

**Library Board Report
Youth Services Department
April 2014**

Prepared by Michaela Watson, Youth Services Coordinator

My name is Michaela Watson and I am the Youth Services Coordinator, hired in May of last year. The past six months have been a whirlwind of exciting programs and growth in the Youth Services department. We have added three new team members in the past six months. Stacy Wells is the Librarian Supervisor at Hall. Meredith Carnley was promoted from Library Assistant at JJGL to a Library Technician with Youth Services at Hall. Tamara Biggio is our part time Library Technician. The other half of the department consists of Sandra Thomas, Robert Dowdy, and me.

Preschool programming remains a popular destination for McKinney's parents with young children. Hall offers a Toddler and PreK storytime on Monday mornings, Music & Movement programs on Tuesday, and a baby lapsit program on Wednesdays. JJGL offers the same programs on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Music & Movement continues to be the most well attended preschool event at the library, with 92 tickets being given away every Thursday morning at JJGL. The two libraries collectively offer fourteen preschool programs each week.

School Age programming, for kids in K-5th grade, continues to grow and attract new people weekly. This semester's theme is STEAM, which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math. Some of the topics have included volcanoes, bubble art, marble maze madness, and bouncing polymer balls. The first part of the program is to talk about the topic and the second part of the program is a hands-on learning lab for the kids. Attendance is always high and even netted 33 kids during spring break! We also added a Lego Storytime once a month, where the kids listen to a book read aloud and then free build with legos. Kids who think they are too old to enjoy picture books listen with rapt attention and then use their problem solving and engineering skills to build. JJGL has three school age programs a month and Hall has two.

Teen programs are held on the second, third and fourth Thursdays of the month at JJGL. This semester we have a teen writing club, where teens can share their work and choose whether or not to receive feedback from the group. The next week, teens can attend a Graphic Novel Book Club and discuss the books they are currently reading. Finally teens can attend a craft program and make things with duct tape, egg shells, felt, and more.

In January we added a Mother/Daughter Book Club on the fourth Monday of the month at JJGL. The program is open to girls (or boys if they really want to attend!) ages 8-12 and their mothers. Each month the participants come prepared to discuss a particular book. Our very own Director, Beth, attends with her daughter Katie and gives it rave reviews!

As of February 2014, youth services programming is up 9.5% and program attendance is up 28.2% from February 2013. I expect these numbers to grow this summer during our exciting Summer Reading Program - Fizz Boom Read.

Our Summer Reading program kick-off event is Friday, June 6 and the SRP will run June 6 – August 15. There will be three reading incentive programs from preschool to teen. Children not yet in Kindergarten make up the first age group: they will complete an activity log with their parent, with tasks such as “do nursery rhymes together” and “sing your ABCs”. When they turn in their completed log, they will choose a book to take home and keep (these come from donations by the public) and receive a few coupons for places to go (Dallas Zoo, Aquarium, aquatic center). Children going into kindergarten through children going into fifth grade will read ten hours. When they turn in their completed log, they will also get to choose a book to keep and receive coupons. Teens, going into sixth grade through going into twelfth grade will read ten books. Upon log completion they will choose a book to keep and be entered into a drawing to win a Kindle Paperwhite: one will be given from Hall and one from JJGL.

We also have exciting programs scheduled throughout June, July and August for families and teens, in addition to most of our regularly scheduled programs. In previous years, paid performers have been reserved for the school age children; siblings and parents could not attend. This year the former school age programs will be family programs, open to all ages. There will be six family programs, including Jungle Jim’s Bugs of the World, The Incredible Bubble Lady, Snake Encounters, and we will have each program scheduled back to back at each library in order to accommodate more participants (a total of 12 programs). Teens will have four programs just for sixth through twelfth graders, including Duct Tape Crafts and Minute to Win It. I have no doubt that these programs will be a highlight of the summer in McKinney!