

Between Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of the Library

Summer 2009



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From the Director

Sara Laughlin, *MCPL Director*

Summer + Reading = Fun (and More)

With support from the Friends, the Library has sponsored a Summer Reading Program for many years and we're looking forward to wonderful, engaging experiences with this year's theme, *Be Creative @ Your Library*.

With all the fun, you might not realize there is also a very serious purpose to summer reading. Reading researcher Karl Alexander confirmed that two-thirds of the reading achievement gap among ninth graders could be traced to what they learned—or failed to learn—over their childhood summers. The results were cumulative, with the gains or losses each summer piling up to account for an enormous gap between those who had mastered reading and those who hadn't.

To counter the summer reading loss, he suggests "strategically planned, structured summer experiences, and that's especially true for those who don't have access to enriching, home-based learning."

Another reading expert James Kim, assistant professor of education at Harvard University, suggests three essential elements of summer reading that make up the "ABCs of Improved Reading":

- **Access** to books. It's critical that kids have access to a wide variety of books over the summer months, but access alone doesn't make a strong impact.
- **Books** that match readers' ability levels and interests. For skills to improve, young people need to read books that align with their own reading levels. Reading books that are too easy or too hard won't help!
- **Comprehension**, as monitored and guided by an adult, teacher or parent. The most important piece to making summer reading effective is the help of an adult who can ask questions and guide kids to better understand what they're reading.

So now you see why we love summer reading! We love providing books and booklists that match children's interests and abilities, and we love those little conversations about books that happen along the way.

As Friends, you're in the perfect position to encourage the adults in your life to support their children's summer reading and to bring the kids in your life to the library. It really does matter.

For a concise list of research supporting the importance of summer reading, visit the National Center for Summer Learning at www.summerlearning.org and click on "Research and Publications." ■

Expansion in Ellettsville

Mickey Needham, *Ellettsville Branch Manager*

The Ellettsville Branch expansion project is underway. As excited children watch the large machinery and staff and patrons try to ignore the occasional noise and fumes, workers from Neidigh Construction have dug a large hole and poured the footers that mark our new children's room.

This 2,000 square feet of additional footage will create a completely new space for our patrons. Filled with light and color, this room will contain soft seats and activity spaces and will be a place that both children and adults will enjoy. There will even be two special window seats for cozy and comfortable reading.

Since we are moving all of the existing shelving from the current children's area into the new room, we will also be repurposing the existing children's space. To meet the needs of our patrons, we will create a space for use by people of all ages by providing space and furniture for collaborative work, family games, and popular materials (DVDs and CDs). Visitors to the branch will notice other differences as well. Visible changes will include the moving of our information desk and some collections, an expansion of our holds pick-up shelving, the addition of comfortable seating and tables and eventually, more internet computers for express use.

We are all very excited about this project and would like to invite you to come out and visit us—either as the work progresses, in a forthcoming open house, or just as a library patron. ■



Children watch the construction in anticipation of the new children's room in the Ellettsville branch.

MONROE COUNTY PUBLIC
LIBRARY

303 E. Kirkwood Ave.
Bloomington, IN 47408
(812) 349-3050
www.mcpl.info/friends

2009 Power of Words An Evening with Author Rick Bragg

Dana Burton, Author Event Committee



Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and best selling author Rick Bragg. "Bragg's writing combines traditional southern Appalachian storytelling with a reporter's unflinching eye on the heart of the story."

- Sara Laughlin, MCPL Director

Were you there? In 2007 the Friends of the Library launched *The Power of Words: Changing our World One Author at a Time* with award winning author Luis Alberto Urrea. Urrea's talk drew a crowd of more than 350 to the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Nearly one hundred attended the reception that followed. It was an exciting and exhilarating event. The Power of Words returns November 14th.

An Evening with Rick Bragg. Pulitzer Prize winner Rick Bragg has been selected as the library's 2009 Power of Words author. Bragg is a compelling, captivating storyteller who speaks vividly about poverty and hard times while capturing the spirit of hope and determination. The event begins at the

Buskirk-Chumley Theater, Saturday, November 14 at 7 pm, followed by a book signing, and later, a lively reception in the library atrium. Don't miss it! Plan to purchase your reception tickets in advance.

A native of Alabama, Bragg has been hailed as a writer whose "vision, generous humor, and richly nuanced voice...never fail to record the grace and dignity of people who live their lives in the margin." His best selling and critically acclaimed trio of memoirs about his Calhoun County family has become an anthem for working-class Americans. The first book, *All Over but the Shoutin'* is a top selection by community reading programs and book clubs. As a journalist, he is drawn to write about ordinary people caught in the midst of poverty and tragedy. Bragg has covered stories

Books by Rick Bragg

All Over But the Shoutin'
Ava's Man
Prince of Frogtown
Somebody Told Me: The
Newspaper Stories of Rick Bragg

and coming in October:
The Most They Ever Had

Reserve a copy from the library. Purchase a copy at the Friends Bookstore.

from Haiti and Pakistan to the U.S. including the Oklahoma City bombing, the Susan Smith trials, and 9/11. Most recently, he received Alabama's 2009 Harper Lee Award named for the

Be a Friend. Pass the word.

- Tell your friends, colleagues, and book club members.
- Read Bragg's books.
- Purchase a reception ticket.
- Bragg's talk is free—invite a guest. Have a special evening out with your book club.
- **NEW this fall. Attend I.U. Lifelong Learning class *Poverty and the Power of Words*.** <www.continue.indiana.edu>
- Give Rick Bragg's books as gifts. Use the coupon below.
- **Make a donation to the Power of Words author series.**

author whose classic novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, has moved and challenged millions of readers.

Bragg's talk at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater is free and open to the public. Information about purchasing tickets to the music, champagne, and hors d'oeuvres reception will be available soon. Please plan to join us for this special evening with Rick Bragg. Put the date on your calendar now!

Visit our website <www.mcpl.info/friends> for more information about Rick Bragg, his books, event updates, and features for readers and book clubs. ■

Friends Bookstore Corner

Extended Hours. Shop late at the Bookstore the first Thursday of each month. We'll be open until 9 pm on July 2, August 6, and September 3. ■

Sale on Friends Gift Items. All Friends gift items will be reduced in price the entire month of June. Save \$2-\$5 on t-shirts, caps, backpacks, and bags. Our new Friends notecards are priced at just \$5 during June. Save even more when you use the coupon on page four. ■

Clearance Sale! Mark your calendars to grab some great buys on books, music, and videos at the next Bookstore Clearance Sale September 11-14.

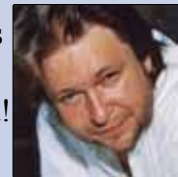
Forty volunteers helped us raise \$3,355 at the February sale. If you would like to help set up or work at the sale, please contact Barbara Wilcox at wilcoxb@indiana.edu. We can also use help this summer boxing books for sale. ■

\$2 off Coupon

Valid on any new Rick Bragg book at the Friends Bookstore.

Support the Friends and buy your Rick Bragg books at the Friends Bookstore.

Come to Bragg's talk and have your book signed!



Our Mission: The Monroe County Library Foundation supports and advocates for the patrons and staff of the Library by enhancing Library collections and facilities, and by contributing to Library programming and professional staff development.



The Board of Directors extends their heartfelt thanks to all of our current Friends of the Library members and donors who give so generously to support our mission to make our library a vital part of our community.

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In Memory Of:

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 Betty Bordner
 Jan Chapline
 Jack Sparks

Holiday Closings

Please remember, Monroe County Public Library will be closed on:

Saturday, July 4th
Monday, September 7th
Monday, October 12th

Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation. —*Walter Cronkite*

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Thank you for your support! If you have not renewed your membership for 2009, please use the form on the back of this newsletter.

We strive for accuracy in our records. Kindly contact us via e-mail <FOL@mcpl.info> or by phone <812-349-3050, ext. 1080> regarding incorrect listings.

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\$1 Off

**Friends of the Library Bookstore
 Coupon**

\$1 Off

\$1 off any Friends merchandise
 in the Friends of the Library Bookstore.

Expires June 30, 2009





Preschool Exploration Center

Joshua Wolf, *Children's Program Manager*

The Preschool Exploration Center. You've probably walked past it and seen the glorious mayhem. Perhaps you've even spent time on the inside with children or grandchildren of your own. But there are two things about that glass-walled, fishbowl room in the Children's Department that you may not know: it's a workshop for early literacy and it's heavily supported by the Friends of the Library.

There's no other place like it in the library. Children ages 0-7 make a beeline for it as soon as they've entered our doors. They delight in the ever changing variety of themed activities that are available. What many people don't realize however, is that each of the activities in the Preschool Exploration Center (or PEC) is chosen to develop one or more of six skills crucial to the ability to begin independent reading. These skills have been defined by the Public Library Association and the Association for Library Services to Children in a research based program called Every Child Ready to Read.

Current research on early literacy and brain development indicates that it is never too early to prepare children for success as readers. Preschool children build the foundation for learning to read through activities in the PEC such as Narrative Play, by describing stories they are acting out in the play kitchen, the tool table or the doll house.

With the support of the Friends, we have recently installed a Writing Center, where children "write" letters and post them in a mailbox. It's been a wild success, and we have had fun trying to decipher the letters. More importantly, the children are working hard at three critical skills: Print Awareness (recognizing print and understanding that it has meaning), Letter Knowledge (understanding that letters are unique and make different sounds), and Print Motivation (the desire to read and write words).

Public libraries are unique American institutions that promote the ideals of democracy and opportunity. Estate gifts have funded major projects, such as the Children's Room in the 1970 library building project, as well as specific resources such as Indiana

Room materials. Please let us know if you are interested in discussing options for including the library in your investment or estate plans. ■

MCPL Lean and Green - Providing Bags for Patrons

Phil Eskew, *Lean and Green Committee Chair*

Consider the following facts and figures:

- According to the EPA, over 380 billion plastic bags, sacks and wraps are consumed in the U.S. each year.
- About 500 nautical miles off the California coast sits a growing "plastic island" about twice the size of Texas, made up of 7 billion pounds of plastic garbage.
- Plastic bags don't biodegrade, they photodegrade, breaking down into smaller toxic bits contaminating soil and waterways.
- Since water keeps the plastic cool and algae blocks ultraviolet rays, every little piece of plastic manufactured in the past 50 years that made it into the ocean is still out there somewhere.

While it is true that Monroe County Public Library is not responsible for the majority of the plastic bags clogging rivers, blocking drain pipes or clumping together to form massive islands of trash in the world's oceans, it isn't that uncommon to see our bags littering the streets of Bloomington.

Consider also those who are working to set a positive example:

- In 2001, Ireland consumed 1.2 billion plastic bags, or 316 per person. An extremely successful plastic bag consumption tax reduced consumption by 90%. As a result 18,000,000 liters of oil have been saved.
- Other countries are banning disposable plastic bags outright.
- In the United States, the city of San Francisco has banned the use of disposable plastic bags, and Los Angeles will do so in 2010. Other communities require a 5-cent surcharge for the use of plastic bags.

- Many retailers, including Ikea, Whole Foods and Bloomingfoods, no longer offer plastic bags, and many other businesses charge for them.

Currently, MCPL distributes 1000 disposable plastic bags per week. That's over 50,000 bags a year! In addition, we use about 5,000 heavy-duty plastic bags that are available on request at the circulation desks and in the Friends' Bookstore. Keep in mind that these bags are not free. The approximate total cost for plastic bags? Try \$4500 a year!

Monroe County Public Library wants to be part of the solution and is striving to lead by example. Like many libraries that have stopped offering plastic bags, including libraries in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Westerville, Ohio, Riverside, Illinois, and Rochester, New York, we are gearing up to phase out our reliance on plastic bags.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? Bring a reusable bag with you when you visit the library or the Friends Bookstore. You get a free Friends canvas bag when you join the Friends or renew your membership. Be a Friend to the library and to our environment! The Lean and Green Committee is finalizing plans to significantly reduce plastic bag use at the library and to educate patrons as to why we are taking this action. Sturdy, reusable bags are now available for purchase for \$1 at the circulation desks. The Friends fully support this initiative and will be subsidizing the purchase of the reusable bags. ■



Lean and Green Committee members include (l to r) Katy Bull, Faye Mark, Bobby Overman, Phil Eskew (chair), Stephanie Holman, Brenda Seibel, and Shawn Henline (not pictured).

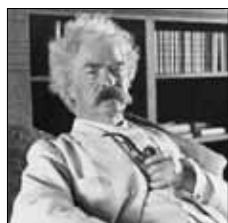
Friends Annual Meeting - Meet Author Michael Shelden



Come to the Friends annual meeting at **5:45 pm on June 24, 2009** in room 1C at the Main Library. Friends President Helena Walsh will recap the work of the Friends this past year. Meet Library Director Sara Laughlin as she highlights the planned library renovations and shares how the Friends can help

meet the goals set forth in the new strategic plan. After the short business meeting, biographer and journalist, Michael Shelden will speak about his upcoming book, *Mark Twain: The Man in White*. His new book focuses on the last four years of Twain's life, a time when Twain began wearing white suits. The book is scheduled to be released in April 2010 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Twain's death.

Shelden, professor of English at Indiana State University, is the author of *Orwell*, *The Authorized Biography*, *Graham Greene*, *The Enemy Within*, and *Friends of Promise*. Shelden was a fiction critic for the Baltimore Sun and as a features writer for the Daily Telegraph of London his work has taken him to 80 countries and 40 states to interview celebrities and authors including Harper Lee, Annie Proulx, Dmitri Nabakov, Jon Krakauer, Eli Wiesel, John Irving, and Tom Wolfe. He has been a guest on NPR, BBC radio, and the Larry King Show.



Don't miss this opportunity to hear about Mark Twain, and get together with Friends who love to support our library. Light refreshments will be served. ■

Travel with a Friend

Karen Franks, *Friends Membership Chair*

This summer as you take your handy dandy Friends navy canvas bag with you, bring your camera. Send us a picture of you and your traveling Friends bag. Drop off your photo in the Friends office, or upload it using the form on our website. If you take your bag to the farmer's market, the lake, pool, or the library, take a picture and submit it to win a prize. Twenty people who share a photo will receive free "Bear Bucks" to redeem at our Friends Bookstore. Limit one photo per family. Catch your photo on the Friends website this summer <www.mcpl.info/friends>. So go ahead, grab your bag, take a picture, and show us how you travel with a friend. *By submitting your photo there is implied consent that we may use it on our website and advertising for the Friends of the Library.* ■



Bookstore Hours

Tuesdays..... 9 am-7 pm
Thursdays Noon-7 pm
Saturdays Noon-5 pm

The Friends Bookstore is located on the first floor of Monroe County Public Library, at the back of the Audio-Visual Room. ■

Friends of the Library

2009 Membership Form

Name _____

(Please print name as it should appear in our publications)

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Date _____

Email _____

(to receive special advocacy and event notices) s09nl

- We would like to list Friends' members, on an annual basis, in our newsletter. Please check the box if you **DO NOT** wish to be listed.
- I would like a free book bag with my membership donation.

Please tell us about yourself *(Check all that apply)*

- New Member Renewing Member
- I am MCPL staff I am an MCPL volunteer
- Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

These are the library services that I use: Main Library VITAL
 Ellettsville Library Bookmobile Library Website CATS TV

Membership Type

Please check one:

- Benefactor* \$500
- Patron \$250
- Supporting \$100
- Business \$100
- Sustaining \$50
- Family \$25
- Individual \$10
- Other \$_____

**A one-time gift to the endowment providing lifetime membership.*

Donation

- I would like to make a donation to the Friends. \$_____
- I would like to support the Friends Power of Words author event \$_____

Please make your check payable to Friends of the Library and mail to:

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Thank you!

The Friends of the Library is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization. All membership donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.