



Dr. Seuss' Birthday Inspires Perris Staff Read-a-Thon

Perris planners, engineers, parks and recreation staff and administrators took time out of their schedules Thursday to take part in an important community service—reading to elementary school students.

Numerous City staff always take part in the annual read-a-thon to celebrate the birthday of famed children's author Dr. Seuss, and this year was no exception. More than a dozen Perris employees spent time reading to students at Railway Elementary School, a kindergarten through sixth grade campus that focuses on science, technology and math.

Railway Principal Rob French said all youngsters enjoy being read to by adults. It's an extra special treat when City policy makers and other professionals serve as readers, he said.

"One of our missions is to inspire a love of reading," French said. "What better way to show that than to have City employees read to them? It's an awesome experience, and it's a blast."

Associate Planner Diane Sbardellati said reading is one of her passions so she was eager to go to Railway. She did double duty, reading from the Dr. Seuss book "I Can Read with My Eyes Shut" to kindergartners and then tackling "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" for more mature fifth-graders.

"It was a genuine pleasure," Sbardellati said. "Both classes were delightful. I really enjoyed reading to students who are a little older because they can absorb more advanced material and have a longer attention span."

Planning Manager Clara Miramontes brought some of her daughters' books from home for her assignment. Those included "Hop on Pop" and "Yertle the Turtle," both favorites of her own children.

"You have to make reading fun for kids," Miramontes said. "They are at the age where they want to learn so much. I love to see their faces when they get engaged. It's nice to see them paying attention and to see their emotions."

Executive Assistant Marilyn Ferholz read introduced kindergartners to Clifford the Big Red Dog by reading from the book: "An Itchy Day." Afterwards, she quizzed the students, asking how many owned dogs and the names and breeds of their critters.

"They are so innocent and love to hear the reading," she said. "It gives me a really good feeling to participate in this program. I have a lot of fun doing it. It brightens my day."

Redevelopment Project Coordinator Rebecca Miranda read "Just Go to Bed" to a group of second graders. Then she reviewed the book with the class, getting them to tell her what they found most interesting and fun.

"I enjoy interacting with the students," she said. "They enjoyed it and so did I. I like to see kids happy."

Other City volunteers who read in honor of Dr. Seuss included Isabel Lugo, Daryl Hartwill, Sabrina Chavez, Nathan Perez, Rene Avila, Melinda Ward and Sara Cortes De Pavon.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough also read to honor Dr. Seuss's birthday, spending a morning at Perris Elementary School, where 100 kindergartners heard him tell the story of "Horton Hatches the Egg." He also took the opportunity to sign autographed pictures of the race car he owns and to promote Perris Auto Speedway, which opens its 2011 racing season this Saturday.

Yarbrough said he has taken part in the reading program for five years and always gets a kick out of it.

"I wish



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough reads the Dr. Seuss classic, "Horton Hatches the Egg" to kindergartners at Perris Elementary School.

someone had come to school to read when I was a student," he said. "The kids are awesome. "Dr. Seuss fired up a lot of kids' imaginations and created in them a love of reading. It's great to be able to give back to the community."



Perris Planning Manager Clara Miramontes reads to a kindergartners at Railway Elementary School.



Perris Executive Assistant Marilyn Ferholz read a story about Clifford the Big Red Dog to a group of enthralled students.



Associate Planner Diane Sbardellati read to Charlene Busch's kindergarten class and then later posed for photos.



These youngsters donned their lab coats during Dr. Seuss Days. The campus is a science, math and technology satellite.