contest winners announced

Three students have been selected as Illinois winners of the annual Letters About Literature contest, presented by The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with Target Stores and sponsored by the Illinois Center for the Book.

Letters About Literature is a national reading and writing contest for students in grades 4 through 12. Participants read a book and write a personal letter to the author explaining how the book changed their views of the world or themselves. Students may select authors, living or deceased, from any literary genre — fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic. The Illinois Center for the Book appointed judges who selected the top essayists in three competition levels:

Level I, grades 4-6: Julia Ilhardt, Avery Coonley School in Downers Grove, for her letter to Nancy Farmer, author of *A Girl Named Disaster*.

Level II, Grades 7-8: Rachel Baruck, Maple School in Northbrook, for her letter to Jay Asher, author of *Thirteen Reasons Why*.

Level III, Grades 9-12: Eryca Campbell, PORTA High School in Petersburg, for her letter to Cherie Bennett, author of *Life in the Fat Lane*.

“These three talented young readers were among nearly 4,600 Illinois students who entered this year’s contest,” said Secretary of State Jesse White, who serves as honorary chair of the Illinois Center for the Book. “I am proud of all the students who took part because they are developing a lifelong love of reading and learning.” An awards ceremony will be held later this year for winners, their families and teachers.

The winning students will receive a \$200 check from the Illinois Center for the Book, a \$50 Target gift card and a plaque from Secretary White. The winners’ teachers also will receive a \$50 check from the Center for the Book to be used for their school or classroom library. The three winning Illinois letters have been submitted for national judging. National winners will receive a \$10,000 grant from Target and honorable mention winners will receive a \$1,000 grant for reading and writing programs at their school or classroom library.

The Illinois Center for the Book is a not-for-profit organization established in 1985 as an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. The Illinois Center for the Book works to nurture and connect readers and writers, and honor Illinois’ rich literary heritage.

Target Stores, along with its parent company Target Corporation (NYSE:TGT), gives back more than \$2 million a week to its local communities through grants and special programs. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs.

“On the Front Lines” Conference

More than 200 members of the Illinois library community attended the three-day “On the Front Lines” Conference in March at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Sponsored by the Illinois State Library, the conference provides front-line library staff with new information, training and techniques to help better serve their library patrons.

Seminars covered such areas as customer service, diversity, electronic resources, grant writing, management skills and administration, reference, technology and youth, young adult services and school services. Speakers addressed a variety of subjects, including strengthening library services for patrons with disabilities, Internet safety, conservation and preservation of library materials, and adding cost-effective conservation measures in libraries.

A vendor fair allowed participants to view new products and demonstrations of innovative technology and equipment such as gaming with Wii/X-box 360, digital imaging and scanning, virtual reference, instant messaging and Web conferencing.

The next “On the Front Lines” Conference is scheduled for March 15-17, 2010.



(Top left) Members of the “On the Front Lines” planning committee: (standing left to right) Mary Ellen McElligot, State Library Director Anne Craig, Carolyn Murphy, Christina Cahill, Emily Guss, Pat Norris, (kneeling left to right) Debra Aggertt, Gwen Harrison, Lian Ruan, Alyce Scott, Elizabeth Clarage and Natalie Tagge. Not pictured are Jane Ehrenhart, Brian Smith, Kristine Kennedy and Leslie Bednar.

(Top right) Conference participants had the opportunity to network and learn about new products at the vendor fair.

(Left) Conference keynote speaker was Karen Hyman, executive director of the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative and a national speaker on “Reinventing Your Library.”



The deadline is fast approaching to submit entries for the 5th annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition. **Entries will be accepted through June 30.** The competition consists of two categories: poetry and short stories. Three cash prizes will be awarded in both categories for original, unpublished works. The competition is open to Illinois residents age 18 and over.

Illinois Poet Laureate Kevin Stein will select winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award, named for the late award-winning Illinois poet laureate. Kaylie Jones, the accomplished writer and daughter of James Jones, will choose winners of the James Jones Short Story Award, named for the acclaimed late Illinois novelist and short story writer. Winning entries will be submitted to *Ninth Letter*, *RHINO* and *Downstate Story* magazines for possible publication.

For entry forms and rules, please visit illinoiscenterforthebook.org.

Secretary White awards more than \$14 million to Illinois public libraries

Secretary of State Jesse White has awarded Illinois public libraries more than \$14 million in FY09 per capita and equalization aid grants.

Public library per capita grants were awarded to 626 libraries, allocated at a rate of about \$1.21 per resident. Seven public libraries with low library tax bases received equalization aid grants totaling more than \$86,000 to ensure a minimum level of funding for library services.

“Libraries count on these per capita grants each year for important expenses such as paying for books, personnel, equipment and electronic access,” said Secretary White. “I am delighted to be able to provide public libraries with some of the financial resources needed to meet their patrons’ needs.”

Among other requirements, public libraries receiving grants this year had to complete an Americans with Disabilities Act self-evaluation form and identify areas where the library is not ADA compliant. Libraries also completed a survey about construction needs and provided a list of electronic databases available to patrons.

ILLINET Depository Library Council

New appointments and reappointments have been made to the ILLINET Depository Library Council. The council serves as an advisory body to the Illinois State Library on matters relating to federal and state government depository programs and services. Members of the council are:

- *Jane Ehrenhart*, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield (Non-Depository Representative)
- *Joe Fitzanko*, Peoria Public Library
- *Paulette Harding*, Poplar Creek Public Library, Streamwood
- *Karen Hogenboom*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library
- *Chuck Malone*, Western Illinois University Libraries
- *Kevin McClure*, Chicago-Kent College of Law Library/Illinois Institute of Technology
- *Jane Treadwell*, University of Illinois at Springfield Brookens Library
- *Jian Anna Xiong*, Southern Illinois University Morris Library
- *Kathleen Bloomberg*, Illinois State Library (ex-officio, chair)
- *Joe Natale*, Illinois State Library (ex-officio)



ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL DONATES BOOKS — The Illinois Reading Council recently donated signed, first-edition books from all five of its Prairie State Award-winning authors to the State Library's Illinois Authors Collection. The Prairie State Award is given for excellence in writing for children. Winning authors have included Jamie Gilson, Candace Fleming, Ilene Cooper, Sally Walker and Jim Aylesworth. Bonnie Matheis (seated right), coordinator of the Illinois Center for the Book, and Kathleen Bloomberg (standing second from right), associate director of Operations for the State Library, accepted the books from Reading Council Past President Pam Nelson (seated left), Reading Council President Roxanne Owens (standing left), Past President Steve Layne and Executive Director Arlene Pennie.

SAVE THE DATE

May 31-June 5

Small Public Library Management Institute
University of Illinois at Springfield

June 7-12

Institute for School and Public Librarians
Bradley University, Peoria

June 19

Illinois OCLC Users' Group annual meeting
St. Xavier College

August 14-23

Illinois State Library at the
Illinois State Fair

CLOSED

The State Library will be closed
Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day and
Friday, July 3 for the Independence Day holiday.

State Library staff news

H. Neil Kelley, Systems, Trustee and Construction Grant consultant, was quoted in an article on the state of library construction in Illinois and other Midwest states in the April issue of *Midwest Construction* magazine.

Margaret Collins and **Dan Dixon** had an article published in the *Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 1, spring 2009, titled "The Inventive McWorters of New Philadelphia, Illinois: Patents as a Genealogical Resource." Margaret is the State Library's patent librarian, and Dan works in the library stacks.

Jane Knipmeyer has moved from the Reference Division to the Technical Services Division as a library specialist. Her responsibilities include cataloging various formats and editing bibliographic records.

Kathleen Bloomberg, associate director of Operations, celebrated her 25th anniversary with the State Library.

Patricia Norris, associate director of the Library Development Group, celebrated her 20th anniversary with the State Library.



Insight
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