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Former Smyrna Director Passes away

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Gwinnett County news and notes

The Gwinnett County Public Library (GCPL) proudly presents the second annual Gwinnett Reading Festival from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 18 at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds. The festival is a free event to encourage the love of reading and to promote literacy in our community. Readers, authors and educational vendors join together in a communitywide celebration of reading for all ages. Activities for children include storytelling, crafts and a special appearance by Spider-Man; activities for teens include sumo wrestling, gaming and artist workshops; and adults will have the chance to meet local, regional and national authors including Rick Bragg, Carmen Deedy and Steve Martini. Every child who attends will receive a free book. For more information, please visit www.gwinnettpl.org or call 770-978-5154.

GCPL and the Buford/North Gwinnett County Rotary Club have collaborated again this year to support literacy in Gwinnett County. For many years, the Buford/North Gwinnett Rotary has generously provided financial support and volunteers to assist the library with preparation of the Littlest Reader packets to be distributed to newborns in Gwinnett County. Packets include a Gwinnett County Public Library pouch featuring the library's mascot, Dewey the Dinosaur; a board book; and a special invitation for the new mother to visit any of the 14 branches to sign up her new baby for his or her very first library card to receive a Dewey the Dinosaur bib. Financial support is provided through a matching Rotary Foundation grant from Rotary International District 6910. "This program is designed to foster a love of reading that we hope will begin at birth and continue throughout a lifetime," said Nancy Stanbery-Kellam, executive director of Gwinnett County Public Library and member of the Buford/North Gwinnett County Rotary Club.

GCPL is also hosting the program "Let's Talk!" a free English conversational program for non-native speakers. Registration is not required. "Let's Talk!" is a 10-week session designed to improve the English conversation skills of non-native speakers. GCPL has created a high-quality program complete with participant resource materials. Other benefits include meeting people from other countries and sharing global perspectives on opportunities and challenges in the United States, world events and culture differences. The main purpose of "Let's Talk!" is to increase fluency in speaking English, to turn passive knowledge of the English language to active knowledge. Census estimates report that 30 percent of Gwinnett County residents speak a language other than English at home. Of those, approximately half report that they do not speak English well. Groups will meet from

7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the following locations: Mondays at the Lawrenceville branch, 1001 Lawrenceville Highway; Mondays at the Centerville branch, 3025 Bethany Church Road in Snellville; Tuesdays at the Lilburn branch, 788 Hillcrest Road; Wednesdays at the Norcross branch, 6025 Buford Highway; Thursdays at the Suwanee branch, 361 Main Street. Sessions are designed for non-native speakers at the advanced beginner/early intermediate levels. Each week a topic will be explored, focusing on listening and speaking skills. Completion certificates will be granted to those who attend eight or more sessions.

On Saturday, July 12, Charles Frazier, best-selling author of *Cold Mountain*, appeared at the Gwinnett Center before more than 300 fans of his best-selling books. The crowd noshed on appetizers, enjoyed an interview and reading onstage with a Cherokee translator, and then clutched books for signing in a line that lasted two hours. Frazier agreed to participate in Gwinnett Reads, a program at GCPL, to visit with his readers and share passages from his latest novel, *Thirteen Moons*. With a record attendance of 320, Frazier's appearance marks the most successful Gwinnett Reads event to date.

On Friday, Aug. 22, GCPL invited the community to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Lilburn Branch in its present location.

For more information on any of the previously mentioned events and programs, please visit www.gwinnettpl.org or call 770-978-5154. ►►

Former Smyrna director passes away

Former Smyrna Public Library director Doris Morris passed away on Aug. 4 at age 86. Morris began working in the library in 1972. There she shared her love of reading with thousands of children, eventually serving as director of the library from 1982-1987. During that time, she established the classic antique book collection and oversaw the feasibility study that resulted in a new library facility on the Village Green. In 1995, she came out of retirement to serve as interim director until the current director, Michael Seigler, was hired. In 2007, a meeting room in the library was named in her honor and city of Smyrna Mayor Max Bacon issued a proclamation honoring her work. ►►



Seigler congratulates Morris at the 2007 dedication ceremony.