

**Library Board Report
Youth Services Department
September 2013**

Prepared by Michaela Watson, Youth Services Coordinator

My name is Michaela Watson and I am the new Youth Services Coordinator, hired in May of this year. I moved from the Houston area with my husband, Jonathan, 3 year old daughter, Alice, at the time unborn son, Thorin, and dog, Pepper. I spent five years working in Youth Services at the Houston Public Library, both as a children's librarian at a neighborhood library and as a leader in the Youth Services department downtown; I am excited about the new opportunities and growth that this position offers. My son was born July 16 and I have just returned to work this month. I am so glad to have the opportunity to speak with you this morning.

The Youth Services department began the summer with a big kick-off celebration at both libraries promoting the 2013 Summer Reading Program (SRP). Along with registering for the SRP, the celebration included fun activities for the kids like face painting, a fishing booth and free balloons which were donated by Bob Tomes Ford. The Friends of the Library sold reusable bags at both events and we advertised for Read across McKinney. This year's Summer Reading Program was very successful. In total we handed out 1,259 logs to preschoolers, 2,335 logs to school-age children and 715 logs to teens, totaling 4,309 logs for all three programs. This represents an increase of 545 logs over last summer. Participants received a variety of rewards including a circus ticket, hockey ticket, a free book of their choice, and food coupons thanks to the many generous donations by Chick-fil-A, Whataburger, McDonalds and others. Teens were entered into a drawing to win a Kindle Touch; three Kindles were given to teens that read ten hours and were entered into the random drawing.

We had something for everyone when it came to our summer programs. The Youth Services team at JJGL continued the popular program, Music and Movement, for the preschool crowd. The program was held on Thursday mornings, with three sessions to accommodate the demand for this program. The program was full of music, singing, and dancing and each week a different instrument or manipulative was used. The children used manipulatives such as sticks, bells, shakers, scarves, or ribbons. Tickets were handed out on a first come first serve basis, with a total of 92 tickets each Thursday morning.

The school age children were treated to four different performers courtesy of the Friends of the Library organization. Preschool children were offered a Reading Buddies storytime program while these programs took place. School Age programming began with library favorite, Zooniversity, who offered live animals and an educational presentation; this program was attended by 124 students between the two locations. Next, the library hosted a puppet show that told the story of Goldie Rocks and the Three Bears. 146 students laughed as Goldie explained her side of the story. In July the students were treated to a Secret Agent Magic Show by James Wand; 210 students

participated, making this the most popular school age program of the summer. The last program was a live performance of Gertrude McFuzzy, attended by 96 students.

As a finale, the library was able to offer two family programs during the month of August. Predators from the Sky featured live raptors of different species and size and Brett Roberts, a magician, wowed the audience with magic and illusion.

This year's teen programs were very well attended and a lot of fun. We began with a program based on the TV show, Minute to Win It. Twenty-eight teens competed in various one minute challenges, including blowing a small ball across the room into a cup and stacking apples. The second program was Main Street Magic, who not only performed but also showed the thirty-two teens present how to do some tricks themselves. Our third program was a craft program where 55 teens used duct tape to create purses, wallets, and other designs. Never underestimate how entertaining a little duct tape can be to a teenager!

Fall programming began on Tuesday, September 3rd and we have lots of fun programs planned through December. Due to incredible demand we continue to receive for the Music and Movement program, we are continuing it in the fall programming schedule along with our standard storytimes. The preschoolers will be able to attend one morning of storytime and one morning of music and movement at each library location.

The school age program for the fall is "STEM". This topic addresses the current emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math in school. This program will be held once a month at each library and will include various topics to make STEM exciting for children; the topics include Deep in the Ocean, Things that Fly, How did they Build That? and others.

The teen program lineup includes Teen Book Club, Teen Craft Club, and Music Exchange. The programs will take place on the first, second, and third Thursdays of each month at JJGL.

I am proud of the Youth Services Team's effort and work to provide our community with such a successful summer reading program. I look forward to the Fall as we continue to provide outstanding programs to our community and grow together as a team.