

Chapbook...

Volume 64, Fall 2008

**Quarterly Journal of the Youth Services Section
North Carolina Library Association**

Message from the Chair

My Fellow Chapbook Readers:

As I am writing this new column, the election of our next President will be decided in just a few short hours. This is an exciting time for everyone, and not just because of the significance of this history-making election. Elections are a time of democracy in action; when we, the people, make a difference in everyone's lives. As I reflect on this, I realize that you and I can also make this claim everyday. We shape the thoughts, feelings, and impressions of today's youth. We strive to increase their knowledge, boost their creativity and give them an outlet to express themselves. In whatever type of library or school media setting you work, you shape the future by working with our youth today. It is a daunting thought and an awesome responsibility; and I, for one, am glad to be able to call myself a Youth Services provider.

Whew! Before I get too heavy and emotional, let's lighten things up by focusing on the upcoming holidays: a really fun time and often an easy one to find creative outlets, storytime themes, book talks and; of course, reasons to party. Thanksgiving offers the opportunity to focus on the 3 "Fs" - family, food and fortune. It is also a perfect occasion to learn about indigenous peoples, their histories, folklore and cultures. December can also be a great time to focus on different cultures, their traditions and celebrations, as well as our own. Of course, "melting-pot" America is representative of so many cultures; we really just have to look to ourselves and our neighbors for inspiration at this time of the year. So, get out there, be creative and remember to have fun yourself!

Speaking of fun, our fall retreat, "All Ages Served," was very successful with over 85 people in attendance. We had some very positive feedback from the attendees. Everyone really loved the location, the Caraway Conference Center in Sophia NC, and it will probably be the top contender for the location of the next Fall Retreat in 2010. I am also happy to report that the Youth Services Board was able to get a NCLA Project Grant to help underwrite the expenses for the workshop, so we will have a little extra money to work with at next year's NCLA Conference in Greenville. We are still looking ahead to next year's NCLA conference and continue to work on ideas for speakers and professional development sessions to present. Remember to let us know if you have any great ideas or areas that you would like these sessions to focus on; after all, we are here to serve you!

In closing, I want to remind you to be proud of what you do. In this time of change, it is very important that our youth have leaders, role models, teachers and friends, and we are all of these things and more. Regardless of how this election turns out, I am hopeful that we are headed into a time of great change for today's youth; a change for the better.

Lara A. Luck

From the Editor.....

I invite our readership to submit articles to the Chapbook; to share your tried and true special programs, or interesting projects, or upcoming events whereby all readers may be informed or even motivated to try something new. There is no deadline.

Send as a single-spaced, 1-4-page word attachment to:

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Summer Reading Program 2008

Lori Special
Youth Services Consultant
State Library of North Carolina

Coffee filter butterflies and construction paper spider hats have been taken down and put away as the statewide 2008 Summer Reading Program comes to an end in most of our 73 libraries and systems. Youth services staff heave a collective sigh and put up their feet as they assess the impact of this program on the over 135,000 children and teens that signed up to visit their local libraries and read this summer.

And read they did! During the months of June and July, youth in North Carolina checked out more than 2.1 million books. The impact of practicing one's reading skills during the summer through participation in the local library's summer reading program pays dividends once school starts. Kids who read during the summer are less likely to have to play reading catch-up once they are back in school in the fall.

Those who signed up to participate in their library's summer reading program did not come alone. Participants brought parents, grandparents, siblings and friends to see storytellers, magicians, entomologists, and beekeepers who all provided information and entertainment related to this year's buggy themes

of *Catch the Reading Bug* (k-grade 5) and *Metamorphosis @ your library* (grades 6-12).

Across the state, you arranged over 7,763 programs and events attended by 319,697 individuals.

Stories abound of children who brought bugs to "their" librarian to identify, teens who created their first movies with the help of their Young Adult librarian, and the live fly who pestered the children and became an

unexpected prop during storytime. All of these experiences made books and learning relevant and meaningful in the lives of children and teens. All of you who provided these services and programs are to be commended and thanked for your hard work, dedication, and, this year, bravery

in the face of bugs. Take a breather, ladies and gentleman, and start thinking about next year! The 2009 themes are *Be Creative* (child) and *Express Yourself* (teens).

Check out pictures that your colleagues have posted on the Ning at slncys.ning.com. The password is youthservices. There are some really great shots.



Trade Secrets K – Grade 5 Workshop

Susan Coltrane and Jonna Libbert of the Randolph County Public Library in Asheboro graciously facilitated this State Library sponsored event.

Children's Services staff from Central and Eastern NC shared some of their best storytime "tasty tidbits." Everyone had a wonderful time and took home lots of great ideas.

Tammy Crotts, from Randleman Branch of the Randolph County Public Library, entertained everyone with as her alter ego Dixie Hick from Hog Swamp Holler – the overall wearing and dentally challenged funny girl with her pot of 'possum stew.

The highlight of the day for me was when a "trade secret" from the Basics of Programming for Children's workshop was shared by someone who didn't even attend the workshop. That is resources sharing in action!

My thanks to Library Director Suzanne Tate for allowing her wonderful and creative staff to host this workshop, to the Friends of the Randolph County Public Library for providing light morning snacks, the participants for bringing their ideas, and the RCPL staff.

To read another view of our day, go to the [Randolph County Public Library's web site](http://www.randolphcountypubliclibrary.org). Click on Library Blogs and then click on Extension Services and see the posting from Betty Bunting, along with photos of the day's mascots.

Listservs & Social Network

Have you ever had the feeling that other youth serving staff know something that you don't? Perhaps your colleagues subscribe to the NCKids listserv.

NCKids provides valuable information to youth services staff across the state from your Youth Services Consultant and from your colleagues.

Have a question about a performer, a book, or how to get teens to stop making out in the stacks? Ask the collective brains located on the listserv.

I use the listserv as the primary means of communicating with youth serving staff across the state. This is the fastest and easiest way to disseminate information to the vast majority of youth service practitioners in the state.

"Today's Tasty Tidbit" or "T3" is my daily (when I'm in the office) post to the list. T3 is my attempt to keep all of you informed about what is going on in the world as it relates to providing library services to children and teens.

Subscription to NCKids is free and a completely voluntary. Try it for a few weeks and if you are not completely satisfied, unsubscribe yourself.

To subscribe go the State Library web page. Click on Youth Services and then Other Websites and Listservs and follow the directions from there or go to <http://lists.ncmail.net/mailman/listinfo/nckids>.

SLNCYS.NING.Com is the social networking site of North Carolina's youth services staff.

This is a site where you are able to share your ideas, photos, video, and set up interest groups with your compatriots no matter how far away.

Joining the Ning, like the listserv, is voluntary. Go to <http://slncys.ning.com> and sign up. The password is youthservices.



Recycle Bug, submitted by Bernie Thompkins, Iredell County Public Library.



Secret Agent 23 Skidoo & Friends submitted by Morna Childers, Buncombe County Libraries.



Amazing Steve Sommers, submitted by Robina Norman, BMH Regional

To look at more photos of summer reading events or to add your own, join the Ning!



Lori has a new email address

lori.special@ncdcr.gov



Carol and wiggly friend, submitted by Cheryl Lane, Randolph County Public Library





How Much is That Doggie in the Library?

By Tamara Kraus
Hickory Public Library

On a typical Wednesday afternoon, the children's department at Patrick Beaver Memorial Library is very busy. An after-school day camp comes in. Kids need homework help. Parents want the AR list from their child's school. Computers get stuck. Preschoolers cry and run amuck. But something magical happens on those Wednesday afternoons. Lucy the therapy dog comes trotting in, and the real excitement begins.

Lucy is one of ten therapy dogs who works in the Hickory Public Library's Paws to Read program. Paws to Read began during the 2007 Summer Reading Program with one dog, and has since grown to include ten dogs and countless children who scramble to sign up to read to them. In fact, even with ten dogs working at Patrick Beaver and Ridgeview Branch libraries, we do not have enough registration slots to meet the demand.

Many people ask us, what exactly is Paws to Read, and what do kids get out of reading to a dog? Paws to Read is a library program for beginning and reluctant readers, as well as children with reading difficulties. Reading to a dog is easier for these children because dogs do not criticize, interrupt, or judge them as they struggle to sound out words or mess up a sentence. They provide a safe environment for reading aloud that does not stress a child who may otherwise get too nervous.

Believe it or not, research has been done to prove that reading to a dog provides a healthy learning environment. Aaron Katcher* found that the presence of an animal draws the child's attention away from himself outward to the dog; neutralizes anxiety, depression, and anger; creates a sense of safety and intimacy; and increases self esteem. Reading to a dog on a regular basis can also increase reading skills, because it encourages children to practice their reading skills regularly and become comfortable reading.

Our Paws to Read program uses only certified therapy dogs whose owners accompany them to each session, and a children's staff member also attends. All dogs are trained and certified through national associations such as Therapy Dogs International and the Delta Society, and their owners must pay all required fees and insurance costs to keep their memberships current. Therapy dogs also must pass a yearly veterinary screening to insure their good health. Our program has grown so much because therapy dog owners are a communicative group, and word has spread about Paws mostly by word of mouth. We don't call the dog owners: the dog owners call us!

The ten dogs currently serving in the Paws to Read program are:

- **Annie**, Yorkshire Terrier, owned by Amy Prestwood
- **Bebe**, a Lab/Boxer mix, owned by Renae Leonhardt
- **Case E**, a poodle, owned by Catawba Valley Medical Center and handled by Heather Bissell
- **Cookie, Mollie, and Zuni**, greyhounds, owned by Janice Mantia
- **Lucy**, a mixed breed, owned by Mary Sizemore (who is also our library director!)
- **Shelby and Bailey**, Rottweilers, owned by Wanda Winfield
- **Toby**, a Shi-Tzu, owned by Erin Jones

Currently the library offers appointments for Paws to Read on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons, Thursday evenings, and occasional Saturdays. Times vary for Patrick Beaver and Ridgeview Branch library, but children can go to whichever library is most convenient for them. Appointments are made on a first-come, first-serve basis. The dog owners have full-time jobs, so we schedule them when they are available. The dogs get a break between appointments for water and walks.

Reading sessions run thirty minutes each, and children must make an appointment in order to read, and call ahead of time if they must cancel. We never have a problem filling an empty slot! Each child has thirty minutes to read to one of the dogs, and they can either bring their own book from home to read or choose one from the library. Children can sign up for another session after their appointment. First-time readers get a dog tag, and subsequent readings earn them a sticker that has a picture of the dog they read to that day.

Paws to Read is a tremendous success for our library. If you would like more information about starting a program at your library, you may call Nancy Brown at 828-345-6037 or Meg Sandner at 828-304-0500 extension 7271.

*This information came from www.therapyanimals.org. The link to this section is www.therapyanimals.org/read/article86.html.

Pictures of Therapy Dogs at Work:





If all families began reading together, imagine how different the world would be... by Lenore Morales

“Families All Read” isn’t just a program title at Hoke County Public Library (HCPL); it’s a dream that’s coming true one family at a time. Funded by Smart Start through the Hoke County Partnership for Children and administered by Sandhill Regional Library System (SRLS) over the last decade, “Families All Read” has evolved into a staple of fun and learning for hundreds of families in our culturally diverse community.

Watching families enjoy stories together, then become consistent readers and faithful library users, is a delightful reward for working with the program. Seeing families return again and again, as well as welcoming new faces, is more than enough motivation to keep it going. SRLS Director Carol G. Walters and HCPL Director Sheila B. Evans, along with Hoke County Partnership for Children, have worked together to make sure that happens. We recently welcomed our newest member of the program staff, Crystal Hamby.

Here are a few of the success stories we’ve witnessed along the way:

- One family reported reading together once a week at the beginning of last year when they first joined “Families All Read”, bringing their two little girls. On their second visit, they increased to twice a week, then three times a week by their third visit. By the end of the year, having attended 22 out of 24 family reading night events, the family was reading together at least 12 times per week. They’ve returned to the program this year with their new baby daughter.
- A family for whom English is their second language attended 5 consecutive events last year. In doing so, they increased their reading frequency from 2 times per week to 7 times per week. Their children, 3- and 5-year-old daughters, received a total of 10 free quality children’s books, a sure boost to the family’s literacy level.
- A military family made up of Mom, Dad and a 3-year-old son reported that they had not begun reading together at the time of their first encounter with “Families All Read” in January. By spring’s end they were reading together every day, a frequency that sent the family over the top in terms of program goals. Library staff members continue to see the family using the library and its many resources, including the Summer Reading Program.

Having worked part-time in the “Families all Read” program for eight years, I know firsthand the necessity of recording and reporting these important and revealing statistics to ensure grant compliance and to track effectiveness. But I also know that smiles on little faces and the expectant, excited energy of families, who line up at the door week after week, can’t be measured and reported so easily. Those results are the source of the most fulfilling rewards. Indeed, they are the sure signs that a family has caught the love of storytime, paving the way for a lifelong zest for learning, especially for the children.

Union County Public Library Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month by Kim Becnel, Juvenile Services Coordinator

To celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, the children's department staff of Union County Public Library's Monroe branch, partnered with the Hispanic Services Department and the Media Specialist of East Elementary School, Susan Hansen, to bring all of the school's second through fifth graders to the library for a bilingual storytime and library tour. While lots of good has come from this effort, our favorite example is Ralph, the third grader who told us after his tour that he would be back to the library that very night to get his own library card and to check out some books. And he was. His mom said he wouldn't take no for an answer.

How it worked:

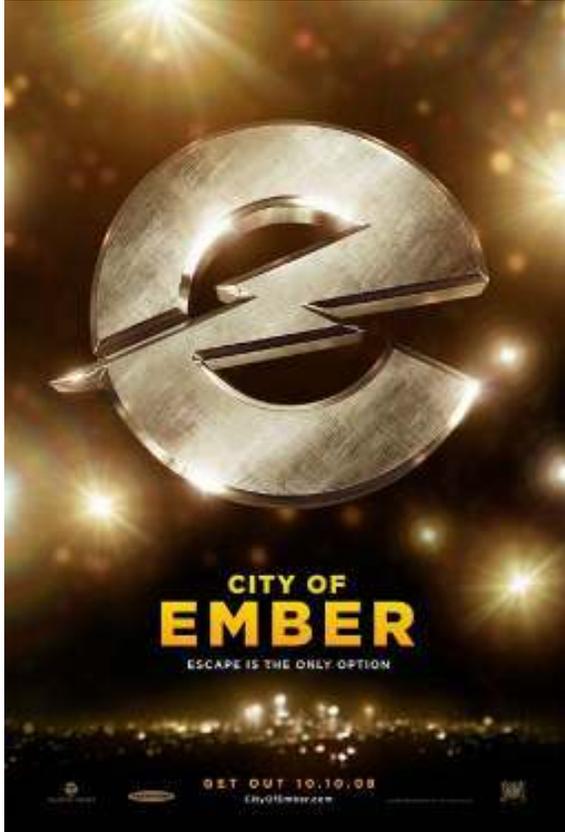
We welcomed the fourth and fifth graders one Monday morning in October and then a couple of weeks (and many deep breaths) later we had the second and third graders in. Since the school had only one bus available, we worked with one busload of children at a time. One group would arrive and begin storytime, and the bus would return to the school to pick up more children. As the new children arrived and headed to storytime, the children in the original bus were further divided into two groups to be given a tour of the library before riding the bus back to school. Rinse and repeat.

Susan Suárez Webster and Oscar Ortiz of the Hispanic Services Department conducted the bilingual storytimes, sharing books, stories, music, art and their own personal experiences with an audience roughly evenly divided between native Spanish and English speakers. After the children experienced storytime, children's department staff and one helpful volunteer took them on a tour of the library which was brimming with artwork by Hispanic artists and bulletin boards celebrating Hispanic authors and illustrators. As we led the children through the library, we gave them basic information about how the library works and showed them all the resources available to them. Many of the children were surprised—incredulous, in fact—when we told them that the library was free and that if they came in with their parents they could have their own library cards.

Lessons learned:

Although it is wonderful to go out to schools to introduce ourselves to the children and tell them about the public library, it is definitely worth clearing the logistical hurdles to bring the children into the library and let them discover what a truly welcoming and wondrous space it is. A good relationship with local media specialists can go a long way toward that hurdle-clearing. We were also reminded that it is worthwhile to go over some library basics, even with the older children. If we take the time to do this—and it can be done in a fun question-and-answer format—we are actually giving this vital knowledge to some members of our audience for the very first time.





HAVE YOU VISITED THE CITY OF EMBER?

By Tamara Kraus
Hickory Public Library

One of the many perks of my job is that I get to read a lot of books. Since Hollywood has discovered the gold mine of stories that exists in children's and young adult books, I also make it a point to see the movies that are based on them. In fact, I consider it part of my job! (No, my library does not pay for my movie tickets. Rats.) Of course, when I heard that one of my favorite books, The City of Ember, was being made into a movie, I marked my calendar with the release date and starting saving my pennies.

I will admit that I am a movie fan, and especially a disaster movie fan, so seeing Ember was already a given for me, even if I had not read and loved the book. However, movies based on children's literature have been of notoriously

inconsistent quality and often downright terrible. Remember *The Cat in the Hat*?

I'm an optimist, so on opening night I dragged my husband into the car and drove to the theater. He was unfamiliar with the book and I had not told him anything more than what he had seen in the trailer. We did not know exactly what to expect, but neither of us was disappointed in this movie.

If it's been a while since you read the book, here's a quick summary. Lina and Doon are teenagers living in an underground city called Ember. They are assigned jobs to do--Lina in the Pipeworks and Doon as a Messenger--but each is unhappy with their assignment so they switch jobs. Lina gets the run of the city as she delivers oral messages, and Doon learns about the Pipeworks that supply the city with fresh water. Both discover as they work that the city is falling apart. Food supplies are running out, and the massive generator that powers the city is quickly failing. Lina finds a secret map hidden in her house, and the teens discover there is a secret way out of Ember. When they try to tell the people, they are foiled by the evil Mayor and must escape alone into the unfamiliar world above Ember.

The teens cast to play Lina and Doon, Saoirse Ronan and Harry Treadaway, were perfect in their roles. Both were believable and sympathetic in the parts they played. Bill Murray played the corrupt Mayor who was hoarding food and other supplies badly

needed by the people of Ember, but his acting did not overshadow Ronan and Treadaway. In fact, it was a little flat (but his well-stuffed belly was not!). Tim Robbins played Doon's father Loris Harrow. Although he did not have a large role, he contributed favorably to the story's plot as an inventor and future leader of the people. Martin Landau was Sol, who was supposed to monitor the pipeworks' gauges but instead constantly fell asleep. He did emerge as a hero; however, as he ultimately gave his life so Doon and Lina could escape.

I liked *City of Ember* because it paints a picture of one possible future of humanity—a remnant of people, living in what is essentially a huge bomb shelter—and the decline of its technology. The design of Ember in the movie is jaw-dropping in its realism and decay. As dark as it is, you can picture what it must have been at the beginning of its 200 plus year existence. It must have been a triumph of technology and human ingenuity. It is also a testament to history and the importance of preserving our memories, traditions, and ways of life.

I gave *City of Ember* a 7 out of 10. The movie did drag in a few places, but the plot followed the book closely enough for my satisfaction and the visual effects of the city wowed me. My husband Eric gave it an 8 out of 10. He had not read the book, but found the story easy to follow and interesting. Unfortunately, movie critics frowned upon the movie, but I recommend it wholeheartedly. It is rated PG, with no sexual situations and very little inappropriate language. However, there are brief scenes of violence. I wouldn't recommend it for very young children because parts of the movie were pretty intense; upper elementary students should be fine. Overall, it's a good family flick.

Don't forget that *Twilight*, based on the popular book by Stephanie Meyer, comes out November 21. I'm also excited about *Inkheart*, which comes out on January 23, 2009. Brendan Fraser, Helen Mirren, Andy Serkis, and Jim Broadbent will bring another of my favorite books to life. Other books-to-movies to look for next year include *Cirque Du Freak*, *Coraline* (02/09), *Where the Wild Things Are* (10/09), *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, *Eloise in Paris*, *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* (11/09), and *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* (9/09). It's an exciting time for book lovers who want to see their favorite stories on the big screen. Here's hoping that the movies are as good as the books!

**All movie information came from the Internet Movie Database, www.imdb.com. Release dates are tentative.

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