

August Update – Children’s Department

Jean Patrick, Children’s Services Librarian

Summer Reading Program – Summary as of August 16

We are thankful for a successful Summer Reading Program. As of Aug. 16, 131 completed Reading Logs have been returned, representing at least 131,000 minutes of reading by our youth. Kids love getting to choose 2 prize books for completing their Reading Logs. Also, kids have completed more than 380 Bingo cards which include language, reading, and art activities. I often heard kids yell, “I love these challenges!” when picking up each week’s card. Of course, the Dairy Queen cards were a hit. Over 200 cards were signed throughout the summer, representing at least 20,000 minutes of reading.

Our family/community onsite & offsite programs were also a success, with the majority of them held at the Corn Palace Plaza and Hitchcock Park. Children, families, extended families, and tourists attended. We provided 15 family programs, 9 Outdoor Storytimes; and 3 Bilingual Storytimes. Total attendance for these programs reached nearly 2,400. *(See programming report of June & July activities for description and attendance details.)*

Comments:

Comments were positive and numerous. Frequently, parents told me they appreciated having programs outside where they felt safe. Families also expressed how happy they were to have evening programs and a Saturday morning program. “It’s so nice to finally be able to attend library programs with our kids,” said one parent who works outside the home.

We also received thanks from Doug Greenway and Nick Bakhtiari at the Corn Palace. Following the 500+ crowd at the two Zoo-mobile programs on June 16, Nick enthusiastically said, “We love that you’re bringing in so many people from the community to the Plaza. This has been one of our goals!” The alpaca program also brought in large numbers for the Farmers Market on a Wednesday evening on July 7, which Doug especially appreciated. The Corn Palace also voiced strong interest in partnering for future events.

One of the most rewarding programs was Starr Chief Eagle, a Hoop Dancer and Lakota Interpreter, who performed on the evening of June 22 with two energetic dancers. Afterwards, people from Mitchell organizations, including the Abbott house, asked for information about bringing them back to Mitchell for programs or workshops, possibly in partnership with the library.

More comments are listed with the photos of Summer Programming.

AUGUST EVENTS

Collaborative Storytime

Cornerstone Career Learning Center collaborated with the library for Outdoor Thursday Storytime on Aug. 5. They provided a free book (*The Monster at the End of This Book*) for each family and craft activities, including a Grover bookmark. Following the reading, I led brief discussion about ways to involve kids while reading aloud. Surprisingly, a couple of 3 & 4-year-olds joined the discussion. "I like it when I get to turn the page," said one of the children. 45 people attended this unique Storytime, from babies to grandparents. Also joining us was a stranded tourist family from North Carolina who spent the week in Mitchell waiting for parts for their RV.

Later in August, Cornerstone will be providing another free book (*Are You My Mother?*) and craft activity for families to pick up at the library. We are thankful for Cornerstone's ongoing collaboration with the library which has been in place since 2019.

Tails & Tales Championship Readers

Each year, we have students who go the "extra-mile" with Summer Reading activities. This year, we have students who have completed their reading logs, Dairy Queen cards, and Bingo cards & are completing several additional challenges. As of Aug. 15, we have at least twelve young readers who are embracing the challenge to become Tails & Tales Champion Readers.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Thursday Storytime

We plan to resume Storytime on the Thursday following Labor Day (Thursday, Sept 9) in the Community Room. Each Storytime includes two stories, a song or rhyme, followed by a craft. Pre-literacy activities and parent education are included throughout the session. Note: If inside Storytime is not available, we will likely have Thursday Storytime at Hitchcock Park through the end of September (weather-permitting).

Saturday Storytime

We also plan to resume Saturday Storytime to reach families who cannot attend Storytime during the week. We are also considering adding a bi-lingual Storytime with Ada Morales, possibly on Saturday afternoons. (This is dependent upon available staff to cover library operations.)

Outreach Storytime

In September, we plan to resume monthly Storytimes with First Lutheran Preschool, Headstart, Palace City Preschool, and Rosedale Colony. However, virus numbers can affect these plans.

Read to Junie B.

We also plan to begin a “Read to Junie B” on Wednesday afternoons during the school year with Diane Kenkel and her poodle. (Junie B is registered with Therapy Dogs International.)

Note: We had a strong turn-out on Wed. July 21 at the library for the inaugural “Read to Junie B” with 80 kids/families reading to Diane and Junie B throughout the day. Even the most tentative kids opened up to Diane and Junie B, including boy with autism. Another boy was so overwhelmed with joy and confidence that tears were in his eyes as he left. Also, a teacher hoped that Junie B would continue to come during the school year so that she could invite students to attend.

OCTOBER EVENTS

Read for the Record

In addition to continuing the September events, we plan to participate again in “Read for the Record” on Thursday, October 28. This year’s selected book is “Amy Wu and the Patchwork Dragon,” by Kat Zhang. This year, I plan to do three readings: an on-site morning reading during Storytime; an online bilingual reading with Ada Morales; and an on-site afterschool reading (also bilingual). I would like to distribute one free book per participating family.

SPEAKING REQUESTS

* Stephanie Gelderman from DWU asked if Ada Morales and I would speak to her Multi-Cultural Education class about the importance of bilingual programs and how such programs can be developed.

* Lewis & Clark Reading Council asked if I would lead a program about new children’s books for Fall 2021. Teachers from Corsica, Stickney, Parkston, and Menno usually attend this event. (I’ve lead similar programs for them in 2017 & 2019.)