Community Book Read: *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*

The concept of everyone reading the same book in a community began about 13 years ago and was spearheaded by librarian Nancy Pearl. She worked for the public library system in Seattle and her project was called If All Seattle Read the Same Book.

Since then community book reads have sprung up all over the country. The first Community Book Read in Bartholomew County was held in 2005 with the book *Follow the River* by James Alexander Thom.

From that first year through 2009 Partners in Education (PIE) spearheaded the Community Book Read efforts. Last year the Bartholomew County Public Library took over the organization of the Book Read with the book *Three Cups of Tea.*

This year, thanks to a survey posted on the library's website, the public had input on the selection of the Community Book Read. The book selected is *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer. The companion children's book Energy *Island: How One Community Harnessed the Wind and Changed Their World* was selected at a later date.

The Boy Who is a true story about a young man from Africa who built his own windmill from found materials at age 14 to create electricity for his entire community. *Energy Island* is about the Danish island of Samso that became energy independent. The book was written and illustrated by Allan Drummond.

The Kickoff Event for the Book Read was held yesterday at the REMC Building. The event was organized by the Energy Matters Community Coalition and featured several interactive stations to explore principles of physics and sustainable energy production.

Copies of *The Boy Who* and *Energy Island* are available for check-out from the library. In addition the Bartholomew County Library Associates purchased several copies of both books for the public to read, return or pass on to a friend to read.

Book discussions around *The Boy Who* will be held September 21 at 11:00 a.m. and October 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the Library and at the Hope Branch Library on October 3 at 4:00 p.m. Many teachers are using *The Boy Who* or *Energy Island* in their classrooms

Bryan Mealer, co-author of *The Boy Who* will be in Columbus on October 17. Mr. Mealer will speak at schools during the day and will present in the library's Red Room at 7:00 p.m. that evening.

William Kamkwamba thought outside the box when he built his windmill. In recognition of this awesome thinking the program Unlocking Your Creativity will be held at the library on October 12 at 7:00 p.m. Moderator Dr. Leah Jackman-Wheitner and panel members Marilyn Brackney, Matthew Jackson and Alexa Lemley will discuss various aspects of creativity.

Could modern wind technology produce enough electricity to power all Indiana homes and businesses? Learn the answer to this and more on October 13, 6:30 p.m. when Chad

Martin, a renewable energy Extension specialist at Purdue, will report on the wind energy industry in our state.

The Children's Department will host three events around the Book Read. For details on these and all Book Read events go to barth.lib.in.us and click on Community Book Read 2011.

Enjoy this year's book and related activities!

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