



The Little Read

A read-aloud celebration in Montclair, NJ

“Read to me!”

What if this plea were the mandate of each and every child to parents, grandparents, caregivers and older siblings? Could we not only wipe out illiteracy but foster a nation of informed citizens by using one of the simplest, oldest and least expensive teaching tools known to educators worldwide?

The Little Read, a three-day read-aloud celebration in Montclair, New Jersey, on October 2, 3 and 4, 2009, invites children to enjoy a good story read aloud to them by Montclair’s neighbors, entertainers, and local heroes. Sponsored by the Montclair Public Library Foundation, **The Little Read** will be a town-wide celebration of literacy and

community – and the event is entirely free to the public. We expect almost 200 readers in all. Each will read aloud in 15-minute slots scheduled throughout the three-day event, which is geared to children in pre-school through grade five. Readings will take place in 11 different locations, and a wide variety of books will be provided at each site, so each reader can select a favorite to read.

Building vocabulary through the ear before the eye...

Words are the primary structure for learning, and there are two direct pathways for vocabulary to enter a child’s brain: through the eye and through the ear. It takes years for the eye to be used in reading, so the best way to introduce words is through the ear. ***We read aloud to our children for many reasons – to reassure them, to bond with them, to inspire them and to arouse their curiosity – but reading aloud also provides a strong foundation of critical skills to improve listening comprehension, create background knowledge, increase vocabulary and offer a positive reading role model.***

In his book, *The Read-Aloud Handbook* (Penguin Books, 1982), Jim Trelease cites many encouraging results of regularly reading aloud to youngsters, including the positive impact on a student named Christopher Williams. Out of 4000 students taking the 2002 ACT, Williams was one of 58 students in the nation to achieve a perfect score. He had a free preparation course for the test: his parents read aloud to him as an infant through adolescence, every night for 30 minutes – even well after he could read to himself.

Additional statistics about the value of reading aloud...

- **Because children spend so many hours outside school (7800 hours a year out of school; 900 hours in school), the most valuable read-aloud opportunities occur in the home, with a parent or caregiver as teacher.** Read-aloud moments are even more crucial at the pre-school age, long before a child has entered school.
- **The word gaps between children of families from different socio-economic backgrounds are startling.** It is estimated that by the age of 4, a child from a *professional* family will have heard 45 million words, a child from a *working-class* family will have heard 26 million and a child from a family on *welfare* will have heard only 13 million words. Reading aloud is the best and least expensive way to close these gaps.
- **Better readers become better writers.** Through exposure to the spoken word, children begin to grasp how to incorporate grammar, verb tense, meaning and the subtleties of descriptive language into their writing.

How will The Little Read raise money for the Library? Sponsors and other donors are stepping forward with generous donations to the MPL Foundation at many levels to support **The Little Read**. The MPL Foundation, a non-profit organization, was established in 2002 to develop philanthropic support for the Montclair Public Library. The MPL Foundation has funded the annual Children’s Summer Reading Club Program, job search and vocational resources, as well as the Library’s participation in the Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), which provides residents with access to 10 million books, CDs and DVDs from more than 75 public libraries in northern New Jersey.

For more details about **The Little Read** visit www.littleread.org, contact the MPL Foundation office at 973-744-0500 ext.2222, or e-mail info@montclairplf.org.



Montclair, NJ firefighter and father of four, CJ Miller is one of many “local heroes” volunteering for The Little Read.

With The Little Read, the MPL Foundation seeks to bring the Montclair community together in a celebration of early literacy as well as to inspire children, parents and educators alike to practice reading aloud now and forever. The goal of our town-wide event is far-reaching, for we want not only to bring residents together in a fun-filled read-aloud event but to give the children of Montclair a glimpse of how strong a nation can be when it is full of readers – citizens who have gained the knowledge to make better choices in the home, the marketplace, the jury box and the voting booth.

Friday, October 2

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Main Library
Noon to 5 p.m.	Bellevue Avenue Branch
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Bedtime Stories at Main Library, Auditorium

Saturday, October 3

9 a.m. to 11 a.m.	Van Vleck House and Gardens
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Main Library
10 a.m. to noon	Watchung Plaza Gazebo
Noon to 1 p.m.	Bobbi Brown Studio
Noon to 2 p.m.	Little Y – Geyer Family Center
Noon to 5 p.m.	Bellevue Avenue Branch
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.	Montclair Art Museum
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Montclair Fire Department Headquarters
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	Glenfield School Planetarium
3 p.m. to 5 p.m.	Montclair State University Campus Carnival <i>(free parking)</i>

Sunday, October 4

Noon to 4 p.m.:	Main Library
1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.:	Furlong Athletics Field House at Montclair High

Lead Event Sponsors

John and Rose Cali, Don Katz and Leslie Larson, Jack and Susan Rudin, Vance Wall Foundation, Josh and Judy Weston

Supporting Event Sponsors

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