



City of Homer

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MANAGER'S REPORT

February 24, 2014

TO: MAYOR WYTHE / HOMER CITY COUNCIL

FROM: WALT WREDE

UPDATES / FOLLOW-UP

NOTE: Some of these items appeared in the last report. I have updated them and brought them back in case the Council wanted to discuss.

1. Ramp 7: The Seldovia Village Tribe has paid a contractor to remove the ramp from the water. City Port and Harbor Staff provided an assist by removing the damaged section of the float extension so that the ramp could be lifted cleanly. It was quite an operation. This takes care of the immediate safety concerns and prevents further damage to the ramp and float system. Analysis and discussion on why there was a failure and who is responsible for fixing it is on-going.
2. Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment: The third meeting of the Needs Assessment Steering Committee took place on Thursday evening, February 13th. The focus of this meeting was discussion regarding the questions the consultant should ask and what he or she should attempt to measure in terms of public attitudes on funding, public desires and use patterns with respect to parks, recreation, and culture, and a 'gap analysis'. There was a lot of discussion about how much background and qualitative information can be gathered internally and when to engage the Parks Commission. Also, there were several items which the group asked me to make you aware of so Council can weigh in if necessary. First, the committee is going to recommend that the surveys and other research methods include people from outside of the City limits. A service area that ran basically from Anchor Point to McNeil Canyon was suggested. The Committee is aware that this might be controversial. The reason for doing this is twofold. First, many of the users of City parks and recreation facilities and programs are from outside the City limits. Including them and measuring their willing to contribute financially could result in better overall facilities and programs for all, including Homer residents. Second, this information could be very useful if the effort to create a broader Borough Service Area gains traction. At the Last Council meeting, a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission reported that the committee was reviewing the Soldotna Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment and Master Plan. The Committee wanted to clarify for Council that what they are working on is a Needs Assessment only. There is no master plan component. A master plan would be very premature at this point and it is not what Council provided funding for. Please let me know if there are further questions about this process.

3. Citizens Academy: The Citizens Academy is scheduled to begin this week, on February 20. An overview of the program and a focus on the City Manager's office, the City Clerk's office, and a presentation by City Attorney Holly Wells will comprise the first session. We were a little disappointed with the low enrollment but are looking forward to the opportunity and a successful academy. A memorandum from Katie on this topic is attached.
4. Critical Habitat Legislation: The legislation that would remove the Homer Port and Harbor from the critical habitat area is on the move. It has already passed the Senate and has been referred to the House. House Rules Committee had a hearing on it yesterday, (February 18) and then voted to send it to the floor. I testified at hearings before House Resources, Senate Resources, and was available for questions yesterday. Thanks to Speaker Chenault, Senator Micciche, and Representative Seaton for their effort and strong support. Also, thanks to Katie for all of her background work and coordination and to Linda Anderson for all of her important work in Juneau on this legislation.
5. Traffic Calming: As you know, there is great interest in some neighborhoods about traffic calming. As I reported earlier, the Planning Commission has taken a real interest in this topic and has agreed to take it on as a project. The Commission has begun its work. For those folks in the community who want to get involved, now is the time to get in on the ground level. Contact Planning staff if you want more information about the Commission work schedule on this topic.
6. Lake Clark National Park Management Plan. Many Homer residents have long standing ties to the Lake Clerk Area. Lake Clark National Park is of interest to many for historical, family, recreation, economic, or other reasons. Lake Clark NP is amending its Management Plan. Attached is a notice about a public meeting in Homer on this topic on February 24.
7. Loss Control Award. The City has been working very hard to control or limit its insurance losses. I would be happy to talk about some of those efforts if you are interested. Attached is a notice that the City received a Loss Control Award (Gold Status) for fiscal year 2012. Gold status means that the City kept its losses to less than ten percent of the insurance premium. AML/JIA covers general liability, property, vehicles, professional liability, and workers comp.
8. Intergovernmental Agreement with Kachemak City. This meeting contains a workshop on the Intergovernmental Agreement for Wastewater Services between Homer and Kachemak City. The Council requested that Mayor Morris be invited and we expect him to be present unless he is called for jury duty in Anchorage. If that happens, other members of the City Council will attend on his behalf. We had a consultation meeting with Mayor Morris on February 13 to review options as requested by the Council.
9. Library/ Youth Service Outreach Activities. Recently, KBBI did a story on the Library Youth Service Outreach Program. Part of the story was that the Children's Librarian was making trips to locations outside of the City to conduct story time and other children's library activities. This story generated some questions so attached is a report and other information from Ann Dixon, the City Librarian on this program. I hope you find it informative. Ann will be at the Committee of the Whole and possibly the regular meeting if you have questions.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Memorandum 14-034 from Port and Harbor Director Re: Report on Alaska Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Task Force
2. Memorandum 14-036 from Community and Economic Development Coordinator Re: Homer Citizens Academy
3. Letter from Lake Clark National Park re: Public Meeting on General management Plan
4. Letter from AML/JIA regarding loss control award.
5. Memorandum from Library Director RE: Youth Services Outreach Activities



LACL 1.A-2

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

Admin/HQ Office

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January 22, 2014

Dear Friends and Interested Parties:

The National Park Service (NPS) has released a plan that updates and replaces the 1984 *General Management Plan* and guides the future of Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. This plan will guide management of park resources, visitors uses, and facilities for the next 15 to 20 years. It also provides direction for stewardship of park wilderness and backcountry recreation. During the planning process, we involved federal, state, and local agencies, tribes and villages, corporations, other interested parties, and the general public.

The *General Management Plan Amendment / Environmental Assessment* identifies and evaluates three management alternatives and their environmental impacts to natural and cultural resources, wilderness character, and visitor experiences. The NPS preferred alternative would expand visitor opportunities while protecting wilderness character and park resources. Under all of the alternatives, the wild and undeveloped character would be maintained, and subsistence use in the park and preserve would continue to be a priority and supported in accordance with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

Please share your ideas about the plan at one of our open houses, and/or by submitting written comments. The plan will be available for public review from January 22, 2014 – March 26, 2014 at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/lacl> (click GMP Amendment). Comments may be submitted electronically on the website above, or by regular mail to: Zachary Babb, National Park Service, 240 W. 5th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501.

Three public meetings are currently scheduled, and others will be announced in the media and on the park's internet website at <http://www.nps.gov/lacl>.

Tuesday February 25 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Alaska Islands & Ocean Visitor Center 95 Sterling Highway Homer, AK 99603	Wednesday, February 26 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Soldotna Public Library 235 N. Binkley St. Soldotna, AK 99669	Thursday, February 27 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Campbell Creek Science Center 5600 Science Center Dr. Anchorage, AK 99507
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Thank you for your interest in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve.

Sincerely,

Margaret L. Goodro, Superintendent



807 G Street, Suite 356 Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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January 21, 2014

Walt Wrede, Manager
City of Homer
491 East Pioneer Ave.
Homer, Alaska 99603

Dear Mr. Wrede:

Enclosed is an award certificate that the City of Homer has earned for outstanding loss control efforts. You are to be commended for a job well done!

Every year we take time to recognize our members who are effectively reducing risks and maintaining a safe environment for their citizens and employees. The AMLJIA awards members with a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze award for loss ratios below 25 percent of their deposit contribution. This is quite an accomplishment and is key to keeping the pool strong and your rates stable. Should you need a frame for your certificate, please contact us and we will send one to you.

Since we began business in 1988, the AMLJIA has become the leading provider of risk management training, services and coverage for Alaska's local government entities. The AMLJIA is the strongest pool in Alaska, both financially and in terms of membership. Your pool is considered to be one of the best in the nation by other state municipal league-sponsored pools and is recognized by the Association of Governmental Risk Pools for meeting their advisory standards. You should be proud of the success of your program. When communities and schools take full advantage of the training and services provided for AMLJIA members, it ensures you as a member have all the tools necessary to keep losses to a minimum.

The AMLJIA could not have achieved this success without the commitment and dedication of members like you. The City of Homer is an important member of the AMLJIA program. On behalf of the board and the rest of the membership, I want to thank you for your commitment. Together, we are making a difference!

Sincerely,

Kevin Smith
Executive Director



LOSS CONTROL AWARD



This is to recognize that the

City of Homer

achieved Gold status in loss control for keeping losses to less than
ten percent of contribution during Fiscal Year 2012.

AMLJIA Executive Director

AMLJIA Board of Trustees Chair

From: Ann Dixon
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2014 9:30 AM
To: Walt Wrede
Subject: Youth Service Outreach Activities

Dear Walt,

Our Youth Services Librarian, Claudia Haines, is repeating an outreach program that began last year as a grant-funded activity in partnership with Best Beginnings Homer. As background, we have been working for some time with the Language and Literacy Work Group of Best Beginnings Homer to improve access to early learning literacy opportunities for families and young children in the Homer area. This fulfills part of our mission "to promote literacy, learning, and enrichment...for our community."

Last year's grant-funded project lasted 10 weeks. Ms. Haines conducted preschool story times and early learning activities at McNeil Canyon Fire Hall during January, February, and March, when it can be difficult for families with young children to get to town. Every other week she also visited Razdolna School to conduct a story time for kindergarten children and their younger siblings. (Razdolna School has no librarian and at that time did not have access to a school library.) The project was very well received and succeeded in introducing 278 children, ages six months to seven years, and their parents to the early learning programs available at Homer Public Library. As well, at least two school visits from Razdolna took place at the library later that spring. Summer Reading Program participation was also up, possibly due in part to the outreach program.

We decided to continue the program this year in an abbreviated form for the following reasons:

- It was very popular with families;
- It meets our goals of reaching more families with early literacy activities and of raising awareness of existing in-library services for youth;
- McNeil Canyon is well within our service area. (Our library service area includes not just the City of Homer but also the communities of the Southern Kenai Peninsula from Ninilchik south to Kachemak Selo and west to Port Graham);
- Two hours per week for seven weeks was a reasonable amount of time that Ms. Haines could, at this time of year, work into her schedule. (This year's program is running only in February and March, with only one or two visits to Razdolna; after that, Ms. Haines' main focus, in addition to her usual duties, will be on preparing and delivering the Summer Reading Program.)
- The small amount of library time invested yields community benefits that extend even beyond literacy and language development. For example, McNeil Canyon Fire Hall will use part of an upcoming story time to teach young children about fire safety.

Since coming on board full-time in January, Ms. Haines has added a second preschool story time at the library on Tuesdays. She now spends afternoon hours in the children's library to assist (and monitor) the after-school crowd. She has also taken over all selecting, ordering, and cataloging of children's materials. The cataloging is of particular importance because we were down to one cataloger following Sue Gibson's retirement.

Other outreach activities Ms. Haines is involved with include:

- Twice-monthly story times at Kachemak Kids Early Learning Center.
- Occasional school visits to promote the Summer Reading Program and offer instruction on resources available through the public library.
- Occasional visits to other preschool facilities to provide story times, early learning activities, and model literacy-development behaviors for staff and parents.
- Occasional participation in community events such as the Rotary Health Fair and PTA Summer Activities Night to demonstrate early learning/brain development activities and distribute information about library programs.

Literacy is a goal that libraries in Alaska take very seriously. As was recently reported in numerous news sources, a study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation finds Alaska children rank 46th out of 50 states in 4th grade reading achievement levels. The data show 42% of Alaska children reading “below basic” levels for their age. (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/5116-4th-grade-reading-achievement-levels?loc=1&loct=2#ranking/2/any/true/14/1185/11560>) The data also show no improvement in the past decade.

Research confirms and reconfirms the vital importance of early literacy skills and language development in young children. Public libraries have a unique and potentially powerful role to play in their communities to educate, model positive literacy behaviors, provide materials, and partner with community groups to improve literacy in our areas. Starting children and families on a solid path to literacy benefits the entire community. In ten years those preschoolers will be attending middle school and high school in Homer, hopefully with a firm foundation in reading -- and literacy skills that reach well beyond “basic.”

As always, I’m happy to answer any questions you or anyone else may have.

Regards,

Ann

Ann Dixon, Director
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**Early Literacy Community Outreach Project
Mind and Body for 5 and Under
Assessment, April 2013
Claudia Haines, Homer Public Library**

Introduction

During the months of January, February, and March of 2013, a time of year when weather combined with distance from the town of Homer can often hinder families' abilities to participate in many community activities, the Homer Public Library (HPL) took one of its popular programs "on the road." Claudia Haines, HPL's youth service coordinator, traveled more than 50 miles round trip on Fridays¹ to bring storytime to families in the McNeil Canyon area and in the community of Razdolna. The pilot outreach project was a first for Homer and represented the commitment of many area organizations to collaborate in the name of *early literacy*. The impacts on the families that attended were positive and immediately recognizable, as where the impacts on the Homer Public Library.



Photo courtesy of Meg Lyon

Early Literacy and Library Storytime

"Early literacy refers to what children know about reading and writing before they actually learn to read and write. It is not the teaching of reading but instead involves the building of a foundation for reading so when children are taught to read, they will be ready (Ghoting, 2006)." Early literacy skills identified by the Every Child Ready to Read Initiative include (ECRR):

- *Print Motivation* (a child's interest in and enjoyment of books)
- *Phonological awareness* (the ability to hear and play with similar sounds in words)
- *Vocabulary* (knowing the names of things)
- *Narrative Skills* (the ability to describe things and event and to tell stories)
- *Print Awareness* (noticing print, knowing how to handle a book, and understanding how to follow the written words on a page)
- *Letter Knowledge* (knowing that letters are different than each other, the same letter can look different, and that each letter has a name and is related to sounds)

Since the late 1940s, even before these skills were articulated, libraries have been offering engaging, stimulating, and fun storytimes with early literacy concepts in mind (Albright, 2009). Using books, stories, songs, fingerplays, rhymes, puppets, crafts, flannelboard presentations, simple musical instruments, imaginative play, and games,

¹ Storytimes were held in McNeil Canyon each week and in Razdolna every other week. An additional storytime was held at Head Start in Homer.



librarians introduce children and their caregivers to these early literacy skills during library storytimes. These programs provide free access to a variety of high quality books and other materials, involve children in storytelling and vocabulary-building discussion, and introduce and reinforce basic literacy, math, and science concepts. In Homer, storytimes also offer children an opportunity for vital social interaction not necessarily abundant in rural communities because of widely separated homes and few public spaces.

Early Literacy in Homer

In Homer, library storytimes have been a vital part of many families' weekly experience for years. The popular Preschool Story Hour is offered every Wednesday, year round, as is the Smallfry Toddler Storytime which began after the library moved to the Hazel Ave. location and children's programs could be better accommodated in the Joy Griffin Children's Library. Unfortunately for families who live outside the Homer city limits, particularly those who live at the outer edges of the library's service area, or whose children are enrolled in childcare, attending storytime is made difficult by travel distance, winter weather, or the storytime schedule. Other families may not attend because they are not aware of the programs and/or their impact on early literacy. In an effort to connect with families who do not already attend storytimes the pilot outreach project was launched.

out-reach /'out,rēCH/ Noun: The extent or length of reaching out. Verb: Reach further than. Synonyms: transcend.

Outreach, going out into the community to share library services, is not a new concept for Homer Public Library staff or for the partnering organizations. HPL staff regularly visit a homebound community members to provide books and other materials for checkout and Claudia visits Kachemak Kids Early Learning Center to share books, speaks with classes at area schools to talk about age-related programs, and represents the library at public events when possible. Because of budgetary constraints significant youth outreach efforts, however, are not possible.



Photo courtesy of Meg Lyon

What *is* new about this outreach project is the opportunity opened up by the partnership and grant funding for HPL to share the traveling storytimes with more families both beyond the physical walls of the library and beyond the area regularly served by local organizations involved with early literacy.

Storytime on the Road

Objective

The purpose of the traveling storytimes was to offer language and literacy skills to underserved populations outside the City of Homer as well as opportunities for families to create and strengthen social networks, crucial to early development.

McNeil Canyon

On Fridays² from January 11-March 29, 2013 (twelve weeks), Claudia visited families living near McNeil Canyon (approximately 13 miles East of Homer) at the McNeil Canyon Fire Station operated by Kachemak Emergency Services. Each storytime lasted about an hour and included these tools used to provide a fun experience for kids and to promote the early literacy skills discussed above:

- theme-related, age-appropriate books read aloud using “dialogic reading”³
- fingerplays and children’s songs using a flannelboard, musical instruments (shakers or rhythm sticks), and/or puppets
- literacy games
- vocabulary-building conversation with children
- storytelling
- theme-related crafts completed onsite by children and their caregivers
- early literacy education for parents

Themes included: weather, Lunar New Year, things that go, Easter and bunnies, the jungle, dogs, artists and illustrators, fire safety, and dinosaurs.

Families were also able to:

- learn about early literacy
- apply for a HPL library card
- check in/out books and children’s materials remotely (at storytimes)
- share and receive parenting advice
- learn about community resources
- receive information about area children’s activities
- get reading recommendations for both kids and adults
- learn about digital resources like Tumblebooks and Listen Alaska



² Claudia offered the traveling storytimes on Fridays so she could continue to offer the regular youth programs at the library and to perform other tasks as part of her part-time job at HPL Monday through Thursday.

³ Dialogic reading actively engages children in the reading of a book and involves the adult asking questions, prompting the child to say something about the book, evaluating and expanding on what s/he says, and repeating what the child said to insure the child has learned from the repetition. The reading of the book becomes a discussion. (Whitehurst)

- tour the McNeil Canyon Fire Station thanks to Kachemak Emergency Services staff who also discussed fire safety while demonstrating firefighter equipment during storytime (Families checked out chimney sweeps and inquired about EMT course during storytime also)
- receive information about services provided by Kachemak Family Planning Clinic
- register children under 5 to receive free books from Homer Imagination Library



Each visit to McNeil required one hour of set up, a 1-1 ½ hour storytime program, and 1/2 - 3/4 hour clean up. Families with children ranging in age from six months to seven years participated. Some attended weekly, and some on occasion. The older children accompanied younger children on school closure days. On two occasions, representatives from community organizations accompanied Claudia to talk to the families about their services and answered questions.

Razdolna School

Every other Friday (a total of five visits due to Russian holiday), Claudia visited the kindergarten class at Razdolna School in the Russian Old Believer community of Razdolna, approximately 11 miles East of McNeil Canyon. The visit lasted approximately one hour and included the use of the following early literacy tools:

- theme-related, age-appropriate books read aloud using “dialogic reading”⁴
- storytelling
- fingerplays and children’s songs using a flannelboard, musical instruments (shakers or rhythm sticks), and/or puppets
- literacy games
- vocabulary-building conversation with children

No craft was incorporated into the program at Razdolna School due to time constraints.

The kindergarten class was made up of five and six year old students who were native Russian speakers and spoke English as a second language. In addition to the children in the class, two sets of caregivers and preschoolers participated on one occasion. Information about library services was



⁴ Dialogic reading actively engages children in the reading of a book and involves the adult asking questions, prompting the child to say something about the book, evaluating and expanding on what s/he says, and repeating what the child said to insure the child has learned from the repetition. The reading of the book becomes a discussion. (Whitehurst)

shared with teachers at the school, who have a collection of library materials, but have limited access to them because of space constraints.

Haven House

While project partners hoped storytimes at Haven House would be part of the project every other week (alternating with Razdolna School), no children were in residence when Claudia was able to provide the storytimes.

Homer Head Start

One visit to Head Start was included because of time available in the grant. Children in the program live in the library's service area, some outside the Homer city limits, but are unable to attend library storytimes because of childcare schedules, transportation, and, in some cases, lack of awareness about the library's services. The storytime included elements similar to those utilized at Razdolna School, but were age appropriate for the preschool's four and five year olds.

The Numbers

Planning and Assessment time

26.5 hours of planning and assessment were necessary for the project. This time included project planning (5 hours) and preparation for storytimes (14.5 hours) which included theme-related book and activity selection, craft preparation, communicating with site representatives and project partners, and advertising the program. Final assessment of the project, including compiling this report required 7 hours.

Program time

Storytime presentations accounted for the remainder of the Claudia's staff time. 61.5 hours was required for the total of 19 storytimes presented. This time included travel between the Homer Public Library and McNeil Fire Station and/or Razdolna School, travel between HPL and Homer Head Start, ½-2 hours of set-up and clean-up time at each location, and 1-1 ½ hours per program for each location.



Photo courtesy of Meg Lyon

Attendance

Children between the ages of 6 months and 7 years joined the McNeil Canyon Fire Station storytimes, along with mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. At Razdolna School, children included members of the 2012-2013 kindergarten class (5 and 6 year olds) as well as preschoolers and parents who visited on one occasion. Homer Head Start's storytime included children in the onsite preschool program that were either 4 and 5 years old.

	McNeil Canyon Fire Station Attendance (every week)	Razdolna School Attendance (every other week, except for holidays)	Head Start Attendance (one time visit)
1/11/13	14	12	
1/18/13	12		
1/25/13	19	12	
2/1/13	14		
2/8/13	18	12	
2/15/13	17		
2/22/13	21	18	
3/1/13	16		
3/8/13	20		
3/15/13	7*		
3/22/13	11	13	
3/29/13	12	13	
4/25/13			17
Total number of attendees:	181	80	17

* Low attendance was primarily attributed to spring break for McNeil Canyon School (KPBSD). Many of the families have siblings in school or were associated with the school district in some way and chose not to come.

The Community Response

It is great to have a way to let my daughter meet and play with other kids. She loves it and watching Claudia communicate with the kids is a good learning tool for me. She is great and very good with the kids and parents. – storytime parent (McNeil Canyon Fire Station)

The response to the storytimes was overwhelmingly positive, as is indicated in the written parent evaluations (included as attachments to this report), email sent to HPL’s director, comments made to KBBI’s Aaron Selbig in a radio news story recorded at a McNeil storytime recorded on March 29, 2013 (Selbig, 2013), children’s participation in discussion and activities, and the regular attendance of multiple families at the programs.

Benefits cited by McNeil Canyon parents include:

- Development of social skills
- Introduction to new books
- Exposure to new art and crafts
- Learning listening skills
- Opportunity to interact with other kids

- Use of imagination
- Interaction with storyteller
- Fostering of awareness to detail
- Interactive learning
- Patience for reading
- Opportunities for parents to see other parenting techniques
- Introduction to and use of basic concepts like shapes, colors, and numbers
- Expands creativity with craft



Families also offered a few suggestions for the McNeil storytime and the space. They recommended:

- continuing the program beyond the 12 week pilot project
- including more musical instruments (with a bigger materials budget, HPL could purchase items such as music and rhythm toys for use in storytime)
- discussing topics less and reading stories as written (This comment related to a discussion about the jungle the group had before reading stories. Talking about the jungle/rain forest helps strengthen vocabulary, narrative skills, and print motivation, but for some kids it can be distracting or they can lose interest. Toddlers (2 and under) and preschool age children (3-5) have different experiences at storytime and this is why HPL offers programs for both age groups at the library. Focusing on the early literacy needs and abilities of each age group helps make the experience successful for everyone. At the McNeil storytime, the group was mixed age and Claudia attempted to meet the needs of all families.)
- blocking off areas like the fire station kitchen, so that the youngest kids won't explore too far from their parents

At both Razdolna School and Homer Head Start, children were engaged, but no parent evaluations were completed. (Letter of thanks for the visit to Homer Head Start included.) At these two locations, the children demonstrated they were interested in the stories, fingerplays, rhymes, and activities by asking questions, sharing related stories and past experiences, mentioning similar books, finishing rhymes, commenting on illustrations, asking for stories to be repeated, naming letters or reading words, and retelling read aloud stories in their own words.

Razdolna School was fortunate this year to be part of the Homer Library's Storytime Project. The Razdolna Kindergarten students loved Claudia's story hour presentations. Their love of reading received a real boost with the excellent book selections and the masterful and engaging presentations. A big cheer for "Miss Claudia"! (In our best library voices.)

- Ann Agosti-Hackett, Razdolna School

Highlights

The twelve week program was a noteworthy experience for both the participating families and HPL staff and achieved its objectives. Children and their caregivers were successfully exposed to early literacy skills, social networking opportunities with other families, and examples of how to share reading with children.

The experience of HPL staff was also positive. The effects of the outreach program on library use were felt immediately. Staff met more families living within the library's service area, shared information about library services, circulated more library materials, promoted early literacy and library related programs, and welcomed kids and teens from Razdolna, Voznesenka, and Kachemak-Silo schools to the library and provided tours and activities during class visits. These visits were planned as a result of storytimes at Razdolna School and library staff meeting teachers and staff.)



Funding

The traveling storytime outreach program was made possible with grants from Best Beginnings Homer and the Homer Foundation as well as support from the City of Homer, Kachemak Emergency Services, and Razdolna School. Contributors and community partners provided the following:

- *Homer Foundation*- provided funding for staff time (planning, implementation, and assessment).
- *Homer Best Beginnings*- provided funding for staff time (planning, implementation, and assessment).
- *City of Homer (Homer Public Library)*- provided professional staff, city car for transportation, use of copier, computer and storytime props (flannelboard, shakers, rhythm sticks, etc.), and program oversight.
- *Friends of the Homer Public Library*- provided materials for storytime crafts.
- *Kachemak Emergency Services*- provided space for McNeil Canyon storytimes January through March, a visit by Assistant Chief Steve Boyle to talk about fire safety, and a tour of the fire trucks and other equipment housed at the station.
- *Razdolna School*- hosted storytimes every other week in kindergarten classroom for kindergartners and interested family members.
- *Homer Head Start*- welcomed one storytime visit in April.
- *Homer Imagination Library (Sprout)*- one visit to storytime at McNeil Canyon and one to Razdolna School.

- *Kachemak Family Planning Clinic*- one visit by outreach manager Chris Fontaine to storytime at McNeil Canyon.

Conclusion

Storytime outreach allows libraries to provide early literacy experiences to children in the community who may not otherwise be able to visit the library. It also helps provide information about library services to families who may not be familiar with the library. This pilot project successfully demonstrated that traveling storytimes meet the early literacy and social needs of families living in the library's service area but who are unable to attend programs at the library. It also demonstrated that outreach can increase use of the physical library and its resources.



While there is demand for successful programs like the traveling storytimes at McNeil Canyon Fire Station, Razdolna School, and Homer Head Start and interest among library staff to continue outreach efforts, the Homer Public Library does not currently have the resources to do so at this time.

Works Cited

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RurAL CAP Homer Head Start
1266 Ocean Drive
Homer, Alaska 99603
May 2, 2013

Claudia Haines
Youth Services
Homer Public Library
chains@cityofhomer-ak.gov

Dear Ms. Haines,

On behalf of children and families enrolled in our program, I wish to express appreciation for the outreach services provided by Homer Public Library. Your recent visit to our classroom allowed children to participate in your Preschool Story Hour. This well-loved and valuable literacy program is typically unavailable to children in our program because of schedule conflicts or lack of transportation for many families.

As an early childhood educator, I understand the importance of immersing young children in language and literacy rich environments to provide the necessary foundation for all future learning. Helping families understand their role as their child's first teacher is a crucial piece. Your visit to Head Start not only provided children with a high quality literacy experience, but also provided a link between families and literacy resources in our community. Furthermore, your engagement with children and books served as a model for staff and parent volunteers in our classroom.

I look forward to a continued partnership between RurAL CAP Head Start and Homer Public Library to support emergent literacy for all young children in our community.

Sincerely,

Terri L Mach

Terri L. Mach
Education Coordinator

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback

---- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

CRAFT SKILLS, IMAGINATION

How could the storytime be improved?

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)?

3

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library?

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area? we love the fire hall location.

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

This storytime outreach program was made possible by a collaboration between the Homer Public Library and Best Beginnings Homer with additional financial support from the Homer Foundation and Kachemak Emergency Services. Would you like to get a 1x month email update from Best Beginnings Homer about future events and programs like these for families with young children or professionals working with young children?

Email address: jwboyd10@yhoo.com

Printed Name: Jason Boyd

Phone (optional):

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback

---- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

INTERACTION WITH THE STORIES TELLER WAS STIMULATING AND POSTED AWARENESS TO DETAILS

How could the storytime be improved? Funding to make IT A PERMANENT PROGRAM

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)?

12 TIMES

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library?

YES

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area?

1/2 mile from my house! I thought it was great

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

Everything was perfect

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Email address: RL STONE @ Yahoo.com

Printed Name: Rod Stone

Phone (optional): 235-2049

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback
--- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

Social interaction, new books, arts and crafts... and we get to see the fire trucks when it's over!

How could the storytime be improved?

more enclosed area

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)?

8 times

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library?

its far away. yes but only a few

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area?

Loved it! closing off some areas would be nice.

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

nothing! perfect time perfect location!
Please have it again!!

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Email address: DylanKLyon@gmail.com

Printed Name: Dylan Lyon

Phone (optional): 226-7065

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback
--- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

He's maturing in social skills!

How could the storytime be improved?

Incorporate musical instruments more! :)

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)?

2 times

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library?

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area?

Great location!

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

It's been easy for me! Thank you!

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Email address: sweetheartbutterfly@gmail

Printed Name: Brittany Mahan

Phone (optional): _____

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback
---- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

She enjoys the craft project + the interactions w/ other kids

How could the storytime be improved?

less elaborating on the stors, just read (for the younger kids esp.)

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)? 3

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library? Very few

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area? Great for east end people - would love to incorporate the fire trucks!

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.) great time/location for us.

This storytime outreach program was made possible by a collaboration between the Homer Public Library and Best Beginnings Homer with additional financial support from the Homer Foundation and Kachemak Emergency Services. Would you like to get a 1x month email update from Best Beginnings Homer about future events and programs like these for families with young children or professionals working with young children? no thanks!

Email address: _____

Printed Name: _____

Phone (optional): _____

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback
---- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

important interaction w/other kids of different ages, learning listening skills

How could the storytime be improved?

Nothing - its great!

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)? 10

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library? Yes, Thursday Lapsit

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area? The firehall location is great, especially for kids that live in the area

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.) Nothing - its very convenient.

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Email address: snowfish12@yahoo.com

Printed Name: Ann Crane

Phone (optional): 907-799-6103

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback

---- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

she has learned shapes, and the story with crafts really opens her creativity

How could the storytime be improved?

we think it is awesome and even well balanced for the spectrum ^{of children}

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)?

5 times, would have gone more if had not been a few, but town trips usually fill up w/errands.

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library?

Yes, the fire hall is a great location, the tour + fireman, fire safety day was a big hit too.

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend

(transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

Nothing, this place is great!

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Email address: wokenbybird@yahoo.com

Printed Name: Dianna Lockwood

Phone (optional): _____

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback

---- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

she gets to see and interact with other kids. it helps me see how other people communicate with their kids

How could the storytime be improved?

no suggestions you have thought it out well and are prepared and have experience with kids & parents

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)?

7 or 8

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library?

Yes

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area?

great location for us. nice facility

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend

(transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

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Yes

Email address: youngchrisd@hotmail.com

Printed Name: Chris Young

Phone (optional): 279-4156

Great job Keep up, this is good

Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback

--- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

~~None~~ Being active
interaction with other kids
interactive learning
Increased in Frequency

How could the storytime be improved?

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)? 6-8

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library? yes

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area?

good area close proximity to most fast end homes well known location.

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

6

This storytime outreach program was made possible by a collaboration between the Homer Public Library and Best Beginnings Homer with additional financial support from the Homer Foundation and Kachemak Emergency Services. Would you like to get a 1x month email update from Best Beginnings Homer about future events and programs like these for families with young children or professionals working with young children?

Email address: talleeboyd@yahoo.com

Printed Name: Tallee Boyd

Phone (optional): 907 2350584

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Outreach Storytime Program 2013 -Parent Feedback

--- feel free to write more comments on back.

What do you feel your child gained from the storytime program?

Socializing with other kids
New experiences in art
patience for reading

How could the storytime be improved?

It's so great every week! I'm learning too - so it's difficult to think of something it needs

Approximately how many times did you and your child attend the storytime program at McNeil (it was offered 12 times)? 7

Have you attended any programs at the Homer Public Library? yes

What did you think of the McNeil Firehall location? Do you have improvements/suggestions for future storytimes here or other location in this area? So wonderful!! Nice + close to home - which means less travel time + money. The only other place I could think of would be the McNeil School library.

What could have made it easier for you and your child to attend (transportation, different location, different time of year or time of day, etc.)

This was perfect!

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Email address: meglyon-photography@yahoo.com

Printed Name: Meg Lyon

Phone (optional): 2350653