

Please include any "stories" from parents or children about this year's library summer reading programs; *Wild Reads at your library*, *X-Pect the Un-X-Pected*, and/or *ReadsinMA*. These anecdotes are very useful. We would also like to hear how the program worked for you and your library.

ANECDOTES:

One 7 yr. old said it was the most fun he ever had at a library.

One parent said she had never seen such a well run program. I used a different aspect of the "Wild Theme" each week. I had a snake program, a dinosaur program, wild butterfly program. I coordinated books, crafts, and other activities.

One parent was particularly enamored of the ReadsInMa: he kept saying how much his children were getting out of it. That was nice. One family with three children that had been trying to finish their goals for years finally did. That was very gratifying. Generally, although a lot of work for one part-time librarian, the program worked well. Some sign up and drop off, but those who stick with it gain a lot from it. They are very proud of their accomplishments and so are their parents.

Comment from a parent: "Dominique had so much fun picking out and reading her books as part of the summer reading group. She is looking forward to the end of the program party on August 5th. We will be there!!! Thank you for all the great programs offered at the library, they have given her a great start as she makes her way to kindergarten in the fall."

Davis Bates performed at our library in May to kick off the summer reading program. One little boy raised his hand and asked Davis, "Are you the man that is on my refrigerator?" This got a chuckle from everyone. It seems that the boy's mom placed the library flyer on the refrigerator to remind her of summer reading kickoff.

Parents and children love the ReadsInMA program; older siblings enjoy helping younger siblings log their hours; kids and parents alike love that they can drop by the library anytime to get prizes without worrying whether they have their paper clock sheets with them; and, interestingly, in some families one sibling will keep track of her hours online, while another sibling prefers the paper method, demonstrating how the ReadsInMA program opens up summer reading to all kinds of learning styles.

Children loved this year's theme, logo, and artwork.

Patrons enjoyed the connection between nature and the library that played out through the summer's animal and nature programs.

Our patrons and children were excited about the theme and enjoyed coloring in the animal pictures and completing the crossword puzzle.

The patrons loved the crafts, coloring sheets, museum passes and the prizes. Parents often comment on how they love working on the weekly "Projects" that we assign with their children. It provides an opportunity to spend quality time and have some good conversations about the project of the week and any research that may have been done to complete the project. Often, conversations between parent and kids has nothing to do with

the "projects", but the parents tell me that the kids love sharing the work with the parents and they open up about other things in their life. My program promotes family activity, not just for the kids.

A mother came into the Library so thrilled that her son was reading so much this summer. She said that he wanted to read 150 hours so he could adopt his very own giraffe. (Our reading incentive program was to sponsor an endangered animal from the world wildlife fund for every 150 hours logged in by children and teens.)

When gathering quotes from parents on why they like the Summer Reading Program, besides the usual information about the benefits of the incentives to get the children to read, one mom said that the SRC helps give structure to the summer. I thought that was very insightful and true. I hadn't thought of that before.

People really enjoyed having free, fun activities that promote reading for their children.

This year we had one young man age 4 who "read" 87 hours and 23 minutes!!!! We were very proud of him. When asked what his favorite part of this year's summer reading program was, however, he said that it was the prizes. I think he must have gotten something out of all that reading though, because his mom tells us, he is beginning to read on his own.

Loved the Animal theme "My children had a great time this summer, Thanks so much" "What a great program!!" On a more personal note I have never received so many hugs in a summer reading program, life is great"

A grandmother who brought her 7-year-old grandson and 11-year-old granddaughter to the library nearly every day of the summer also brought them to the closing party, which featured Mary Jo Maichack's story and music show, "A Feast of Beasties." Anthony was initially upset that the show looked too babyish for him, but he stuck with it and decided that it was pretty good after all. He was highly suspicious that I hadn't gotten him a book that was up to his level. "I am seven years old now and I can read a lot, you know." He got a jungle themed Mad Libs book and was overjoyed. We close at 2 on Saturdays, and when my husband was walking me out the front door at 2:15, the three of them sat on a bench under a tree on the front lawn. Anthony ran up to me beaming and I sat with him while he read me the Mad Libs he had been working on for an hour. It was so satisfying.

The program worked well. It was a fun them this summer. For every two hours that the kids read in a week, they were able to move their paper jeep from animal to animal that was hanging in the children's room, they had a fun time with that. We were also able to make some fun activities around it like a Safari Scavenger Hunt and an animal mask making craft session.

A grandmother said that her grandchildren look forward to the "Reading to Dogs" program when they visit her in the summer and they were eager to read to the dogs again this year. One father said that his teenage daughter liked being able to come to programs that were actually fun, like the "Breaking Dawn" release party where they came up with a game of Twilight charades.

We always have stories about children who learn to read. This year, we had three families whose children ages 4-6 caught the reading "bug." It's always very satisfying to know that a program, display, or hand-picked book turned the key and started their little reading engines.

Had a parent comment that she put her children in out of town camps for the summer and she didn't realize that there would be so many things to do right here at the library!

COMMENTS ABOUT HOW THE SRP WORKED FOR THE LIBRARY:

This year's Wild Reads program worked very well for us, and for the age group we usually attract (ages 2-10). We did read towards adopting two endangered animals through WWF and that was great for the older kids, and of course fit in well with the theme.

We really worked on our room decorations and the kids and parents went wild for it! We turned out kids' room into a jungle and it was nice to see that hard work was appreciated. We also used stickers and a sticker sheet for each child to keep track of individual reading...huge success there as well. Our best program was a "Meet Curious George" story time, complete with a live Curious George! All in all, it's been a great summer.

I love animals, this summer is cool. We had a lot of fun with the wild theme- it took us all over-very open ended.

The children and parents responded wonderfully to our theme of "Wild Reads" around the world as we featured a different continent each month, leading up to Asia and the Olympics

We partnered with Heifer International and at the end of the summer I plan to kiss a goat if kids read enough. Kids are apparently talking about whether I will kiss a goat or not all the time at home. It's fun to see them get so excited! They're also all excited about voting for which animal we'll get for a family through Heifer International. So far the water buffalo is winning!

Our young (and not so young) patrons loved the Wild Reads theme this year. We decorated the children's room to look like a jungle and everyone was impressed. We had paw prints leading into the room, monkeys and green streamers hanging from the ceiling, and several palm trees located around the room. A few wild prints covered seats and a tiger named "Stay" welcomed everyone. One contest called "Count the Monkeys" was a big hit.

My program was very successful this year. Many parents have said that it was the only thing that got and kept their kids reading for the summer. We had a weekly movie, daily craft activities, special weekly storytime for autistic/normal functioning children, wild magic performance, wingmaster performance, made reading chain where each bead=1 hr. of reading, hunt for Sammy the sloth in the library, a summer store and an ice cream social. Great, great summer.

It worked well, I had many families who were here several times a week throughout the whole program and told me that they had a wonderful summer because of the events we offered.

Many parents thanked us because the incentive raffle baskets really got their reluctant readers excited about reading! We had our largest ever participation, so it worked for us!

This year we had a summer interpreter from Mt. Greylock. She did a great job of bring Mt. Greylock to the library at story time and then the kids were encouraged to participate in the Young Rangers program at the Mt. So we had a good cooperative program going. The programs were built around the wild life of Mt. Greylock; birds, bug, mammals, trees/flowers. Everyone had a good 5 weeks.

Since we did not go with on-line program, because at the present time, Medford has not responded well to our blog etc , although we are open to this next year, we personally interacted often with reading club members, including toddlers, and were often told by parents that they appreciated this. We are thinking about online next year. Want to hear other experiences in more detail.

Our favorite performers were "Wingmasters". They were the "official" beginning to summer reading program in June. We also bought great (cheap) wild animal masks from Oriental Trading to give to children when they signed up. A big hit. Even with slightly older children.

Wild Reads was one of the most well received themes. Everyone worked very hard to complete their personal summer reading goals in order to earn the Wild Reads tee shirt. ReadsInMA was well received by 35 families.

This theme was so good because there were so many different ways to go with it...'wild' music, animals, yoyo club, science...but the poster was too specifically 'animal', and too scary.

I used wild with a Dragon theme which worked very well. We had a "floating" dragon and for every three books read, the children added scales to complete the dragon.

We always give out small prizes to kids in PreK to entering grade 3, and then grades 3 to 6 get to be in our weekly raffle. My favorite raffle winner this summer appeared literally 10 minutes after I phoned him to say he had won. His mom said, "He just couldn't wait to come and claim his prize!" (Which was a Wild Reads t-shirt, Wild Reads Frisbee and a book). The next time I saw him, he had the shirt on. A first grader was so motivated this summer that she read 50 books within the first couple of weeks and wiped out the prizes we give out. We told her she could hang up an animal shape for every 25 books she read after that, so her goal became to get all 4 animals to hang up (so another 75 books)--she ended up reading 280 books total. The animal theme was extremely easy to adapt and fun; it was simple to find and book animal-themed programs and find animal-themed decorations and merchandise.

The Janway prizes were very popular

It was a fun and "wild" theme that we (the librarians) loved working with.

My parents love summer reading for the interests that are promoted/suggested for maintaining skills. Motivation is always high due to games, contests, activities that coincide with the theme.

It was great to hear library ads promoting the libraries this summer.

We had a large turn-out for our "Born to be wild" endangered species club. The kids loved making a craft and learning about both exotic and local endangered animals.

We had so many parents at our end of the year summer ice cream party say how great it was because it really motivated their child to read. We also had a number of comments about our programs because the wild theme (which we did lots of animal events for) was of real interest to so many kids.

Kids liked the reviews - writing & reading.

The children and the parents loved the prizes.

I loved the "Wild Reads" theme - it was so easy to develop program ideas around! We did everything, from wild animals to dinosaurs. For our finale, we had Animal Adventures, a traveling live animal program, which is always a huge hit with the kids. And most importantly, we had a record number of children complete the program this year! All in all, it was a very exciting, very productive summer, and I couldn't be more pleased with the results.

I had a few parents that were concerned that the online reading site wasn't secure and they didn't want their children's information on the internet. These families insisted on doing the program on paper.

This year was wildly successful at Lilly Library as we partnered with Heifer International. For each minute the kids and adults read, participants earned \$.01. We raised a total of \$1,682.86! The Heifer portion of the project was underwritten by Xeric Foundation and private donations. Other parts of the summer reading program were sponsored by The Friends of Lilly Library, Smith College, and donations from local businesses. Parent and kids loved the idea of sending animals to Heifer and helping other people. It was our most successful SRP to date.

Everyone loved the theme this year! Great choice!

BPL had Teen Summer Reading Finale Trivia night. Over 60 on-line participants and families attended this event to celebrate summer reading.

Children loved the theme this year. We had wild animal inflatables and stuffed animals in the Youth Room that the kids really enjoyed.

Everyone enjoyed the theme! Animals are always winners in our community. For the first time in West Brookfield, children voted to sponsor bees for Heifer Project International. This was done instead of receiving weekly prize incentives. This was a great opportunity to teach children about the Democratic voting process, while becoming more aware of the global community.

We truly utilized the theme throughout our craft programs. We made Wild Things masks out of papier mache', small stone and rock wild things and a paper circus!

This year both parents and children were very happy that Water Wiz was included in the coupon program. Water Wiz is a reasonable distance from our town and parents were happy that the free coupons afforded them an inexpensive family trip. We required children to read 3 hours for the chance to pick out a coupon of their choice. We had many children reading 3+ hours a week just so that they could go to Water Wiz.

Nothing really different other than the fact that our customers love this program for its ease of use.

We had weekly live animal programs, which had great appeal and attracted new patrons and solidified our relationship with old patrons. There was a personal feeling to these programs. I appreciate the summer theme for inviting this kind of programming.

One of the first things I heard on registration day was, "I get to read on the hammock first"! I think YA participants would like something with their theme that they can use to record hours.

As always parents seem so pleased that we offer a program during the summer with incentives to get their children reading. We found more people coming into the library this summer. It was one of our busiest summers ever.

This is the first year we offered a reading program for young adults. It was received very well. The 25 that signed up were serious about it. I'm hoping to expand on it next year and make it even better. Having the schools require them to read helped us get such a good response I would say.

The children loved the poster, especially the eyes.

We were surprised by how excited kids were to write reviews. Several parents mentioned that their children love to read, but are reluctant to write, and they were thrilled to see their children writing for fun.

Our parent and child feedback has all been connected to our incentive prizes and special programming. Everyone loved the theme which inspired us to host a live animal program, which was extremely well-attended.

Children especially liked the live animal shows which the theme lent itself to so well. Comments were very positive.....more enthusiastic participation than previous years (we librarians think more people stayed home than went away for vacations)

WILD Reads: Our school visits introduced the kids to the program, and we also used the visits to talk about the library, SAILS, and "other" types of books that all counted as reading (samples brought in). So the program helped us reach the kids with more than just one message!! Families liked the clocks. Some patrons said their kids were on a "mission" to color in "all the clocks" on the page! Families commented on the online component - easy enough for their kids to do. Several families commented on the online reviews saying it gave the children an opportunity to practice writing in conjunction with their reading. Families and patrons really enjoyed our visual, hands-on, and interactive display. (WILD WALL) Some parents set goals for their children and if the kids did not reach them, regardless of our "it's not about quantity" concept, kids were not brought to the library for the "prizes". The program encouraged more home read-alouds with families and siblings. Our first 100 registrants got a goodie bag (Janway). This was fun for the kids. The program went smoothly for us. We were very busy. Circulation was increased. Some families commented that they were reading and doing the clocks, but they just didn't have the time to come into the library. "Too busy". Some others said they were reading, but didn't have time to "track". Some past participants asked about the coupons before we'd even had time to get them displayed. Southwick's and Water Whiz were very popular.

We had fun with the theme and interpreted it as -keep the wild in the wild- so did a lot of nature oriented events such as a young families walk on a local Pascammuck Trust Trail, an older kids clean-up of a trail, storyteller Jennifer Jacobson's program "Helping the Earth," Gini Traub from the Mass State Parks program "Before There Were Stores," Boston Museum of Science Live Reptiles show, Nature Origami led by a patron Jean Wilson, "Trash to Treasure" with Marjorie Latham, a camp-in at the library (our first!), Worms! Worms! Worms! Where each child took home 2 worms in a worm palace (a mason jar filled with moist soil and leaves) with instructions, a sewing circle to make tote bags as part of "Bagshare" (where patrons can borrow one of our totes if they forget their own to carry their books home in). The events were very well attended (we didn't expect that 45 children and 25 adults would come for Worms! Worms! Worms!) And a lot of fun!

Some comments from patrons on our evaluation form: "We had a wonderful time! I thought the prizes and events were over-the top fantastic!" Another one- "Fantastic summer program! It gave us weekly structure and goals, kept my two boys excited about both reading and being read to and the "Critter Cash" and prizes were a constant conversation topic. And the bit of math and "money" management they had to do didn't hurt, either!" Another - "The store had some great toys this year! I always think you deal with the crowds of people who come to the library for this very well."

In keeping with the Wild Reads theme, I had a gigantic snake descending from the ceiling in our children's room. The snake was partitioned into six segments, each representing one of the six weeks of the program. Above the snake I hung a sign that read, "Make Reading Hiss-tory!" If club members fulfilled the weekly reading requirement, their names were written on a tag and tacked onto the snake. The tags would then be moved to the segment of the snake that corresponded with the amount of weeks each member read. Once though, while tacking up the tag of a three year-old girl, I was told by her mother that she did not want her name to be hung because she was afraid of snakes. "It's cardboard," I explained. But the child was adamant in her refusal. I asked why and it was her six year-old brother who had the final word. "She's not taking any chances," he said.

We liked the theme in our library because it definitely lent itself to a multitude of books and programs.

Many parents were happy to have help in encouraging summer reading and were appreciative.

We had comments on the great theme this year and I agree, it was a great theme to work with.

We could not have had a better summer! The theme afforded lots of opportunities for live animal programs as well as some unique library-generated programs like our First Annual Worm Race. We typically decorate the Children's Room and, based on the theme, it was easy and fun to pull off. I stuck very closely to the theme precisely because it allowed for lots of creativity. The kids loved it and our attendance at library programming (whether it be a live animal show, storytimes, craft hours, field trips, and a music performance) was way up. For a small library, we still had at least two programs a week and parents certainly noticed and commented that they appreciated that. Definitely a strong choice of theme in my book.

A few parents liked it as it kept a record of titles that could be brought to school. I did print out the lists here as the parent couldn't seem to get the whole list to print at home.

This year I made a deal with our general store where a child could get a 25 cent coupon for reading five age appropriate books. Kids read and kept track of their reading better than in any other year. A quarter at the general store buys an ice cream sandwich so every week they checked in, got their coupons and trooped across to the store.

We use the coupons to tourist attractions as our weekly incentives. With gas prices so high, this year readers chose attractions close to home. Parents were very appreciative!

Comments we received included: "Good variety of activities; we liked the weekly contests." "We loved the programs you offered." "We look forward to the Summer Reading Program every year." "This was just great-our first time-boys age 6 + 3. They loved it!" "Loved the weekly take home craft; felt more informed this year." From Patricia: This was my first summer here and I couldn't be more pleased with the results! This was also the first time that

ReadsinMa was used; we had a 27 children registered on-line. We offered a variety of professional performers/entertainers and even presented our own Story-to-Stage production - every week had something unique to do or see. We also offered a Parent Raffle which was a big hit! Overall, the comments have been very positive.

The comment I most often heard this year was that the whole program really kept children interested in reading over the summer. Our program was quite small this year because the library was closed the summer before this one, but the families that did participate were great, and highly involved. I was the only staff member dedicated to the summer reading program this summer (since I was the only one in Children's 95% of the time), but the small size seemed to work out. As our hours get more consistent though I'm expecting the program to get bigger which means we'll need more staff!

This theme was fantastic. There were so many things that we could do and what kid (or parent) doesn't love animals? So many parents just came up and said "Thank you so much for putting this together". My staff and I were really excited about this summer and it really showed through.

Children enjoyed getting the summer reading logs.

We decorated in a jungle theme and the preschoolers would say "WOW!" when they came into the children's room. Parents loved the free discount coupons (which they only got after their log was checked) and the Janway bookbags we sold. We had a large lion that the Summer Reading participants could put their hand into its mouth for a chance to get 2-5 raffle tickets (to win cool donated prizes that were on display). The kids thought this was very cool. At the end of the summer when they passed in their reading log, we created a Jungle Hut with vines, a monkey, complete with grass roof in which they could step into and pick out a prize-then they would get their certificate. They loved it! It was a book cart covered in cardboard and decorated. Each week we had a different wild animal craft to make at the craft table. We had Exotic Animal Programs, A Live Wolf Presentation (cub included), Wild Animals of MA, and reptiles. The end of the Summer Party was "WILD" with games, crafts, face painting, Jungle Juice and Animal Crackers and a huge Wild Jungle MoonBounce! Eleven Teens volunteered to help run this. Many parents commented on how fun our summer reading program was and they wished their library would be so creative and fun. We had a snake program, Animal Safari Storytimes; Make a wild animal out of paper mache workshop, movies such as "Monkey Trouble" and "The Wild". For the Tweens and Teens we had a Survivor Party, Smoothie & Tie Die Party, Gaming, movies and a battle of the bands concert with over 200 people of all ages. Last year 100 were in attendance. The bands were local teens. This year was very successful. It was our best attended summer reading program to date for both teens and children. We had book displays all summer with animal themes, trivia and even guess how many feathers the Pink Flamingo is sporting contest. It was a large plastic jug decorated as a flamingo-3 winners each won an animal kite. The teens liked that their reading program was online.

Parents who bring children to the library are our heroes. We are too rural for children to come alone.

Parents loved the Wild Reads theme and everything that went with it. Not that pleased with the computer usage for Reads in MA.

Because of the limited staffing, hours and children in our small town, I had to try something different. I worked with the school asking them to pick one book they would like the children in that grade to read over the summer. I then ordered several copies of each book. We split up the week into grades 1st and 2nd/ 3rd and 4th/ 5th and 6th, hosting two grades each night. We planned the theme for the night around the book the teacher suggested. We had a special performer on the last night of Summer Reading week. We were very pleased with the flow and the turn-out and will try this again next year.

The theme was very easy to build programs around -- we had a couple of very successful campfire story-telling sessions with animal fables. Animal-based science programs were highly successful, as usual. Running the program through August was less successful -- turnout for events dropped precipitously during the last week in July, and it never recovered.

We had a program about wild cats in the wild...our fee was matched by two organizations and donated to keep these cats healthy and alive

The program worked very well for our library because animals are fun for children and there are so many possibilities for programs, crafts, and other activities. There were several organizations that offered programs for free or very little money because they want to promote their work protecting animals.

This is from a comment to our summer reading surveys we distribute. "The librarians are all very sweet to me and my sister. The library is always decorated in a really fun way. I love coming every week. They also always have really fun activities going on like crafts, stories, reading contests and all sorts of special shows. Thank you for such a great place for my family to enjoy.

We work the theme into our program, rather than work the program into our library. We use the theme to encourage reading across genres and encourage non-fiction pleasure reading in the summer, so our participants were encouraged to be "Wild about Animals," "Surf the Wild Seas," "Go Wild in the Kitchen," and "Take a Wild Ride!"

We decorated the children's room to look like a rain forest- with vines hanging from the ceiling, large pieces of animal print fabric draped here and there- and all the wild animal stuffed toys I could resurrect from my kids' collection- it was a big hit! Several children coming in to register proclaimed that it looked like a library jungle!!

The room was decorated with paper vines for a jungle look! The vines were covered with leaves that each child had written their name on when they signed up. A young girl, named Elizabeth, brought in her toy monkey to visit the toy monkey we had hanging in our paper "jungle vines". She was so excited; she brought it several times during the summer. We had birds and other animals hidden amongst the vines but the monkeys were the favorite!

It starts in mid-May when I spend a half hour in every classroom in the elementary schools promoting the SRC. From then on every student I see remarks "there's the library lady." I love the SRC for the time it gives me to meet the kids in their classrooms which then leads non-library users to introducing me to parents in the community. Then this summer, parents and grandparents and day care groups were very, very appreciative of our extensive programming schedule. They often commented on how fortunate it was that the library gave children something to do. We had many families who attended every event. We broke all our in-room and program attendance records, as well as all our reading records. All our programs with participation limits were maxed out. Even on the day we had 160 bodies in our small meeting room, no one complained about being crowded or hot. The presenter also handled the

situation very well. He made sure everyone was able to get as close as they wanted to his living creatures. I'm hoping every one who came to World Animal Adventures remembers this program when the library asks the town to finance an expansion.

Older teens who hesitated to join the SRC were willing to do so when they learned their time spent reading would benefit the food pantry in town.

This was also my first summer for a program jointly sponsored by the library and the school system. I feel this activity led to my being asked to participate in the after-school program this fall.

I couldn't have accomplished a half of my goals without the generous financial help of our Friends group and the willingness of my staff to work above and beyond their job descriptions.

The program and related activities were good, but the attendance was poor. This has been an ongoing problem in this town. However, those who attended did enjoy the activities.

We received excellent feedback from young & old alike on our SRP. People complimented both the quality as well as the variety of programming. One parent called it an A+ summer.

We bought the "Wild About Books" rug from Demco. What a hit!! It fit right in!! "Wild About Books" had us (Friends of the Library) giving a dollar to the African Wildlife Federation for each child who reached her/his goal. The money went to buy supplies like binoculars for the rangers who protect Mountain Gorillas and Rhinos.

We really like the program and it keeps growing in our town. Our local elementary school really promotes summer reading and uses the MRLS theme as well. This year we went in to the school and ran an assembly as well as hosting each grade for a visit to the library. It definitely got the children motivated to come in.

The theme was great. Appealed to many and fit with our own library's unveiling of a polar bear sculpture.

It was our most successful summer program ever. We tied it in with "read to meet the need," raising money for our local animal shelter. "Reads" in the title made it clear to the public that it was a reading program. "Wild" implies animals, which is always a huge draw.

Because we are a vacation destination, we have many summer visitors who return to Eastham every year. Parents and grandparents alike tell us that their children's first request when arriving is to come to the Eastham Public Library and sign-up for our Summer Reading Program. We have become part of their summer ritual!

Many parents comment that they love the idea of everyone reading with the same or similar goal and the fact that we make the experience fun with decoration, program participation and incentives.

We loved the theme which was versatile and so popular with children. We heard many positive comments such as "I love everything about this library. It's just plain fun!" "When I'm asked what I do with my children this summer, I say I take them to the Lenox Library."

Children loved the idea of visiting our library to add a new banana for the 'reader monkeys' in our trees.

Parents and children love the Summer Reading Program. The events, coupons, reading records, bags, bookmarks, and certificates. Parents comment on what a great incentive the program was for their children. Children start off in our Listening Club and by the end of the summer they are reading and in our Reading Club. One Mom told me how excited her daughter was for the start of the program; how she had it all planned out weeks in advance and was explaining to her younger sibling exactly how the program worked. Another Mom told me how her daughter had a conversation every day with her day care provider about the program and on completion proudly displayed her prize and certificate. One kindergarten boy read 75 books in order to receive the dinosaur prize he wanted. His Mom said he was showing his dinosaur to everyone and telling them all how he had acquired it. The Randall Library and I have great support from our community and always have a very successful Summer Reading Program.

The theme was excellent, it allowed for a lot of original ideas...straying from the usual! Kids liked it!

I think that Concord might drop the reading logs and certificates for the readers and only use the on-line reading club. We will continue to create a booklet for the read-to-me club members. We enjoyed reading the children's book reviews. We will encourage good natured rivalry to see which of the schools will have the most children join the club. We can control the gifts very easily by leaving a message that pops up when the child has read a certain number of minutes.

We partnered with Buttonwood Park Zoo in New Bedford to adopt one of their animals. We had them come out for story times, they offered raffle prizes (including a year's family membership!), and we had an end of summer party there with special activities put on the zoo staff. As we move towards a non prize summer reading program, this local piece has been very important to us. We're already thinking of ways to incorporate space into the zoo to continue our partnership next year.

In the past, we had used Caribbean Conservation Corp and Heifer International, which were both wonderful. But being able to actually visit the place and see where the money is going is very rewarding to the children.

Once again, our numbers increased. We conduct a charitable summer reading program, no prizes, and the kids are already asking about the charity for next year! This summer we focused on adding programming for the grades 5 - 8 set, and had a core group of 12 kids who were regular attendees. We had many families who arrived at the library still wet from town swimming lessons!

We had many animal type shows and the audience numbers were consistently higher than previous years. We feel that there were many factors, one of which is the appeal of animals.

Wild Reads as a theme was very popular; having wild animals visit was a big hit! Wild stories worked well for storytimes.

I thought the artwork on the logs and bookmarks was blah; no color. There were some other bookmarks available from other suppliers with much more oomph! I loved the Wild Reads Logo, but the rest was disappointing. I found some better clip art on Microsoft!

The coupons worked well. Water Wizz was a BIG hit. Pinz is in the next town; some parents wished there wasn't the age restriction.

I have some saved to another computer that I don't have access to right now due to the continued problems at our library with the ceiling. I will try to forward that info to Janet Eckert this week.

We had several new people attend this year and they were amazed by the quality of the programs we offered.

Parents and kids loved having the book reviews available for viewing online.

We had a petting zoo as a kickoff program that even very young (2- and 3-year olds) are still talking about. The theme was broad enough that we could tailor it to an animal/nature orientation, which was very popular.

Overall, the YA's and parents were pleased to have the program offered at BPL. They look forward to it each year. Many of the parents noted that this is the "only way" that they can get their kids reading. Since they look forward to the end of the program finale, prizes, our raffle, etc. it motivates them to read. I noticed that we had a lot of boys participating which is unusual for a program like this -- speaking from my own experience.

The theme was great because this town is big on animals.

Parents of younger children enjoyed logging/rating books on-line with children and keeping track of progress ~ seen as an extended literacy activity. Kids loved logging their progress - I had several grade school boys who wanted to keep going during the school year (they were some of our most enthusiastic users!).

We have wild animals in this library elicited a pretend scare. Older children were introduced to a 60 year old treasure. CALL IT COURAGE (Armstrong Sperry)

The parents and children here at Bigelow Library enjoyed the program offered by Creature Teachers of Littleton, Mass. as their favorite component for "Wild Reads at your Library". The parents also liked the component we used called "You've Got Mail" Each week the children received "Mail" in a postal bucket, in the form of activity sheets and projects to go along with their reading theme. A lot of work for me and a couple of volunteers, but it kept the children coming in for a regular weekly visit!!

Many parents and children said that they loved the Wild Reads Jungle theme and keeping track of items read using the Wild Read log sheet.

The theme was very popular and something everyone could relate to. It was also conducive to finding theme-tie-ins for activities and programs. This caused some mix-ups for us however. For example a performer brought his "Something Wild in the Library" musical show to the library and patrons thought they were coming to see the "live-animal" show slated for later in the summer.

It was a great theme and people really enjoyed our wild animal programs like "Explore the Ocean World" and the "Mountain Musers". Most comments we received were about how great the programs were.

Parents said their children looked forward to weekly library visits because of the variety of programs and activities for all ages (Wild Bucks, Wild Hunts, and Wild Guessing) and were disappointed when the summer reading program ended.

We had Carol Weis come and read for us, and she brings such an amazing abundance of zest and joy to her performance. No matter what the kids would say she was right there with them. We had a wonderful time with her and truly enjoyed "When the Cows got Loose".

Kids liked the animals. It was difficult coming up with regular programming that would bring the kids into the library together. Parents usually brought their kids whenever they could. As a result, there was no weekly raffle or group prize-giving ceremonies.

We fused some of our green initiative programming with summer reading programs, utilizing the three Rs which will always benefit wildlife

As always, we have many children reading and proudly bringing in their reading logs to show me. The Wild Reads back packs and the animal bookmarks were favorite prizes. We had all our Storymobile programs from Read Boston outside in our library park. Everyone loved that.

Every year several parents remark that the reading program with the logbooks and the way we recognition the titles and times spent reading is the motivation that propels the children to make great strides in reading skill and enjoyment.

Young children not excited about online program

We were told our reading program was the talk of the beach. (That's a lot of people on Martha's Vineyard)It seemed vacationers were looking for quality inexpensive entertainment this year than other years. Our treasure chest of inexpensive treats was a great success. Every book read on your reading level earns a prize. For readers of long books, every 100 pages count as a book. Readers of 10 or more books also got a t shirt

At the party for participants, members of the library's book clubs for kids put on a play, loosely based on the book "where the Wild Things are". The kids loved it.

Our Teen program was well received. We had twelve challenges for them to complete to be entered into the grand prize drawing. The teens completed 204 total challenges. They voted online for the grand prize also.

Maureen scanned a letter I received from a family that used the coupons to MA attractions. We had lots of very positive feedback about the value of the coupons.

The theme was very popular with everyone. We developed quite a few storytime/craft programs based on this theme and patrons told us that these were some of our best programs! We also had several programs that featured live animals (ducks, turtles, rain forest animals) and had very high attendance at these events and very enthusiastic audiences.

I purchase prizes and give everyone something for so many hours of reading. They like it so much they are still asking to do more!! I tried Teens for the first time with some success. I need to push it more. But I suppose 20 isn't bad for the first year.

No comments

In the past, I've managed to sign up somewhere around two hundred kids for the summer reading program, but then only had a very small number of the children signed up for the program participate. This year only 87 children signed up, but it was the most successful summer reading

program I've had in terms of children's actually participating and coming in and collecting prizes and participating. I wish I had written down anecdotes, but there were many happy parents and children with this year's program.

The animal theme was easy to implement. I rented Egg Incubation equipment from Animal Affair and ran the 5 week chicken hatching program which was well received and very successful. We were able to hatch 15 chickens out of 18 eggs. Families visited every week, several times a week for 5 weeks in order to check the progress of the eggs. Once the chickens hatched the library was swamped with visitors for an additional 2 weeks. I had 14 different programs including a Library Sleep-Over, and 4 Story Time/Craft Hours that I presented. I used grant funds for several of the programs and the library received additional money from the Trustees of the Howard Funds in town which paid for 3 additional animal programs. Patrons were very complimentary and we were extremely busy with visitors this summer!

The theme was very easy to work with and immediately opened itself to a variety of programs and ideas.

We liked the theme. We had a live animal program for the end of summer reading program party. It fit the theme, and the kids and adults loved it.

Younger children and parents love the reading records (we use the time records). Children feel very independent with their use and MANY parents tell us that their children are really getting into reading on their own for the first time. Filling out the reading record and earning prizes is a huge motivator for them.

I wish we had more anecdotes. Our program asked kids to read at least two hours per week. We were very busy this summer because the public schools finally REQUIRED students to read a certain number of books over the summer (a first!), and we had 8 programs/events a week for six weeks. We tried to do a "READ to FEED" incentive (with kids voting for Heifer International donations) but only about 9 kids opted to do this.

We printed up our own mood pencils (through Janway) and these were one of the most popular prizes.

This year we had kids keep track of their reading and for every hour they read money was donated to the animal shelter. They really liked that. My story hour kids had a great time with the Wild Reads theme. We had Animal Adventures at the end of the summer and it was a big hit. The parents loved that the most.

The Wild Reads theme was extremely popular with all families. Even adults came flocking for the live animal programs.

Parents are constantly telling us that they are impressed with the work that the library puts into the SRC every year, and that their children look forward to it each summer. The children come in very enthusiastic to find the hidden objects (a moose and a koala this year), get their raffle tickets for reading, and participate in all the activities going on throughout the program.

This summer, our 1,455 participants reported reading for 27,607 hours. Since they're allowed to *report* (no more reading) on their summer reading until the end of September, this total should

grow. Our patrons love our Summer Reading Program. They find that it really motivates their children to keep reading all summer.

We operated a sand art table with pre-sticky pictures of wild animals, birds and insects that was a huge success with all ages. Parents worked along side their preschoolers, older kids were independent.

The logo and posters were "frightening" for some. The black and white flag/banner was especially intimidating.

We had lots of parents say that they liked the theme this year; it was one that was easy to incorporate the tweens into, they didn't feel it was "young".

We always have fun being 'wild' about reading. The breadth we could take the theme worked so well for us here on the Cape from choosing our non-profit beneficiary (Wild Care, Inc.) for our reading for a cause aspect, to the diversity of programs that can fall under that 'wild'theme. We enjoyed every minute of it. More could have been made of the local 'wild' things in the artwork, i.e., foxes, whales, raccoons (creatures native to area).

We had more participation than last year but reading logs aren't very popular here. We have members who visit other libraries around the state, and they enjoy seeing the familiar artwork of the reading club from their home library.

Parents reported good-natured competition among siblings regarding who could read the most pages! We did not post pages read for the entire group because we had not asked participants' permission to do this when they registered. However, this is a question we plan to add when we do this next year. Apparently the competition is quite motivational for older children! Parents of younger children who read together found that the online component motivated them to continue to read on a regular basis and they and their children enjoyed seeing the growing list of how much they had read.