Experience Johnson County Library

Early Library Experiences help with language development

Reading ability is important for success in school. So many parents ask, “How do I teach my child to read?” Every time you read to your children, you’re helping them learn to read.

Children get ready to read long before they start school. Johnson County Library has always promoted early childhood literacy and through the new 6 by 6, Ready to Read: Six Skills by Six Years program, the Library is focusing on assisting parents and caregivers with having their children ready to read when they start school.

Studies clearly show that reading aloud to children prepares them to become readers. Researchers have identified three age categories and six important pre-reading skills that children need to know before they learn to read at around the age of six. By reading aloud to your children, you can help them ready to read with these 6 skills by 6 years of age:

- Have Fun with Books (Print Motivation)
- Notice Print All Around You (Print Awareness)
- Talk, Talk, Talk (Vocabulary)
- Tell Stories About Everything (Narrative)
- Look for Letters (Letter Knowledge)
- Take Time to Rhyme (Phonological Awareness)

Through Library Foundation grants (see related article on page 3), Johnson County Library has created a special early literacy space at Antioch Neighborhood Library, 8700 Shawnee Mission Pkwy. in Merriam. New promotional materials for the six skills feature beautiful artwork by local children’s illustrator Brad Sneed to share with parents and caregivers. An open house for Antioch’s early literacy space is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 15, 4:00-7:00 p.m. The public is invited to attend and experience this new interactive environment designed for preschool-aged children (birth through 6 years old) to share early literacy activities with their parents and caregivers. For more information on 6 by 6, the early literacy space and related activities, visit www.jocolibrary.org/6by6.

BlitzRead! Adult Fall Reading Program

Johnson County Library invites adults (ages 14 and up) to participate in the Library’s 2009 fall adult reading program, BlitzRead! Sept. 1-Oct. 31.

The goal of BlitzRead! is to encourage adults to read and explore parts of the library’s collection of materials that they may not have discovered. How to participate in BlitzRead!:

1. Read or listen to any book.
2. Submit your entry online or at any Johnson County Library location for a chance to win a prize.
3. Repeat steps one and two! Read or listen to as many titles as you’d like to increase your chances of winning!

Each Johnson County Library location will hold a drawing from submitted entries for a $25 Visa Gift Card and tickets to Rainy Day author events. One grand prize winner will receive a $100 Visa Gift Card! Entry forms available online and at all Library locations.

Readers are encouraged to visit the library’s Web site, www.jocolibrary.org/blitzread for more information and resources to participate online.

Congratulations to the Friends of the Johnson County Library for their great success with the annual book sale at Metcalf South Shopping Center. Not only did they raise over $81,000, but they also generated great public interest in books and libraries. On my shift, many old acquaintances and library users stopped by and mentioned how much they appreciate the public library.

The Library Foundation also provided a generous gift of $25,000 for the online providing of literary criticism. This enables users to use remote access to the database where previously they had to come into the Library to use the materials. In these challenging fiscal times, the tremendous community support from not only the Friends and Foundation but also from library volunteers keeps our services strong and reflects the community’s support for their public library system.

The Library’s strategic plan 2008-2012, Experience Johnson County Library, focuses on three outcomes. One of the outcomes is to reach segments of the population that are under served. In September, services specifically designed for our youngest patrons and their parents, caregivers or guardians will be launched. Known as the 6 by 6 Initiative, the service is located in Antioch Neighborhood Library which has been transformed as the focus for early childhood literacy skills building. Research shows that working with young minds in the formative preschool years can have a lasting impact on learning and reading. Come visit the branch for a “live” experience.

Donna Lauffer
County Librarian

Leawood Pioneer Neighborhood Library Grand Re-Opening

The Johnson County Library cordially invites you to the Grand Re-Opening Celebration of the expanded Leawood Pioneer Neighborhood Library 4700 Town Center Dr. Leawood, Kansas on Saturday, October 17, 2009 11:00 a.m. Ceremony & Ribbon Cutting
11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Music & activities for all ages
Refreshments provided by the Friends of the Johnson County Library

Donna Lauffer
County Librarian

Experience Johnson County Library, published three times a year by Johnson County Library. Funding provided by the Johnson County Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library.

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A message from the county librarian

Donna Lauffer
County Librarian

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Marsha Bennett, Editor
bennettm@jocolibrary.org
(913) 261-2319
A Record-Setting Annual Book Sale

The 2009 annual Sizzlin’ Summer Book Sale, sponsored by Johnson County Library and the Friends of the Library, was a huge success. Held June 10-13 at Metcalf South Shopping Center, there were a record number of items sold bringing in more than $81,000.

Special thanks to each of the 260 volunteers who provided 1,883 volunteer hours to staff the sale and help customers with their purchases. This is one of the region’s largest book recycling and fundraising efforts.

In addition to the annual book sale, the Friends operate quarterly used book sales and two used book stores. During the first half of 2009, more than $207,000 in revenue was generated through book sales, Internet sales and the used book stores.

For more information on book sales visit www.jocolibrary.org/book-sales or call (913) 261-2319.

Tell Us a Story

Do you have a story to share on how Johnson County Library has made a difference in your life or why the Library matters? The Friends of the Library are collecting stories and asking for your help. E-mail (bennettm@jocolibrary.org), write a letter to the Friends (Friends of the Johnson County Library, PO. Box 1833, Shawnee Mission, KS), or complete a form and drop it in one of the Tell Us a Story boxes in the libraries.

From Gurdit, Shawnee

I am a resident of Johnson County who has used public and private libraries, ranging from such prestigious institutions as Harvard (where I went to graduate school) to state university libraries like the ones at KU and UC, Santa Barbara. I have also used many different libraries abroad. Nowhere has the services, attention to detail, and user-friendliness been as great as at Johnson County Library! I returned to Shawnee a year and a half ago, after directing a study abroad program for American college students overseas, so I could finish my doctorate in sociology. Although I have a larger personal library of my own, I was initially somewhat skeptical of being able to find the sources I required through JOCO library. You guys have far surpassed my expectations. In particular, I have been very impressed with the Interlibrary Loans Division! They have not only obtained hard to find textual and audio-visual sources from remote corners of the country but have done so in the most expedient and seemingly effortless manner. I cannot thank you all enough. Kudos to all the staff who make the JOCO Library truly an invaluable treasure!

From Susan, Leawood

I have nothing but good things to say about the Johnson County Library system. I love to read and love books but I no longer buy them. I keep a list of books I want to read on hand and every so often I get online and put several on hold. The email comes and I pick up the book(s). It is so easy and it makes me so happy. Also I attend your book sale each year. I love non-fiction best and when my hands are full I check out. Then I return the books to the library to be sold again...and again, I hope. Keep up the great work!

From Brendan, Olathe

In a time of economic downturn, sharing books, magazines, and audiovisual materials among a group is one of the most cost-effective ways to educate and entertain ourselves and our entire community. I visit the library every few days and am proud that my tax dollars go to support it for my use and everyone’s use.

Volunteer for the fun of it

Johnson County Library teen volunteers from 42 different schools helped with summer reading programs, special events, book sorting, and shelving. The Youth Services staff created wonderful opportunities for area teens to gain job skills, confidence, and community service hours. This is a tremendous asset to the library during the busy summer months, and also develops lifelong supporters of the Library – maybe the best gift of all!

To volunteer for the Library or Friends of the Library, contact morgan@jocolibrary.org or call (913) 261-2319.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Fall 2009 Used Book Sale

@ Antioch Neighborhood Library
8700 Shawnee Mission Pkwy., Merriam, KS

Thursday, Nov. 5 – 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 6 – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 7 – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Most items at the Used Books Sales are priced at $1 and 50¢; some items specially priced. Cash, check, MasterCard, Visa and Discover accepted with ID. For more information, visit www.jocolibrary.org/booksales or call (913) 261-2319.
Pinnacle Award winners will be recognized at the Pinnacle Award Recognition Dinner, on Thursday, Oct. 29, 7:00 p.m., at the Regnier Center, Johnson County Community College. The dinner will be preceded by a reception at 6:00 p.m. Winners will be presented with a commemorative item, and make brief remarks about their passions and successes.

All proceeds from sponsorships and ticket sales will support the mission of the Johnson County Library Foundation, building an endowment for the Library's collection and securing support for lifelong learning programs. Sponsorship and ticket levels:

- **$3,000 Pinnacle Sponsors** receive eight premium seats, special lighted signage at event venue, opportunity to distribute promotional items, awards presentation participation, recognition in public announcements, acknowledgment in all printed materials
- **$1,000 Dinner Sponsors** receive eight premium seats, opportunity to distribute promotional items, awards presentation participation, recognition in public announcements, acknowledgment in all printed materials
- **$500 Table Sponsors** receive eight seats, opportunity to distribute promotional items, acknowledgment in all printed materials
- **$290 Ticket Four-Pack** includes four-seat grouping
- **$75 Individual Ticket**

Please join us on Oct. 29 as we recognize excellence in our community. If you are interested in sponsoring or attending, just have questions, contact our Foundation office at (913) 495-7579 or e-mail ZergerS@joclibrary.org.

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**2009 Pinnacle Award Winners**

**Doug Tally – Excellence in the Arts**

Doug has spent over 20 years in his dual career as an outstanding music educator and jazz composer and performer. A highly-respected jazz educator in the Midwest region, he has served as an adjunct instructor for the jazz ensemble at MidAmerica Nazarene University. His tenure in the Shawnee Mission School District has been marked by excellence and innovation, including an unbroken string of Division I ratings (the highest possible score) for the Shawnee Mission Northwest High School jazz band under his direction.

**Myra J. Christopher – Excellence in Advocacy & Public Engagement**

Myra became president of the Center for Practical Bioethics in 1994, and continues to serve as its executive director, a position she has held since the Center’s inception in 1985. This role allows Myra to continue her lifelong mission to improve care for seriously ill people and their families. An author and frequent speaker on bioethical issues, Myra has made presentations to such prestigious national organizations as the American Hospital Association, National Health Lawyers Association, AARP and American Philosophical Association.

**Phillip Spencer – Excellence in Business & Entrepreneurship**

Phillip currently serves as CEO of Codero, an internet hosting services company headquartered in Overland Park. Before Codero, he was CEO of Aplus.net, a $30 million Web hosting firm. Philip is widely known for his prior success as President and CEO of Everest Connections, Inc., a Limestone-based cable, telephone and Internet access provider that thrived in a market dominated by larger competition and grew to more than $60 million in annual revenues, being named one of the second-fastest-growing company in Kansas City by Ingram’s Magazine and Ernst & Young.

**Gaylon Umbarger – Excellence in Literacy & Education**

Gaylon is director of training for Literacy Kansas City, a philanthropic organization providing free, confidential, one-to-one and small group reading help to adults and older teens in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. He has served on the Literacy Kansas City staff since 1995, directing services to students and tutors, tutor training, in-service workshops and writing training materials. Throughout his involvement with Literacy Kansas City, Umbarger has spoken to numerous groups, and has appeared on radio and television many times.

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Johnson County Library Foundation providing important literary study tools

With a $25,000 grant from the Johnson County Library Foundation, Johnson County Library will convert part of its extensive print literary criticism collection to a Web-based portal. This grant represents the Foundation’s first Collection Enrichment Project, an annual effort to provide additional depth and breadth to the Library’s collection.

The Library’s Contemporary Literary Criticism and Twentieth Century Literary Criticism collection currently consists of 478 printed volumes housed at Central Resource Library. The online database will replace the print volumes, and offer library patrons access to the journals via home or school computers, as well as public computers at the Library’s 13 locations. The Library will be purchasing the database’s electronic files, meaning the material will be permanently available at Johnson County Library and will provide lasting value for the Library’s collection. The online version will feature an easy-to-use search engine, instead of requiring traditional printed indexes. This improvement will also provide a much needed space savings at the Central Resource Library.

Literary study resources, such as Contemporary Literary Criticism and Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, are a critical tool for students and researchers. Students throughout Johnson County regularly utilize these research tools in their coursework.

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Kansas Health Foundation awards $25,000 recognition grant to Library Foundation

The Kansas Health Foundation has awarded a $25,000 Recognition Grant to the Johnson County Library Foundation to fund the Library’s new 6 by 6, Ready to Read: Six Skills by Six Years early childhood literacy program.

The grant will provide vital funding for the new program, which will inform parents and caregivers of preschool-aged children about early literacy research and how they can help prepare children to be ready to read.

**6 by 6, Ready to Read** will have an emphasis on serving low-income families with special skill-cards. Skill-card kits will feature early literacy activities and the artwork of Brad Sneed, a locally-based children's illustrator.

The 6 by 6, Ready to Read program will position Johnson County Library as an important early literacy resource available to the community free of charge.

The Wichita-based Kansas Health Foundation works to improve the health of all Kansans by focusing in the areas of children's health, leadership, public health and policy. It was founded in 1983 and has approximately $540 million in assets. The Kansas Health Foundation grants approximately $25 million each year to non-profit organizations, educational institutions, public school districts and state agencies.

www.joclibraryfoundation.org
Learn a language online

Johnson County Library now offers the Mango Languages online language-learning system to those with a Johnson County Library card and PIN.

Mango is free of charge and provides a fun, fast and convenient way to learn a foreign language.

Mango’s online language learning system focuses on teaching actual conversation skills for a wide variety of languages. Each lesson combines real-life situations and audio from native speakers with an easy-to-follow interface and simple, clear instructions.

Because it’s completely Web-based, library patrons can learn anywhere they have an internet connection – at the Library, a coffee shop, or even from home.

Mango Languages currently offers 12 language courses – Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish, Japanese, French, German, Italian, Greek, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, ESL English for Polish speakers, ESL English for Spanish speakers, and ESL English for Brazilian Portuguese speakers – with many more to come.

To access the Library’s Mango Language learning system, visit www.jocolibrary.org/languages.

Meet Mirko, Library Volunteer

The Library loves its volunteers. Mirko Del Pozo is one of several volunteers that help keep the Circulation Department at Central Resource Library running smoothly.

Mirko, who is originally from Peru, came to the United States at the age of 13. He is hearing impaired and learned both English and Sign Language fluently within a few years of moving here.

Mirko says that he likes volunteering at the Library because it gives him experience working with people, and he appreciates the chance to practice his English.

To volunteer at the Library, visit www.jocolibrary.org/volunteer or call 913-261-2314.