

Librarian's Shelf by Brad Hruska

2016 Summer Reading Success!

Every year the Columbus Public Library (CPL) strives to provide a quality summer reading program to area youth and this year was no exception. "On Your Mark, Get Set, READ @ Your Library" attracted 731 participants (this number does not reflect the 120 students who signed up for the teen program, the nearly 257 individuals involved with the Platte County Bookmobile, nor does it take into account the 249 participants of the adult program).

To kick off this year's festivities, Magician Jeff Quinn performed before a packed house. Quinn did a fantastic job incorporating fun, magic, and literacy awareness into his show, which attracted 197 participants.

Children of all ages were given the opportunity to partake in a wide range of activities throughout the eight-week program. Mondays were movie days at CPL. Families gathered in the library's auditorium with their pillows and blankets to view fun, animated films like "Cars," "Cars 2," "Wreck-It Ralph," "Monsters University," "Hercules," "Planes" and "Planes 2."

On Tuesdays numerous activities and presentations took place around Columbus. The Omaha Children's Museum put on its educational "Whiz, Bang, Super Science Show." Wildlife Encounters brought in an array of athletic animals. The Columbus Family Y conducted two sports clinics at Frankfort Square. Dr. Doug Peters, Physical Therapist with the Columbus Community Hospital, taught children how to properly stretch before sporting events. The Columbus Arts Council along with gifted volunteers, Lois Smith and Tammy Hempstead, hosted an art in the park event. Staff from the Edgerton Explorit Center presented a fascinating physics presentation.

Wednesdays were reserved for those students that just completed the fourth and fifth grades. For these lucky individuals, CPL partnered with the Nebraska Extension office of Platte County to offer "CPL Pit Crew." This program provided individuals with engaging hands-on activities dealing with the various aspects of science.

Seven local celebrity readers (Riley Scott, Susan Littlefield, Sandie Fischer, Vanessa Ocegueda, Tammy Hempstead, Jenny Meyer, and Angie Luebbe) shared over 80 entertaining books with children during our two-session story time program on Thursdays. Little ones then received a balloon animal of their choice!

To conclude this year's program, a community pool party was hosted on Friday, July 29, at the Pawnee Plunge. Families splashed around from 10-11:30 a.m. and then enjoyed a sloppy-joe and hotdog luncheon served up by Karen Hake, Bookmobile Librarian, and the Friends of the Columbus Public Library.

This year's program could not have taken place without contributions from great community organizations like the Friends of the Columbus Public Library, the Pawnee Plunge, the Columbus Arts Council, Pizza Ranch, Applebee's, McDonald's, Pizza Hut and wonderful individuals like Lois Smith, Tammy Hempstead, and Connie Jansen, whose time and donations went to good use by helping encourage the children of Platte County to keep reading during the summer months!

I would also like to thank the 54 youth volunteers who donated 558.75 hours by helping register and distribute reading incentives to the children who came to the library this summer!