

“Librarian’s Shelf” by Brad Hruska

Make more family time your New Year’s resolution

At the dawn of every year, millions of people around the world make various resolutions. Some vow to lose weight and become fit. Others strive to be better stewards with their money and become financially sound. This year, my pledge is to spend more quality time with my children.

The saying “Children grow up so fast” has proven to be painfully true with my little ones. My son, Brennan, is 7 and in the first grade, my oldest daughter, Alena, is 4 and in kindergarten and Bekka, my youngest, will turn 1 Jan. 15, so spending time with my kin has recently become a huge priority in my life.

Fortunately, the Columbus Public Library (CPL) has resources that can help parents, like me, who want spend more worthwhile time with their children. Books like “The Active Family” by Amanda Soule, “365 Ways to Live Green for Kids” by Sheri Amsel, “The Boy Mechanic” edited by Popular Mechanics, and “Clay so Cute” by Sherri Haab provide great interactive activities that can be used to strengthen the family bond.

CPL also offers year-round events like the infamous Summer Reading Program, which contributes to the family nucleus by providing enriching activities that encourage children and their parents to read together during the summer months.

Another lineup that families can participate in is CPL’s Story Time/ART program, which begins a new session Thursday, Jan. 13. The story time program offered by CPL consists of two distinctive programs that are in an alternating weekly rotation.

The cycle begins with Story Time, which is exactly what its name implies. The first part of this program is a traditional, 30-minute story time when children listen to four to five picture books that follow a particular theme. During this time, little ones also are introduced to songs, poems, nursery rhymes and finger plays.

After the tales conclude, participants are then invited to play with a number of educational toys that teach them skills like counting, the alphabet and color and shape recognition.

Week two of the rotation, children experience StoryART. This program is similar to Story Time; however, in addition to allowing the children to play, little ones are then shepherded down to the Columbus Art Gallery where Susan Schoenhofer and Lisa Rosendahl assist them in creating a wide-range of hands-on projects, which youngsters can take home and share with the entire family.

So if you are like me and want to make 2011 a year for building stronger bonds, let the Columbus Public Library help. We have innovative resources that are sure to provide you with wonderful ideas for improving family dynamics and also offer a wide range of free programming that is sure to bring delight to the entire family.

If you have any questions about the events offered by the Columbus Public Library or would like to

know of other books within our collection, please contact me at (402) 564-7116, extension 4, and remember, children grow and mature fast, so enjoy them while you can.