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

Fall
2015

INSIGHT

“Letters About Literature” contest winners announced

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White has announced that students from Gillespie, Wilmette and Oak Park are the winners of the 2015 “Letters About Literature” contest. The national reading and writing contest for students is sponsored by the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Center for the Book. Additionally, Aidan Kingwell from Oak Park was a national “Letters About Literature” winner. White honored the winners at a ceremony in his Springfield office.

“For the eighth year in a row, I am proud to announce that Illinois had more entries than any state,” said White. “The young writers we honored today have demonstrated, through their writing skills, how literature impacts so many lives.”

To participate in the contest, students in grades 4-12 must read a book or poem and then write a personal letter to the author explaining how the book changed their views of the world and/or themselves. Students may select authors, living or deceased, from any genre — fiction, nonfiction, contemporary or classic. The Illinois Center for the Book appointed judges to select the top essayists on three competition levels. This year’s Illinois winners are:

- Level I, grades 4-6: **Cameron Hailstone** of Gillespie wrote to authors Scott Lamb and Tim Ellsworth about their book, “Pujols: More Than the Game.” Cameron is a student at Gillespie



“Letters about Literature” contest winners accept their plaques from Secretary White. Pictured from left to right are Claudia Levens, Level II winner; Secretary White; Cameron Hailstone, Level I winner; Aidan Kingwell, Level III winner; and State Library Director Anne Craig.

Middle School, and his letter was submitted by teacher Kim Henderson.

- Level II, grades 7-8: **Claudia Levens** of Wilmette wrote to author J.K. Rowling about her Harry Potter book series. Claudia attends Wilmette Junior High School, and her letter was submitted by teacher Erin Schwarz.
- Level III, grades 9-12: **Aidan Kingwell** of Oak Park wrote to poet Mary Oliver about her poem, “When Death Comes.” Aidan attends Fenwick High School in Oak Park, and her letter was submitted by teacher Mary Marcotte. In addition, Kingwell was the first-place national winner in grades 9-12 and received \$1,000 from the Center

for the Book in the Library of Congress.

Each winner received a \$200 check from the Illinois Center for the Book, a plaque signed by Secretary White, a tour of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield and a complimentary lunch at the Illinois State Library. Teachers received a \$100 check from the Illinois Center for the Book to purchase books for their school library, a certificate signed by Secretary White, a tour of the Lincoln Presidential Museum and a complimentary lunch at the State Library.

Read the winning essays at <http://illinoiscenterforthebook.org/pdfs/lal-winners-2015.pdf>.

Libraries receive Junior Maker Toolkits

The Illinois State Library is distributing LEGO toolkits to help libraries develop Junior Maker programs for children ages 4-7. The toolkits were donated to the State Library through a partnership between the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and LEGO Systems, Inc. The toolkits were offered first to public libraries that qualified for equalization grants under the FY15 Public Library Per Capita and Equalization Aid Grant Program, and then to subsequent libraries that ranked low on a yearly calculation of public libraries equalized assessed valuation.

Any library that responded to the offering was required to assure that it had space to create a Junior Maker area and the resources available to provide and conduct programming. Along with a box containing thousands of LEGOs, the libraries received a Junior Maker activity guide. The activity guide, co-created by ALSC and LEGO Systems, Inc., included activities, suggestions and research tips as well as an inspirational poster for libraries to display as a fun backdrop for photos of the children with their creations.

The 12 libraries that received Junior Maker Toolkits are:

- Bond Public Library (Wenona)
- Cahokia Public Library District
- Chester Public Library
- Coulterville Public Library
- East Saint Louis Public Library
- Frank Bertetti-Benld Public Library
- Georgetown Public Library
- North Chicago Public Library
- Park Forest Public Library
- Phoenix Public Library District
- Virginia Memorial Public Library
- West Frankfort Public Library



State Library becomes DPLA Service Hub

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White has announced that the Illinois State Library has been selected as a Service Hub for the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). As a Service Hub, the State Library will gather digital collections from around the state for contribution to DPLA. DPLA is a single free virtual library comprised of digitized collections created by libraries, archives and museums across the nation.

The Service Hub responsibilities will be shared by the State Library, the Chicago Public Library, the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries of Illinois (CARLI), and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. Collections from the Illinois Digital Archives and the CARLI Digital Collections will be the first items represented in the DPLA in early 2016. Other collections from around the state will be added afterward. The State Library was selected as a DPLA Service Hub following its application for inclusion.

DPLA launched in April 2013 with nearly 11 million books, images, historic records and audiovisual materials available through the platform. Visit the online digital library at <http://dp.la/>.

New continuing education program video

The State Library has teamed up with alumni of the library's continuing education programs to create a new video that details firsthand accounts of the success of these programs. Each program is different and offered statewide at low or no cost with attention to the highest quality content. The programs, including ILEAD USA, On the Front Lines, Synergy and the Statewide Public Library Management Institute, are rooted in Secretary White's philosophy of strengthening resource sharing and cooperation among Illinois libraries. View the video on the State Library's Continuing Education Web page to learn more about these programs.

Interlibrary Loan Traffic Survey requirement for system membership – Deadline extension

The new deadline for completion of the survey is now the same deadline as the annual membership certification — March 31, 2016. Data should cover the state fiscal year, July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015. School districts should provide data based on interlibrary loan and reciprocal borrowing activity for all school buildings within the school district.

For more information, refer to the completion guidelines and the LibPas data input instructions. For questions, please call toll-free 800-665-5576, ext. 2.

Jesse White hosts Little Free Library® Build Day

Twelve groups from across Illinois gathered at the State Library to build Little Free Libraries to take back to their communities. Todd Bol, co-founder and executive director of the Little Free Library®, assisted with this effort. A Little Free Library is a structure that contains books, in which a person takes a book and returns it when finished or replaces it with another book. Illinois Build Day was sponsored by Little Free Library® and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Center for the Book.

“I am proud to offer Little Free Libraries to communities throughout the state,” said White. “The convenience of having a Little Free Library in your neighborhood encourages neighbors to read together. I applaud Bol’s concept to promote casual reading, which will lead to lifelong learning.”

In June 2014, the State Library began a “Little Library” program based on Bol’s concept as an outreach effort to state employees. Currently, there are 11 “Little Libraries” in state agencies in Springfield and one in Chicago. In the program’s first year, the Illinois State Library’s “Little Libraries” circulated 1,036 books. In 2009, Bol created the first Little Free Library to share books with his neighbors. After seeing the community’s positive reaction to the miniature library, Bol built 30 more and gave them to neighborhoods. Today, there are over 30,000 registered Little Free Libraries in all 50 states and over 70 countries around the world.

The Illinois Little Free Library Build Day was the second stop on the Little Free Library’s Road to the National Book Festival, which is the first leg of a bigger

(continued on page 4)



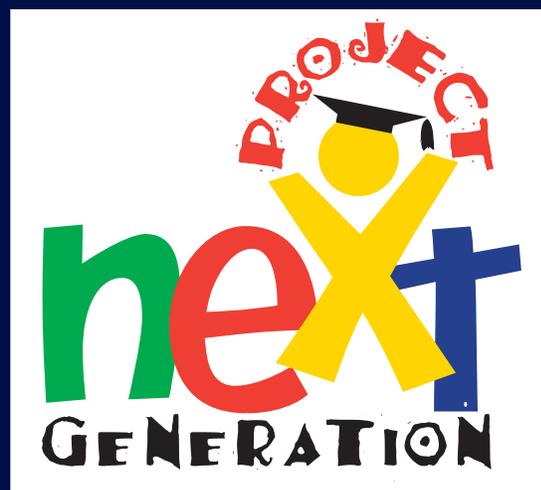
Springfield Southeast High School Library participants showcase their “Little Library.” Pictured from left to right are Devonte Winters-Taylor, Spencer Shipley, Todd Bol, co-founder and executive director of the Little Free Library®, Susan Pennington, Natia Billips and Taje Kittrell.

Project Next Generation picnic

Project Next Generation (PNG) is Secretary of State Jesse White’s mentoring and technology program — administered through 21 participating Illinois public libraries — created to educate at-risk junior and senior high school students and bridge the digital divide. 2015 marks the 15th anniversary of PNG. This year, 185 people attended the picnic at the Illinois State Library. The main event at the PNG meeting featured a performance from the Jesse White Tumbling Team.



Jesse White Tumbling Team performs in the atrium of the Illinois State Library



Little Free Library® (continued from page 3)

trip – Across America with Little Free Library®. For more information about the Little Free Library® movement, visit <http://littlefreelibrary.org>. For more information about the State Library's "Little Library" program, please contact Taran Ley at 217-785-5615.

Illinois Build Day participants include:

- Athens Municipal Library
- Chenoa Public Library District
- Giant City School, Carbondale
- Illinois Reading Council, Normal
- ILLINOIS READS 2016, Mt. Sterling
- Midlothian Public Library
- Princeton Public Library
- Rochester Public Library
- Sherrard Public Library District
- Six Mile Regional Library District, Granite City
- Springfield Southeast High School Library
- Wyoming Public Library District



Insight
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State Library staff news

Marti Martin, the director's assistant, retired following more than 38 years of service to the Secretary of State's office.

Ethel Snyder retired following more than 46 years of service to the Secretary of State's office.

Carol Weyhrich, library technical specialist in the Government Documents Section, retired following more than 35 years of service to the Secretary of State's office.

Eric Edwards joined the State Library as an interlibrary loan librarian.

Jamie Mott, former State Library reference librarian, has been promoted to library program specialist in Library Development.

Bill Kemmett and **Bonnie Roberts** have joined the Talking Book and Braille Service.

SAVE THE DATE



December 31 — Deadline to submit Family Reading Night event photos

January 14 — Deadline for Public Library Per Capita Grant applications