

7-1-2017

News - Fayette County Public Library

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Recommended Citation

Martin, Gina L. (2017) "News - Fayette County Public Library," *Georgia Library Quarterly*: Vol. 54 : Iss. 3 , Article 16.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol54/iss3/16>

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*People, Libraries
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

Fayette County Public Library

The Fayette County Public Library in Fayetteville, Georgia hosted NASA Link Live! on Monday, June 19, 2017. Over 650 people attended from all over the state of Georgia. On May 22, 2017, the library was notified that it had been selected to host a NASA In-flight Education Downlink by NASA's Johnson Space Center. Library staff had less than one month to prepare and plan an event to highlight this awesome opportunity for students K5–12th grade to ask questions of an astronaut live from the International Space Station (ISS).

As part of their Summer Reading Program, Fayette County Public Library successfully applied to host a [NASA In-Flight Education Downlink](#), which allows educational organizations like libraries and schools to host virtual meetings with astronauts. Students converse with the astronauts and learn about science, technology, engineering, and math concepts “in ways that are impossible on Earth,” according to the NASA website. This year's Summer Reading Program theme is “Build a Better World” and the library will offer engaging and fun activities for all ages through July 22, 2017.

“Our library strives to offer the best programs to our patrons by creating unique experiences like the NASA In-flight Education Downlink. We are so excited to call into the International Space Station and speak with Astronaut Jack

‘2fish’ Fischer and learn about his expedition and allow students to ask questions,” said Library Director Christeen Snell.

Students selected to ask questions submitted their questions to the library in advance. These young people are from Fayette County and surrounding areas and ranged from ages 5–17 years old. Submitted questions showed a curiosity about eating, training, sleeping, and mission aboard the International Space Station.



Jack D. Fischer (Colonel, US Air Force) was selected by NASA in July 2009. Prior to becoming an astronaut, he graduated from the US Air Force Academy with a bachelor of science in astronautical engineering and holds a master of science in aeronautics and astronautics from the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology (MIT). He is currently a part of the Expedition 51/52 crew that launched to the International Space Station in April 2017.

The opportunity to host a NASA educational downlink event was an incredible experience for all ages in the community. The Fayette County Public Library serves Fayette County, Georgia, and surrounding counties. All events are free and open to the public. Since the event was held during the summer months while school was out, the library was able to provide an incredible STEM education experience for adults, school age and pre-school aged children, and college students. The “Space Chat with

Astronaut Jack” kicked off the NASA Link Live event and was emceed by Dr. Valerie Jones, presidential math awardee and math specialist for the renowned Ron Clark Academy in Georgia. The library was pleased to have Fernbank Science Center bring their inflatable star gazing theatre where groups toured the International Space Station virtually while watching a 2D video and viewed an educational presentation on the “State of the Solar System,” presented by Dr. Scott Harris. Onsite there were educational booths hosted by The Southern Conservation Trust and Flint River Astronomy Club (FRAC). Attendees learned about what animals or plants need to survive in various regions around Georgia and then were challenged to think about what forms of life if any could survive on the ISS. FRAC’s booth held several educational handouts from the NASA education center in Warner Robbins, Georgia, and demonstrated how to safely view an eclipse through a telescope. This was extremely popular as many people are aware of the upcoming eclipse in August. There was sidewalk chalk art with space themed stencil designs for the younger kids to color and bumper balls demonstrating weightlessness. Niagara Bottling Company was the Out of this World sponsor and demonstrated water filtration and injection blow molding on-site. Over 600 people attended from near and as far away as New York, Alabama, Florida, and the West Coast as a result of being on summer vacation during the



timing of the downlink event. Preceding the downlink, the library has been highlighting books on space in the collection by creating displays around the Children’s Department and offering science related workshops, such as Crazy 8’s Math Challenge, Marshmallow Challenge, Maker-space Monday, Coding, Doc Atoms, and weekly story time including books about space travel. The library’s participation in the downlink gave a phenomenal boost of 134

books and materials on space exploration being checked out on the day of the downlink. Also, there was an increase of 16 percent above the average number of new library cards issued on that day. The library plans to continue to follow Mission 52 and Astronaut Jack Fischer on social media and look for

more ways to enhance STEM programming within the library for young patrons.

Fayette County Public Library is only the second library to host an In-Flight Education Downlink event and one of five locations selected in Georgia.

To watch the NASA downlink recording that aired live on NASA TV, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHzNT7bV7M>

To learn more about hosting a NASA In-Flight Education Downlink in your library, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/centers/johnson/downlinks>.