

October 2008

## DeKalb County News and Notes

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### Recommended Citation

(2008) "DeKalb County News and Notes," *Georgia Library Quarterly*: Vol. 45 : Iss. 3 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol45/iss3/17>

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*Chef Alton Brown helped bring a huge crowd out for the Cobb Library Foundation's spring fundraiser.*

"up close and personal" with many of their favorite authors. The most recent luncheon, held on Sept. 22, featured former University of Georgia head football coach Vince Dooley. Donna Espy, executive director of the Cobb Library Foundation, has been pleased with how well the community has embraced its events, and she sees the benefits paying off in future generations, as illustrated by one of her favorite quotes, by former newsman Walter Cronkite: "Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation." ►►

## DeKalb County news and notes

DeKalb County CEO Vernon Jones, county commissioners and trustees of DeKalb County Public Library hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Tucker – Reid H. Cofer Library on Sept. 19. The ceremony included an unveiling of the designs for the new, 25,000-square-foot library and a discussion about its unique features.

DeKalb County Public Library is offering a fascinating look at Jewish literature and culture this fall with a free, five-part reading and discussion series called "Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature – Identity and Imagination." The series focuses on contemporary and classic books that explore the theme of being torn between two cultures, estrangement and coming home. An orientation session to introduce the theme and books will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 7:00 p.m.

The series was developed by Nextbook and the American Library Association, with local support provided by the Georgia Holocaust Commission and Georgia Perimeter College. The books for discussion are *Exodus: The Second Book of Moses*, *Lost in Translation* by Eva Hoffman, *The Centaur in the Garden* by Moacyr Scliar, *Kaaterskill Falls* by Allegra Goodman and *Out of Egypt* by André Aciman. Samira Hotchkiss Mehta, doctoral student at Emory University, will lead the discussions. All programs will be held at the Decatur Library, 215 Sycamore Street. For

details or to register, visit [www.dekalblibrary.org/letstalk](http://www.dekalblibrary.org/letstalk) or call 404-370-8450, ext. 2258.

DeKalb County Public Library joined other partners in the AJC Decatur Book Festival Early Learning Program on Aug. 29, hosting special activities highlighting the joys of books and reading for prekindergarten children and their parents. More than 300 4-year-olds from Decatur and DeKalb County schools and child care facilities took part in the event at the Decatur Recreation Center in downtown Decatur. They and their parents enjoyed stories from author Babs Bell and storytellers Jerry and Yolanda White. Library Youth Services Coordinator Sharon Deeds says the special program for pre-K children was the first of its kind sponsored in conjunction with the annual book festival.

"Things went well. The author and storytellers built a festive atmosphere around books and reading, showing the 4-year-olds that reading can be fun. The goal was to build awareness in the community about the importance of introducing books and reading to children early," she said. In addition to stories, the children were treated to lunch and refreshments provided by the Organization of DeKalb Educators (ODE), State Representative Stephanie Stuckey Benfield, Chick-fil-A, Kroger, Starbucks and the Atlanta Bread Company. They also received books, book bags and school supplies provided by Target, Reading Tree, Kroger, the Ferst Foundation for Children's Literacy, Georgia Public Broadcasting, Judge Johnny Panos and ODE. ►►



*Author Babs Bell (center) gets children actively involved in her story at a special event for 4-year-olds at the AJC-Decatur Book Festival Early Learning program.*