

## ***“Librarian’s Shelf” by Brad Hruska***

The Fun Goes on @ the Columbus Public Library!!!

People assume that because the summer reading program is over that the fun and excitement of the Columbus Public Library’s Children’s Department are finished; however, that is not the case. During the school year, the youth division conducts outreach to numerous schools and daycare facilities and also plans and facilitates weekly Thursday morning and afternoon Story Time and StoryART sessions.

For years, libraries have offered story times as a way of enticing mothers and their children to the library to check out books. Stereotypically, little ones would come into a room, sit cross-legged on the floor, and listen to a grandmotherly-type librarian read two to three storybooks.

Let me be the first to tell you...things have changed! The reason libraries now offer story time is to provide them with an enriching environment to come and interact with other children, have fun with their parents, be exposed to quality literature, and to learn.

Children who attend story hours often become skilled at sharing, know how and when to sit and listen, and develop interests in nonfiction subjects like insects, the solar system, and dinosaurs.

The Columbus Public Library offers two forms of story hours: Story Time & StoryART. Story Time is very much what its name implies. Little ones meet in the Children’s Room. Early arrivals have the chance to play the “Look and Find Game.” This activity permits them to search through the Children’s Room for a particular object. Once the item is found participants come and tell me where it is hidden. This activity serves two purposes 1) to help children heighten their vocabulary and 2) allows them a chance to expend energy before the storytelling begins.

The story times sessions usually begin at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., depending on the time of day. At this time, little ones are invited to come and sit on “The Magic Carpet” where they can sit on a cloud, the sun, or their favorite letter or color. Participants then join me in an activity that prepares them to listen. Once the children are ready, the fun, poems, songs, and storytelling begin!

After the 30-minute story time is over, the children are invited to interact with their parents using different educational toys found in the “Learning Activity Chest” for one hour. The activities found in the chest help children improve such skills as color/shape recognition and counting.

StoryART, on the other hand, follows a similar format; however, instead of moving into “Learning Activity Time” after the readings, youngsters are guided down to the Columbus Art Gallery where the talented Lisa Rosendahl and Susan Schoenhofer help them create amazing art projects. These crafts, which correlate with the day’s theme, are then displayed in the Children’s Room for two weeks and then given to the youngsters to take home.

So, the next time you are looking for an entertaining and educational program for your children, grandchildren, or daycare attendees; be sure to come to the Columbus Public Library’s Thursday

Story Time/ART programs, which kick off on September 9th. Again, we offer two sessions, one 10:30-noon; the other 1:30-3 p.m., so no matter what your youngsters' schedules are there is sure to be a story hour session available for them. If you have any questions about the upcoming Story Time/ART programs, please contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4.