

Literacy Fun in the Sun found in Columbus

Columbus has a lot of festivals.

A little over a year ago I began working here, and at the time I knew almost nothing about this community. After twelve months, one of the few things I can say about this town for certain is that people here love to come together and celebrate.

Don't get me wrong. I live in Bloomington, so I'm used to the pageantry of community celebration. If you look at any Bloomington community calendar, you see a long line of festivals, gatherings, and events. However, and this difference is crucial, the Bloomington community is much more segmented. Most events in Bloomington, however colorful or well publicized, involve only a tiny segment of the population.

In Columbus, people really turn out in droves for events like the Ethnic Expo, Popfest, and, so I'm told, North versus East games. There's a coherence and sense of place here that I'm not used to. So I was surprised and elated last year at the overwhelming turnout for the first Bartholomew Reads Literacy Festival.

And guess what folks, we're doing it again! This year, the Second Annual Bartholomew Reads Literacy Festival will be held on Saturday, May 19th, from noon until three pm on the Library Plaza. Once again, we'll have great prizes like iPods and desktop computers, but don't forget that you have to be there to win. We have two great performers, renowned juggler Troy Roark and Musician Marc Thomas with Max the Moose.

In addition, Clifford the big Red Dog will be there, alongside other wandering book characters, and over twenty local agencies that are involved in literacy efforts around the community. And kids, don't forget to come in costume as your favorite book character for a chance to win prizes and glory in our costume contest.

The festival will also be your chance to pre-register for the library's 2007 Summer Reading Club, *Get a Clue @ Your Library*. Patrons who pre-register will be able to redeem points on the day that the program actually begins, May 29. This year, club programs and prizes will focus on mysteries and finding clues. Throughout June and July, we will present story-times, magicians, and treasure hunts along with our usual summer prizes.

The Bartholomew Reads Literacy Festival is a great way to celebrate reading, but more than that, it is a fun way for all ages to become aware of the many resources that Bartholomew County provides for promoting literacy.

For more information about the festival or the summer reading club, drop by the library, or call us at 379-1288. If you're interested in volunteering for the festival, please call Mary Clare Speckner at 379-1266.

Josh Wolf was Children's Librarian at Bartholomew County Public Library.