

# LIBRARY NOTES



**Grand Prairie Independent School District  
Grand Prairie, TX 75052**

**V.11, No.6  
March 1, 2007**

## **State House of Representatives Recognizes GPISD's Read Across the Prairie Initiative Husfeld and Librarians Travel to Austin to Receive Award**

Thanks to librarians, principals, teachers, and students, GPISD's *Read Across the Prairie* Initiative is a big success. As a testament to this success, State Representative Kirk England introduced legislation in House Resolution 27, recognizing GPISD as a community of readers and commending the districts efforts to encourage our community of readers.

The librarians will leave at 4:30 in the morning on March 1<sup>st</sup> and travel to Austin with Acting Superintendent Earl Husfeld to receive this honor. The resolution will be read on the house floor on that day as well. All GPISD libraries will be closed so that all library staff may attend. Our community of Readers is alive and growing. Below please find a copy of HR 27.

### **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, The development of strong reading skills is crucial to academic success, and by helping to instill in students a love of reading at an early age, the Grand Prairie Independent School District is making a sound investment in the future of tomorrow's leaders; and

**WHEREAS**, While reading is indispensable to a comprehensive education, it is also the foundation for a lifetime of enjoyment and accomplishment; and

**WHEREAS**, Parents, teachers, librarians, and members of the greater community may serve as role models to students by reading for pleasure, demonstrating that books are a valuable tool for entertainment as well as for education; and

**WHEREAS**, Reading regularly for fun can help to establish a rewarding habit that will last a lifetime, and in developing this practice, the students of Grand Prairie ISD are giving themselves a gift of incalculable worth; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas Legislature hereby recognize the Grand Prairie Independent School District as a community of readers and commend the efforts of the district board, administration, students, and teachers to encourage and promote this important life skill; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the Grand Prairie ISD as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.

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### **FYI**

Grand Prairie ISD's use of Playaways has received national as well as international attention. An Associated Press reporter wanted to talk to a representative of schools that are using these products. Findaway World, the producer of Playaway's, referred this reporter to Grand Prairie ISD. The result of this twenty minute interview was over 50 articles nationally and internationally. Articles have appeared in CNN School News, Fort Worth Star Telegram, Yahoo Financial, and Yahoo UK and Ireland among many others. The list is continuing to grow. Playaways and MP3's for learning are here to stay.

## **AUSTIN ELEMENTARY**

**Kathy Brundrett**

Well, what did you do over our last Winter Break? Did you read? Many of our students must have spent their time reading! I could tell by the number of 6 Flags 6 Hour Reading logs that were turned in. Six Flags will be full of Austin Students this summer! Have you read the 2007 Texas Bluebonnet Award winner? Our teachers and students were excited to hear that *Ghost Fever* by Joe Hayes won the Texas Bluebonnet Award for this year. *SOS File* and *The Lightning Thief* were also favorites at Austin. Our students have already started reading selections from the 2007-2008 Texas Bluebonnet Nominee List. Keep Reading!

## **BONHAM ELEMENTARY**

**Pat Phipps**

Cold hands really do love books in the Bonham library. Our favorite Bluebonnet pick was *Ghost Fever* by Joe Hayes. *Good Dog* and *SOS Files* were also some of our favorites. Students were also reading for the 6 Flags 6 Hour Reading program and counting time in the Book Clubs and Reading Buddy program for those free tickets.

Kindergarten and first grades practiced alphabetical order and made circle maps for favorite Valentine stories. Second grades completed animal acrostics and used the encyclopedia as they finished their animal research by making circle maps. Third and fourth graders played Library Lingo to help them become familiar with the library collections. Fourth and fifth grades made time lines of famous presidents in honor of President's Day. We love to read at Bonham!

## **BOWIE ELEMENTARY**

**Elaine Tricoli**

February is Library Lovers Month and I, for one, loved every minute of being in the library!!

### **Storytime**

Our Kindergarteners came to the library to hear Diane deGroat's *Roses are Pink, Your Feet Really Stink!* Afterwards we made old-fashioned Valentines out of lacy doilies, hearts, ribbon, and glitter! Our first graders enjoyed a read aloud of Laurie Parker's *Texas Alphabet*. Then what a great time we had making quilt squares for each class's Texas alphabet quilt! 2nd through 5th graders came in for a reading of *If the Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks*. We followed each read aloud time with a thought provoking discussion about the impact Rosa Parks's act of courage had on the Civil Rights Movement.

### **Research**

3rd graders hopped into the library for research on frogs! They transformed their hallway into a frog habitat, and it is jam-packed with all kinds of fantastic frog facts! 5th graders worked on a Black History Month project studying the life of an African-American and the contributions he/she has made (or is making) to our world. Each student will participate in a Living Museum where he/she will pose as the person studied. Imagine meeting Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, and Colin Powell all in one afternoon in the library!

## **Special Events**

On Valentine's Day we had a special drawing and the winner got to take home an adorable stuffed dog that dances and flaps his ears while singing, "You Make Me Want to Shout!"

Lots of Bobcats are headed to Six Flags this summer after joining the 6 Hour Reading Club! Congratulations to everyone who earned a ticket!!

Happy Reading and Researching!!

## **BUSH ELEMENTARY**

**Michael Broussard**

Students completed reading logs for the Six Flags Six Hour Read to Succeed reading promotion. Students that read for a total of six hours receive a free ticket to Six Flags. Every year we have over one hundred students at Bush that get a free ticket. I am hoping this year to have over two hundred students get a free Six Flags ticket.

Read aloud in the library has still been very popular. Students love to check out the books that have been read during read aloud. Some of the most popular books from read alouds, that continually stay checked out, are: *Walter the farting dog* (four books in this series), *Scary Stories to tell in the dark* (three books in this series), *Stories to solve* (three books in this series), *Once upon a cool motorcycle dude*, and *The stinky cheese man and other fairly stupid tales*. Of course pop-up books during read aloud remain as one of the all time favorites of students at Bush.

Barbara Bush Dolphins are still reading for fun!

## **CROCKETT ELEMENTARY**

**Lisa Howell**

*The S.O.S. Files* by Betsy Byars was the winner of the Bluebonnet Award at Crockett Elementary! Of course, the big winner of the Bluebonnet Award was *Ghost Fever* by Joe Hayes. His amazing ghost story was our second runner up. Fourth grade students visited the library to take part in a special writing assignment based on the book *The S.O.S. Files*. Each class created their own S.O.S. File, which contained their writing about a time they had an emergency. It was great to hear everyone's stories!

The Scholastic Book Fair is quickly approaching and will take over the library on March 5th, during Texas Public Schools week. We can't wait to see what new books the book fair will have to offer this spring! Keep up the great reading Crockett Bulldogs!

## **DANIELS ELEMENTARY ACADEMY**

**Gale Albritton**

Spring must be in the air! You know the old saying "out with the old and in with the new." Well, I've been shifting the collection a little to create four specialized sections: "Just Right Books", Spanish, African-American and Accelerated Readers. Whew!!! What a work out...I almost felt as if I were at the gym doing squats, arm lifts and deep knee bends!!

Did you know that before Martin Luther King Jr., Frederick Douglas was involved in the civil rights movement? Douglas was giving speeches and writing articles fighting for civil rights in the 1800's! That's what one fifth grade class discovered as they conducted research on the Civil Rights Movement utilizing the Gale Databases. They seemed excited about their new discoveries.

Just the mention of the word "FREE" captures the attention of our students (actually me too) especially when it means earning a complimentary ticket to Six Flags!!! Our DRAGONS are on fire about READING!

## DICKINSON ELEMENTARY

Melissa Forsythe

The Dickinson library has been a busy place this month with many grade levels working on fantastic research projects. Kindergarten is learning all about ladybugs. They came into the library to search for information books on our non-fiction shelves. They learned about the Dewey Decimal System and that books in the non-fiction section are shelved according to subject. Each subject has a different number assigned to it. We poured over the 595 shelves, which are the shelves containing books about insects, looking for the best books about ladybugs. Our students learned not only about ladybugs but about libraries as well. Fourth graders have been working on bat research. What an interesting creature the bat is! Using print, online, video, and Power Video resources to take lots of notes, students have learned much about the often misunderstood bat. Fifth graders are just beginning a unit of study on famous Americans. Be sure to read next month's newsletter for more information about their wonderful projects.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Scholastic Book Fair will be held the week of March 5<sup>th</sup> through March 9<sup>th</sup>. We will be open late during Open House on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Please come by to look at the selection of terrific books available to purchase and help support our library. Happy Reading!!

## EISENHOWER ELEMENTARY

Mary Hill

Another successful Bluebonnet Luncheon has come and gone with a new twist this year of having "Librarian for the Day." Sam Cumby announced the winning book and hosted the festivities. The 2008 titles are on the shelf and ready for check out. It's never too early to start looking for next year's favorite.

Second grade recently enjoyed their in depth study of animals and habitats. But before the books could be returned, third graders swept out all the *Nature's Children* titles to focus on a specific animal. Kinders are currently MOOOOO-ing freely among the farm animal books as they are learning the beginning steps of finding and recording information.

Fifth graders have depleted the biography section while fourth graders have polished off a semester of intense reading, writing and listening skills as they prepared for the writing TAKS. With all that work going on, it's only logical that first graders have a little fun. The first ever "Nursery Rhyme Challenge" had classes learning, reviewing, singing, and winning.

Don't miss our Book Fair - March 2-8. On March 15, Jay Jenson, from Radio Disney, will read to third grade.

## FANNIN ELEMENTARY

Karen McPherson

The votes are in! Fannin students echoed students around the state by choosing *Ghost Fever* as their favorite Bluebonnet book. *Good Dog* came in second, closely followed by *SOS File*. Students who voted were invited to eat lunch in the library where they received certificates of participation and enjoyed a preview of next year's nominees.

"Mrs. Mac! Look at this!" said an excited 2nd grader using Kids Infobits for the first time. Second graders were so excited to learn how to look up information using Gale Databases. They used a fact sheet to help them locate information about an animal of their choosing.

*Red Ridin' in the Hood* was the book choice selected by fourth grade girls for Lunch Bunch. They thoroughly enjoyed the fairytales that had been rewritten with an infusion of Latin American culture.

In celebration of Black History month, students got to meet Harriet Tubman, aka first grade teacher, Kathy Davis. Ms. Davis became Harriet Tubman for the day as students were able to learn more about her life.

## FLORENCE HILL ELEMENTARY

Karen Sims

After all the Bluebonnet voting was completed, *So Be It* was the Florence Hill winner. Now that the state has decided the winner, I can't keep *Ghost Fever* on the shelf!

I think we will see many reading friends out at Six Flags this summer. We had tons of students turn in their Six Flags reading logs to get a free ticket to Six Flags.

Thank goodness the bugs have moved out of the library....okay, they weren't real bugs, just the insects Kindergarten was studying! We had a great time exploring ladybugs and much more. Hats off to all the hard work our kindergarten team did to make Kindergarten's first research project a huge success.

## GARCIA ELEMENTARY

Michelle Casey

WOW! What a great month February was! We read, researched, and celebrated Black History Month, Groundhogs Day, President's Day, and Valentine's Day. All these occasions made it super easy for Garcia's Toros to make their reading selections.

Kindergarten spent time in the library researching American symbols. They looked at books, and Internet sites that had information on the Bald Eagle, American Flag, The Statue of Liberty, The Liberty Bell, and Declaration of Independence. Our second and fifth grade classes have been busy checking out biographies, and using Info Bits to research famous people. One group of fact seeking third graders have been busy researching the Bermuda Triangle, and our fourth graders just finished learning everything they could on bats.

Moving into March is an exciting time at Garcia. We are not only ready to head into Spring, we're ready to spring into reading!

## GARNER ELEMENTARY

Joette Cook

Students streamed into the library recently to vote for their favorite Bluebonnet book. Each student who was eligible to vote arrived at the "voting booth" with their voter registration card in hand. In addition to *Ghost Fever*, Garner students also enjoyed *The S.O.S. File*, *So B. It*, and *The Lightning Thief*. Ms. Karen Stevens' third grade class is still working on Bluebonnet reading. They have all read 13 books, and are working on reading 15 and earning a Certificate of Achievement.

Our Six Flags Six Hour Reading Club is winding up. We have so many students who have earned their free ticket! Garner students will be having a great time at Six Flags this summer!

Ms. Hester's fifth graders have been busy researching independently in the library. Second graders are learning their way around the nonfiction section, and kindergartners know all about the easy section! We are becoming great library patrons!

## HOUSTON ELEMENTARY

Marcie Eckhout

Congratulations to Joe Hayes for his win of the Bluebonnet award this school year. The Houston Hornets were so excited to hear that *Ghost Fever* had won. The students feel a real connection to this year's winner since he personally visited our school this fall and told stories to each grade level. Everyone is busily trying to finish up their 360 minutes of reading for the Six Flags Read to Succeed Club. All students who achieve this goal by Feb. 16th will be eligible to visit Six Flags free of charge for one day

this summer. All of our students are excited about this contest because we can see Six Flags from the windows of the library story area.

Several boxes of new books have just arrived in the library and we cannot wait to open them and start reading. More books are expected to arrive this spring. These new books are encouraging the students to visit the library more frequently and to read just for the fun of it.

## JOHNSON ELEMENTARY

Monica Dubiski

In the area of research, we are looking forward to the 3rd grade GT students learning about Alaska, Polar Regions, and the Iditarod. Fourth graders will learn about castles and knights. While the fifth grade students will study the Holocaust and look forward to their experiences at Enterprise City.

Dr. Seuss's birthday is just around the corner. There is such a large, well read collection of his materials here. Creative thoughts are circling around about how to best honor and celebrate his contribution to children's literature. We do have the resident seamstress, Nancy Conner, who is widely known to make great Cat in the Hat Hats. Now for striped socks, whickers, and a large bow tie ...

Some of the favorite books floating around the library these days are the Extreme books by Animal Planet, books from the Wayside Series (thanks to Ms. Orona), and Christopher Paul Curtis books. Students are also curious and overjoyed with our other new, attractive arrivals.

The LBJ library helpers are doing a great job. We have student volunteers every morning before school who are trained and have earned a library pass. Several teachers regularly send their responsible students through out the day when they are finished with their assignments. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Feliciano, Mrs. Holland, Mr. Franco, Mrs. Burns, and Mrs. Wilkins.

## MARSHALL ELEMENTARY

A.J. Tickell

And the Texas Bluebonnet Award winner is... *Ghost Fever/Mal de fantasma* by Joe Hayes. His book won for the state of Texas and our school. The Bluebonnet list for next year is already available at <http://www.txla.org/groups/tba/index.html>. This is a great time to start reading the new nominees.

February was filled with important and fun events. We read about Groundhogs, discussed Abraham Lincoln, and George Washington's contributions to our history and highlighted several famous African Americans for Black History Month. Many students have checked out biographies about famous and important African Americans and several classes have written Valentine cards about their favorite books. Even though February was incredibly busy with testing and Winter Break the students found time to read for fun and earn a Six Flags ticket. Soon there will be Frog research and Spring activities in the library. What a busy and fun time of year!

## MILAM ELEMENTARY

Sara Coolidge

So many celebrations, so little time! February in the library means that it's time to dig up facts on Punxsutawney Phil, fall in love with books about Valentine's Day and discover "scores" worth of information on George Washington and Abraham Lincoln (President's Day). Students of all ages wondered whether groundhogs like Phil can really predict the weather, and many visited the library in order to search the Gale Databases for information on Punxsutawney or to borrow books about real groundhogs. Did you know groundhogs are closely related to squirrels? Neither did we, until we read it in a library book!

While groundhogs and presidents were in high demand, most Milam Mavericks saw red this month --- Valentine's Day red, that is. *Fluffy's Valentine's Day*, *Clifford's First Valentine's Day* and *The Legend of the Valentine* were just some of the most popular books. Students were in such a festive mood that some even asked for St. Patrick's Day books already! This just proves that good readers can't wait to get their hands on the next book, and the next and the next...

## MOORE ELEMENTARY

Linda Dragg

And the award goes to.....*The SOS Files*. That is the Bluebonnet Book winner for Moore this year. It was a very close vote, with *Ghost Fever* coming in second, and *So B. It: A Novel* coming in third. All students reading seven or more books were invited to a Bluebonnet Lunch in the Library. We ate, had some fun activities, and got a preview of next year's Bluebonnet books. Ms. Overton's class won the overall competition for reading the most Bluebonnet books. They have won an afternoon Library Read-In.

Several boxes of new books arrived at our school lately. They have been displayed in the library, and the students were so excited to check them out. Of special interest to them were the new Joe Hayes books, animal books, and monster books. Also popular this past month have been our biography books. Many students were checking them out to learn about famous African-Americans from the past and the present. Some have done book reports on them, and others just reading them for pleasure! Way to go, Musketees!

Students have been finishing up on the Six Flags Over Texas Reading Club six hours of reading. We hope to have many students who will earn free tickets to Six Flags just because they read for the fun of it!

## POWELL ELEMENTARY

Nancy Warder

Students tested their detective skills by solving the questions posed during February as we celebrated Black History Month. Answers were uncovered by following the trail to the reference sources through Gale Online Databases. Mrs. Sowels rewarded students who successfully solved the questions.

Where in the world is Ross the Reader and what is he doing? Powell students know Ross the Reader is spreading the word: "Reading is Fun!" Ross is our cowboy in the Read Across the Prairie logo. Students are mailing his image to friends and family or taking him with them on trips to far away places. We have three maps: Texas, U. S., and the World, to display our collections of photographs and postcards from the different places Ross the Reader has visited. So far Ross has spread the word to Sante Fe, San Antonio, Hawaii, Canada, Malaysia, England, and India. It is exciting to learn about all the different communities he has visited.

## SEGUIN ELEMENTARY

Evelyn Edington

The Bluebonnet Races here at Seguin were a huge success this year. Sixteen of our third, fourth and fifth grade teachers participated, allowing 278 students to vote. The goal was to see which teacher could read aloud the most Bluebonnet titles. Mr. Jackson's fifth grade class read 14 books, Miss Griffith's fifth grade class read 13 and Miss Henderson's fourth grade class read 12 of the Bluebonnets. As a reward, each of the participating classes received Bluebonnet books for their classroom libraries. Our favorite Bluebonnets were: 1st *Ghost Fever*, 2nd *The SOS File*; and 3rd *Each Little Bird That Sings*.



Seguin Storytellers prepared Anansi stories in honor of Black History Month. During story time our students are learning about this tricky little spider that is one of the most important gods of West Africa. Our club members are keeping the students spellbound as they weave their stories around these Ashanti tribal legends. For more information about this legendary arachnid go to <http://www.anansi.org/>.

Please stop by our Book Fair on March 5-9 & Thursday night 6-8pm.

## TRAVIS ELEMENTARY

Susie Hall



March rolled in like a lion...a mighty roaring Travis Lion. The month began with a great trip to Austin to hear our *Read Across the Prairie* Initiative read on the floor of the House of Representatives. On the 2nd, we participated in Read Across America Day with many activities to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Then, the library was an integral part of many projects for Texas Public Schools Week. We are particularly proud of the first graders from Mrs. Shauna Villarreal's class for completing their first real research project using all the library resources. They discovered some interesting facts about lions and were happy to display their hard work for our Open House. Finally, on March 10, GPISD Librarians will participate in the Title 1 Parent Conference by bringing reading, rocking and great books to kids and parents. It is a tremendous sight to see all our rocking chairs being used by people of all ages lost in a good book.

Speaking of a good book, our students keep reading and they are particularly excited about the new books that arrived courtesy of Mrs. Jacks. They could hardly wait for the boxes to open and each one of those has flown off the shelf. Thank you, Mrs. Jacks, for the funds that allowed Mrs. Hall to buy those new kid favorite books!

Our featured book for the month is *How to Make Four Million Dollars by Next Thursday* by Stephan Manes. We will let you know if we learn anything and get rich by the time of the next newsletter! Stay tuned.

## WHITT ELEMENTARY

Lisa Miller

January and February find the Whitt Stallions scurrying about the library. First graders are learning all about the ocean and sea life. (Did you know that the father seahorses hatch the eggs?) Second graders have been researching animals and are moving on to famous people in their biography studies. Mrs. Murphy's and Mr. Hardin's third grade classes came with reading buddies from Mrs. Kaisand's and Mr. Morton's classes to learn about chopsticks and fortune cookies. (It's not easy to eat a cheese ball with chopsticks!) Most of the third graders were also entertained by *Cody's Secret Admirer* again this year (inferencing gone wrong!). Ms. Brown's fourth graders just finished *My Chimp Friday: The Nana Banana Chronicles*, always an exciting challenge. And last, but not least, Mrs. Morton's fifth graders enjoyed *The Well: David's Story* as a Book Club selection. We're movin' and groovin' in the Whitt Library. Come and check us out!

## ZAVALA ELEMENTARY

Linda Laib

Read Across the Prairie's, **Ross the Reader**, is a readin', ridin' cowboy. He is roaming to places near and far spreading the word to "read, just for the fun of it!" I can't wait to see where Zavala students and staff are taking him. Postcards, pictures, and information will be displayed on our **Ross the Reader** bulletin board for all to see. Read-um cowboy!

Zavala students chose *The SOS File* by Betsy Byars as our winner for the Texas Bluebonnet Award. Our 2nd choice was *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. An Outstanding Participation trophy was awarded to the class with the most participation and this year Mrs. Webster's fourth grade class earned the traveling trophy. One third of her class read five or more of the 20 nominated Bluebonnet book choices and then voted for their favorite. Way to go!

## ADAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Beverly Harkness

As March blows into the Adams Middle School Library, students are looking forward to the new shipment of books that will be arriving shortly. Now that the writing portion of the TAKS test is over, students are working on building up their stamina for the Reading portion of the TAKS.

During the month of February, the biography section of the library was especially popular. Students enjoyed checking out biographies of their favorite African Americans from our Black History display. The library also sponsored a Black History Scavenger Hunt. Competition was fierce and everyone that participated had a fun time. Gift certificates were awarded to the winners.

Read Across the Prairie is still in full force at Adams Middle School. "Ross the Reader," was spotted in Maui, Hawaii and Las Vegas, Nevada during Winter Break. We are looking forward to seeing where else he might be spotted before school is out for the summer.

## ARNOLD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Kyla Schooling

New books! New books!! That's the headline in the Arnold library. A generous helping of Title I money enabled Mrs. Schooling to order the books that teachers and students requested. Also expected soon are a number of Playaway Digital Audio books. Teachers have made many inquiries and students have expressed interest in their use.

Magazine check out is new at Arnold. The process started out slowly with just a handful of titles, but will expand to match student interest! Speaking of magazines, Mrs. Schooling wants to order the magazine titles that you like best, so stop by and make suggestions for next year's order.

Research continues in the library. Mrs. Martin's students researched their future career choices. Arnold students want to be all kinds of interesting things when they grow up. Some wanted to work in the law and medical fields while others wanted to design golf courses and computer games. Arnold students have exciting goals!

Story time with Mr. Duff, Mrs. Olsen and Mrs. Lovell's students was all about patterns this month. Students got to examine patterns in stories and in everyday things such as quilts and candy.

## JACKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Katie Sessler

Jackson students on all grade levels have been learning about World War II and the Holocaust. They're reading fiction and non-fiction and researching to learn more. Our eighth grade ELA classes were honored with a visit from Mrs. Grace Taylor. She shared her experiences as a child in Holland during World War II. Her family hid a Jewish family on their farm and her father and grandfather were active in the Resistance Movement. Her insight and stories were fascinating to us and we are thankful for the opportunity to learn from her. She spoke in the library all day and was so impressed with our students that she's already agreed to return next year.



ELA classes have checked out books as we continue to Read Across the Prairie. Ms. Martin, Mr. McDonald, Ms. Lackey, Ms. Skierski, Ms. Katseres, Ms. Browder, Ms. Walters, Ms. Gilbert, Ms. Getty and Ms. Kelemen brought their classes one or more times.



Mr. Hales, Mr. Hernandez, Mr. Haberkorn, Mr. Gillentine, Ms. Martin and Ms. Smith brought their classes or used library materials for research. Ms. Martin's classes researched notable Asian Americans and ended their month of studies with an Asian feast.

Many students came on their own time to find more information for Black History Month. We've had displays on books by and about famous African-Americans and also a display of love poems and stories for Valentine's Day.

## KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Marjory McCowen

We are very excited at Kennedy because our new books are arriving. Thank you, Mrs. Jacks, for your help in improving our collection. Already arrived are audiobooks, which will be some very exciting listening. The authors of these books are old favorites such as Richard Peck, Sharon Creech, Eion Colfer and Tamora Pierce, as well as new choices like Anthony Horowitz, Rick Riordan, Jeff Stone and Meg Cabot. Soon to come are a plethora of nonfiction in the science, math and social studies, and fiction of every genre. We are very fortunate to have all of these new resources.



Our eighth graders are now studying the Civil War and there is much good fiction about that conflict. I recently read *Shades of Gray* by Carolyn Reeder. Will, the orphan son of a slain Confederate officer, is sent to live with an aunt in the country. He considers his uncle to be a coward because Uncle Jed chose not to fight in the war. Will gradually comes to sort out his feelings and realize that good people fought on both sides and some good people did not fight. This book is very good in showing the damage of the war to everyone. In *Red Cap*, by G. Clifton Wisler, the notorious Andersonville prison is shown through the eyes of a captured Yankee drummer boy, Ransom Powell. Wisler has written several books on the Civil War that have proved to be well researched and insightful. A third book exploring more of the relations between black and white in the Civil War is *With Every Drop of Blood* by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier. This is the story of two boys; Johnny, the rebel boy who is taking food to relieve Richmond, and Cush, a black Union soldier who wants to learn how to read. Eventually, Johnny is able to realize that slavery is wrong and learns to value Cush as a person. Historical fiction allows us to live in and learn about a period of time in a unique way.

## LEE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Barbara McCaffrey

In honor of Black History Month, Ms. Porter, Ms. Anderson, and Ms. Radanovic have been researching African Americans of influence across the expanse of time and fields. Ms. Porter's research culminated in a paper, poster and oral presentation. The Gale Databases received a work out again as they proved excellent, not only for biographical research but also for science and social studies. Mrs. Carlton's classes investigated famous scientists and inventors and incorporated their achievements into the bigger picture of the Industrial Revolution in America. Mrs. Nolen continued individual research with her advanced academics classes. Teachers and students continue to use all three of our computer labs and the library for research.

In the spirit of Valentine's Day, library helpers decorated valentine trees. Valentines filled with poetry about books and libraries adorned the trees. These were created by Kay White's ELA students. Sweet treats were prizes for successful Dewey Decimal searches as a follow up to our lessons on the nonfiction section.

Lee's Educational Fair was held on January twenty-seventh. Each department had booths. Once again, the library and ELA joined forces. Our theme was Reading Rocks so we were able to use our rockers and hand out reading lists, surveys, free books, pencils, bookmarks and stickers as well as sign parents up for the Read Across the Prairie program. Everyone enjoyed the festivities including the cakewalk, door prizes, Ballet Folkloric dancers, Lee choir, and the Grand Prairie High School ROTC performers and SGPHS dancers.

## REAGAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Linda Clearman

As boxes of books are delivered to the library, the students are always anxious to see what interesting books might be in them. As the most recent boxes arrived, the students were especially excited to see the newest "thing." Several Playaway Audio Books were ordered, and the students are lining up to check them out. This newest addition is great, but it is good to see there are still many students who love those books.

Research continues in the Reagan library. Mr. Walker's and Ms. Murphy's science classes each spent several days researching animals and their habitats. Each of Mr. Walker's students chose a land animal on which to gather information and present their findings. Ms. Murphy's eighth graders chose specific marine habitats and the organisms commonly found there. Mr. Lackey's social studies classes used the library as their "stage" to present original dramatic presentations about slavery during the Civil War. We found that Mr. Lackey is multi-talented, playing two roles in one of the skits!

## TRUMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Linda Johnson

SCE money has been spent; orders have been placed; now we wait for the arrival of new books and books on CD.

This month Trojans are really involved with research. Ms. Harrison's 7th grade science classes are researching biomes of the world. Classes are divided into groups, given biomes to research and instructed to use both print and online resources. Each group will present their findings to the class in the most creative fashion possible.

Ms. Casey's English I students are researching London and Paris from both historical and contemporary perspectives in an effort to make culture and history come alive in *A Tale of Two Cities*. Students will share their information as "Londoners" and "Parisians" presenting fashion, food, and history through multi-media presentations.

Ms. Casey's GT English I students, in cooperation with 8th grade students at School 24 in Timisoara, Romania, are researching common problems in our communities such as recycling, need for crossing guards, graffiti, litter and water pollution. The students will agree on a common problem and work together to find a solution. The students' joint efforts will be presented on a website of Project Citizen and will also be presented to a world conference for civic education in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

## GRAND PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL



Carmen Koshnoodi

**The great challenge is to prepare ourselves to enter these doors of opportunity.** *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**February** was a fantastic month for many reasons. It was the month of **love** and **romance**, as well as the month of honoring **Black History** and all our **Presidents**. Our Black History display proved to be a popular one with the teachers and the students, as we had to continually reshelve the area.

Our **Valentine** display provided an opportunity for our students and teachers to delve into some romantic poetry and short stories as well as romantic historical fiction. Another busy section was our romantic novel area with some authors showcased like *Brown, Cabot, Dessen, Draper, Sones, Steel* and many many more.

For our biography readers, the **Presidents** display shelves allowed them to peruse for their favorite president. The last reason February was a great month was because of our wonderful winter break. We hope everyone read a lot of books and relaxed.

Due to our break and end of the trimester testing and **TAKS** testing, February was not as busy in our checkout and research area. We look forward to having our students and classes come back thru very soon.



**Spring** is trying to come thru and we are in the process of reading shelves and weeding in preparation for all of our new arrivals. We look forward to all the new arrivals and especially the Playaway audio books that are due in any day now.

## GRAND PRAIRIE HIGH NINTH GRADE CENTER

Kathy Nichols

February seemed to fly by before we knew it, especially the winter break. A variety of teachers used the library this month. We enjoyed having Mr. Flores' use *LitFinder* or books to locate a play. Mrs. Crane's classes did in depth research on world regions while Mr. Nipper's researched gods and goddesses. Also several teachers brought classes to check out books.

This month launched the use of "Gaggle" which is a pilot program given to our English teacher, Mrs. Kostyniak. We have been very proud of her because she just won Region 11 Intern Teacher of Year for the state of Texas. She is very technology and research orientated when using the library. She is adamant in using reputable resources such as Gale and World Book along with the books. For example, her classes have come to research a topic in the library with their answers going on a discussion board. Gaggle will allow the students added technology through the use of chat rooms, email, blogs, etc. Students will be in a supervised situation. Mr. Sosa and myself will also be participating in the pilot program.

## SOUTH GRAND PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL

Martha Jordan



Don't you love a good research project? I have to admit that I do!

I love the searching, the note taking (now known as copy/paste or highlighting), even the writing of the final paper. I love the stacks of books I might use, yet it is also great fun to master a powerful online database. A book index doesn't let you search by 2 or 3 key words at a time. But with our technology, we can find the exact data we need in multiple sources, in just a few searches! With a new tri beginning, our students are delving into some great assignments covering a vast array of subjects. We guide them to the best sources available and hopefully teach them the most efficient and advanced research strategies as well. Learning along with them – always a new subject - is one reason the librarian's job is so terrific and rewarding.

One day we help English IV students locate information on interesting events of the 1800's. Then the very next week, the Pathophysiology class (Daffy Duck would have fun with that!) is hard at work researching specific medical topics.

The Communication Applications classes will be very frequent users next, as they must locate background information for each of their various presentations. The district-provided online Gale databases, especially Opposing Viewpoints and the new eBooks, are extremely valuable for these assignments.

Then the AP U.S. History classes arrive, followed by the AP English III classes. Squeezed in among all of that research, are numerous groups just coming in to browse and checkout from our new arrivals.

The cool, new Playaway audio books (tiny digital players) are very popular with students and teachers wanting to enjoy a book and be active at the same time. Have you tried one?

Displays in the SGP Library during March will focus on Women's History Month – reminding our patrons of some of the amazing contributions of women in America.

The unpacking and processing of **new books, new DVD's, more Playaway titles, and new equipment** also keeps us extremely busy in between helping students and teachers.

However, one day in March will be very quiet, even dark in the SGP Library. Why?? We are joining the staff from every GPISD Library as we travel to Austin on March 1<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the **recognition by the**



**Texas House of Representatives of our 2-year Read Across the Prairie emphasis on reading.** Thanks to Representative Kirk England and our own Belinda Jacks, GPISD librarians are being commended by the State of Texas for our dedication to bringing books and reading to the forefront in GPISD. **It is not too late to get your Read Across the Prairie key chain to remind you to read for fun every day!**

## SOUTH GRAND PRAIRIE NINTH GRADE CENTER

Belinda Stanley

The last trimester of the year has started with lots of activity in the SGP9Library. New books continue to arrive, and many students are enjoying the new *Drama High* series and are anxiously awaiting the arrival on the next installment.

Ms. Emery's World Geography classes researched African Diaspora and Ms. Del Re's classes created "new" cultures. Ms. Pedersen's English classes began their independent research projects and other English classes geared up for Mythology projects to begin in March. Not only will March come in "like a lion" but it will also come in with Zeus, Hercules, Medusa and many other mythological beasts, heroes, gods, and goddesses.



## BOOKMARKS FOR THE INTERNET

By Carmen Galindo

### Texas websites:

#### Outdoor Kid

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/kids/>

#### San Antonio Missions

<http://hotx.com/missions/history.html>

#### Texas Treasures

<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/index.html>

#### Texas Governor's Mansion

<http://www.txfgm.org/>