

Show of Hands

Fairfax County Public Library
Volunteer Newsletter



Fall 2009

Helping Kids Get Ready to Read

There is an expanding group of library volunteers who don't actually volunteer inside a library building. Instead they are out in the community, visiting child care centers and Head Start programs throughout Fairfax County helping preschoolers develop important pre-reading skills by leading fun and interactive storytimes.

Renee Edwards, the library's early literacy outreach manager (aka Miss Renee, the Librarian), works with 19 Ready-to-Read volunteers. Together these volunteers led 461 storytimes last year alone, introducing ready-to-read skills and the library to 8,858 kids.

Storytimes led by the volunteers are much more than just opening up a book and reading. They are full of songs, finger plays, puppets and more. Ready-to-Read volunteers are required to have a strong background and experience working with groups of children. The résumés of these



Early Literacy Outreach Manager Renee Edwards shares a book with youngsters at Hunters Woods Elementary School in Reston.

volunteers contain phrases such as "taught kindergarten for 20 years," "elementary school music instructor," "former children's librarian" or "preschool teacher."

Volunteers complete a training process which includes learning about the six pre-reading skills that all children need, observing a storytime and then being observed as they present a storytime before they lead programs on their own. Most volunteers lead at least one storytime a month and can spend anywhere from 1-3 hours per month volunteering in this capacity which includes preparing for and leading the storytimes. Since it is a county-wide program, volunteers visit child care centers that are convenient to them. "The need is great," said Edwards. "I get requests from 1-3 new child care centers every month who would like storytime presentations. There is no way this effort could be successful without our skilled volunteers."

The careful selection of books, finger plays and movement or music activities is an important preparation step for all

Ready-to-Read volunteers. Most volunteers develop a theme or topic for each storytime. "I try to choose something timely such as the changing seasons or an approaching holiday," said volunteer Susan Auerbach. Volunteers often practice by reading the text of a book aloud many times to become very familiar with it. "For two-year-olds, I look for books with rhyming or repetitive text involving a very simple story line or early concept. I truly enjoy the book selection process as it exposes me to new children's literature. I like 'hunting' for the pieces that make up the lesson and putting them together to form a cohesive, smooth lesson," said Auerbach.

Donna Schutz has been a Ready-to-Read volunteer for four years. As a former kindergarten and special education instructor, Schutz is a firm believer in the importance of reading aloud to kids. "I try and introduce books that I think the teachers may not have used before."

For the volunteers, the experience is very rewarding. "I love watching the response of the kids!" says Schutz. "I get lots of hugs. They all appreciate the books I bring and it really helps them to be excited about reading."

For more information about this volunteer opportunity, please contact renee.edwards@fairfaxcounty.gov.

- Erin Chernisky, Volunteer Coordinator

Memorial Gift Supports Ready-to-Read Program

This year, the Fairfax County Public Library's Ready-to-Read program is largely supported through contributions made to the Fairfax Library Foundation in loving memory of dedicated volunteer, Bonnie Rupp (pictured here with her grandchildren). She served the community surrounding Thomas Jefferson Library until just prior to her death in December 2008. For more information about memorializing or honoring a loved one to help underwrite this and other library programs, call 703-324-8300, e-mail info@FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org or visit the foundation online at www.FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org.



Ready-to-Read volunteer Bonnie Rupp with her grandchildren. A memorial fund in her name supports the library's Ready-to-Read program this year.

Making a Difference

It was about 6:30 p.m. on a Tuesday night when a woman came in to the Sherwood Regional Library. She approached the information desk and was clearly feeling somewhat distraught and at loose ends. The customer told me she is employed by the county school system, but felt her life was going no where and she was spending too much time in front of the television.

What really upset her was that her principal had asked why she hadn't responded to an e-mail. She was too embarrassed to tell her administrator that she was computer illiterate.

As she asked for brochures on how to use the computer, I suggested she might want use our free volunteer-led one-on-one computer tutoring service. She worked days and since our Technology Lab volunteers usually only had hours free during the day, she explained she would not be able to use our help.

I decided to call up to the Tech Lab and ask volunteer Jerry Stryker, who normally does not offer evening tutoring, if he could take a student without an appointment. Stryker, a U.S. Foreign Service retiree who has been volunteering at the Sherwood Regional Library for 15 years, was ready and willing. He told me to send her upstairs, so I took her up and introduced them.

Almost an hour and a half later, she came down smiling, gave me a big hug and thanked us. She was almost in tears, and said she was excited about what she'd learned, and would definitely come back to the library to learn more about computers.

- Anne Heising, Sherwood Regional Library



Sherwood's Tech Lab volunteer Jerry Stryker

One Thousand Hours – Already!

It shows great commitment when a Fairfax County Public Library volunteer reaches 1,000 hours of service. It is downright remarkable when that volunteer reaches 1,000 hours in less than a year. Yet one of Sherwood Regional Library's volunteers has achieved exactly that.

Susan Hitch started volunteering at Sherwood in January 2009. Originally, she joined us as an Adopt-a-Shelf volunteer. As of the end of July 2009, she had accumulated more than 1,065 hours of service! Susan has contributed to the Adopt-a-Shelf program and much more.

For the circulation department, she removes holds that have not been picked up and pulls hold requests from the shelves. She also works on mending. For the children's department, she has helped pull and label books on the Fairfax County Public School summer lists. In all departments, she does many other little things that we don't normally think about – until she went on vacation and all those "other little things" didn't get done! Susan is here every day, seven days a week – and we're glad she's here!

- David Hanlon, Sherwood Regional Library

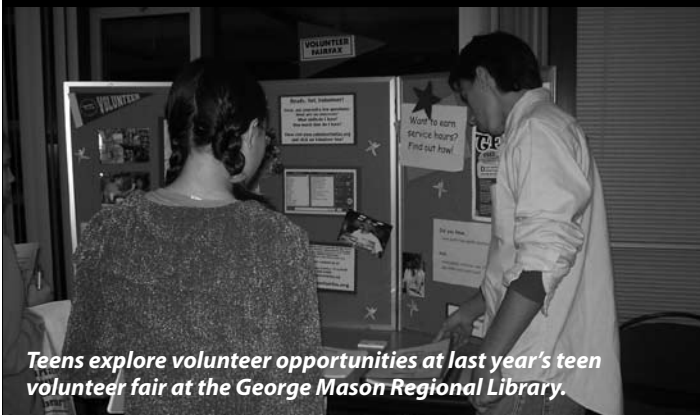


Photo Courtesy of SH Page Manager Jackie Butler

It may be a record! Susan Hitch has donated more than 1,000 hours of her time at the Sherwood Regional Library in less than a year.

Teen Volunteer Fairs

Teens looking for volunteer opportunities with a nonprofit organization can attend one of the following volunteer fairs, cosponsored by Volunteer Fairfax:



Teens explore volunteer opportunities at last year's teen volunteer fair at the George Mason Regional Library.

**Sherwood Regional Library,
Tues., Oct. 6, 6:30 p.m.**

**Kings Park Library,
Wed., Oct. 21, 6:30 p.m.**

**Tysons Pimmit Regional Library,
Wed., Oct. 28, 6:30 p.m.**

**Chantilly Regional Library,
Sat., Oct. 31, 10:30 a.m.**

For address and directions to these branches visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or pick up a library bookmark at your local library branch.

VOLUNTEERFEST®

Six Fairfax County Public Library branches will be participating in the 15th annual VolunteerFest. VolunteerFest is a community-wide day of service held in conjunction with National Make a Difference Day. This is a fantastic opportunity to provide just a few hours of service to help support our library branches. Library projects will be held on two Saturdays – 10/17 and 10/24.

To register for any of the projects, visit www.volunteerfairfax.org

Project: Shelf Reading Blitz!

Library: Dolley Madison
Date: 10/17/2009
Time: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Description: Volunteers will be checking the shelves to be sure that books are in their proper location. Organizational skills and an eye for detail are wanted! Minimum age with adult supervision: any; without: 13.

Project: John Marshall Community Library Fall Clean Up

Library: John Marshall Library
Date: 10/17/2009
Time: 9 a.m. - Noon

Description: Help beautify the library both inside and outside. Help with the fall preparations for the gardens by planting bulbs, spreading mulch and picking up trash. Inside, help by cleaning shelves, furniture and other surfaces, as well as pick up items that have fallen behind the shelves, shift collections, assist with creating displays along with several other projects. Minimum age with adult supervision: 6; without: 14.

Project: Book Burrow Dedication

Library: Burke Centre
Date: 10/24/09
Time: 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Description: Volunteers are needed to help with the dedication of the Burke Centre Library's "The Book Burrow," an area outside the building where youth service programs may be held. Volunteers will read books to young children, play some musical instruments and help with setting up other programs. Minimum age with adult supervision: 12; without: 18.

Project: City of Fairfax Regional Library Clean Up

Library: City of Fairfax Regional Library
Date: 10/24/09
Time: 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Description: How do the books get reorganized? Here is

your chance to help the City of Fairfax Regional Library by shelving books, as well as other tasks around the library including shelf reading, cleaning computers and trimming outside plants. Minimum age with adult supervision: 12; without: 14.

Project: Library Grounds Clean Up Day!

Library: Pohick Regional Library
Date: 10/24/2009
Time: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Description: Volunteers are needed at the Pohick Regional Library to clean up the grounds by removing unwanted plants, weeds and brush. Volunteers will also assist in the clean out of the landscaping shed. Minimum age with adult supervision: 13; without: 18.

Project: Shelf Reader's Bonanza

Library: Sherwood Regional Library
Date: 10/24/2009
Time: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Description: The Sherwood Regional Library is in need of a few good shelf readers! Volunteers are needed to put books in the correct order on the shelves. There are plenty of collections for volunteers to work on based on individual interest. Minimum age with adult supervision: any; without: 15.



A volunteer shelves books at Burke Centre Library at VolunteerFest 2008.

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Published quarterly
Volunteer Newsletter of the
Fairfax County Public Library
12000 Government Center Parkway
Suite 324
Fairfax, VA 22035-0059

Editor
Pat Bangs

Design & Production
Lorrie Bennett
John Goodyear

Volunteer Opportunities at the Fairfax County Public Library

The Fairfax County Public Library is recruiting volunteers. Please help us advertise our opportunities by sharing this list with friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, schools, clubs or places of worship – wherever someone may be able to help.

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Chantilly

Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, needs volunteers **to search for books on the shelves, shelve books and assist with various circulation functions including checking in books and processing materials returned to the branch.** Contact Elizabeth Rhodes at 703-502-3883 or Elizabeth.Rhodes@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Adopt-a-Shelf volunteers are needed at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. This is a flexible volunteer opportunity that can be done evenings or weekends, on your own or with family members. Tasks include making sure books are in order on the shelf, finding books that belong to other library branches and checking the conditions of the books. For more information contact Mary Selden at 703-502-3883 or Mary.Selden@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Help people practice their English. Volunteers are needed to lead an English Conversation Group at the Chantilly Regional Library. For more information. Contact Jaye Lahlou at 703-502-3883 or Jaye.Lahlou@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Centreville

Volunteers are needed at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive **to assist with various circulation functions** including checking in books and processing material returned to the branch. Contact Al Brown at 703-830-2223 or Alphonzo.Brown@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Fort Belvoir

Volunteers are needed to help the library's Early Literacy Outreach Specialist with the Ready-to-Read Program by **reading books aloud at preschools and childcare centers located at Ft. Belvoir.** Prior experience teaching or leading children's programs is required. Volunteers can also work in an area of the county that is most convenient for them. Contact Renee Edwards at 703-324-8413 or Renee.Edwards@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Kingstowne

The Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre is in need of volunteers to work in a variety of capacities at the branch including **conducting one-on-one computer tutoring sessions, leading an English conversation group and mending books.** For more information contact Jennifer Koenig at 703-339-4610 or jennifer.koenig@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Oakton

Adopt-a-Shelf volunteers are needed at the Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, to perform the following tasks: **reading spine labels, reshelving books that are out of order, pulling books**

that belong to other branches and determining which books need mending. Experience with the Dewey Decimal System a plus, but not required. Contact Mary Medina at 703-242-4010 or Mary.Medina@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Circulation Support volunteers needed to assist with any of the following or similar tasks: completing patron maintenance; weeding paperbacks; placing carts in order; searching for items to be reserved for library customers; mending books and magazines. Ability to operate computer equipment quickly and efficiently, with minimum training. Contact Mary Medina at 703-242-4010 or Mary.Medina@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Reserved Books Assistant volunteers needed to assist with any of the following tasks: checking in of items received through delivery; capture of customer information; placement of items on assigned shelves at holds pickup; removal and routing of expired reserves. Requires attention to detail. Basic computer skills necessary. Contact Mary Medina at 703-242-4010, Mary.Medina@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Library Aide volunteers needed to perform circulation desk duties after training: check books in and out; collect fines for staff to process; issue library cards and enter customer data into the computer; process returned material correctly; inform customers of library services, policies and procedures; direct customers to information desk when appropriate. When not on desk, may perform backroom tasks. Ability to use the computer terminal and simultaneously interact pleasantly with customers. Stamina to stand and work the desk for two hours at a time. Ability to bend and stretch to reach high or low shelves, able to push heavy carts and bins. Contact Mary Medina at 703-242-4010 or Mary.Medina@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Mending volunteers needed to mend all materials (magazines, book spines, torn book covers) so that they can be used by the public. Using available supplies and resources, determine best way to mend damaged material and then repair it. Cut and fold book covers properly. Good manual dexterity required. Contact Mary Medina at 703-242-4010, Mary.Medina@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Other volunteer opportunities may be available as well and training is available for all positions. For more information, contact the branch/department where you are interested in volunteering. For a list of volunteer coordinators and their contact information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library. Under How to ... Click on Volunteer.