



Family Fun Literacy Luau Night  
Highlights Reading And Fun

Caring planners of Family Fun Literacy Luau Night held at Newark High School February 22<sup>nd</sup> did everything except provide balmy ocean breezes to give the Pre-K through fifth grade attendees the look and feel of a real vacation getaway.

The 90-minute departure from the ordinary included:

- Children and their parents being read to by two area children's librarians

- Splashing, playing and swimming in the NJS pool

- Making colorful paper leis

- Snacking on crunchy cheese-flavored beach balls, cool (licorice) tubes and sunny surfing bear cupcakes

- And picking out four or more brand new books to take home

The free event was organized by Derek Poole, Family Literacy Coordinator for Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County.

Poole is also the founder the "Our Community Reads" program that often



holds such events in one of the five participating Wayne County school districts in Newark, Lyons, Red Creek, North Rose-Wolcott and Gananda.

He was assisted in the planning for the Family Fun Literacy Luau Night by Chris Mizro, his program assistant at Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County

and "Our Community Reads" Newark Advisory Committee members.

Krystina Dippel, the children's librarian at the Newark Public Library and Caitlin Barnes, who works part time in the

children's library at the Newark Public Library and is the full time librarian at the Gananda Elementary School read books to the 25 children and parents attending the event.

Children attending came from Newark elementary schools; Roosevelt Children's Center in Newark and East Palmyra Christian School.

Retired Kelley School third grade teacher Kathy Eckert, who is a "Our Community Reads" committee member, provided the fun snacks.

Dippel and Barnes were in charge of providing the materials for the craft making.

Noting Wayne County has a 10 percent illiteracy rate, Poole said the "Our Community Reads" events are intended to put the importance of family literacy in a really fun context at these events that also provide several free books for children.

"Newark has been one of our best community endeavors for "Our Community Reads" because of the very committed and supportive volunteers we have here," Poole said.

The next event the organization is planning will be held March 20<sup>th</sup> at the Park Presbyterian Church from 6-7:30 p.m.. The event will have a pajama party-related theme and children will be asked to bring their favorite stuffed animals.

Informational flyers will be sent home with children at Perkins and Lincoln Schools and will be open to Pre-K through second grade students.

Newark "Our Community Reads" advisory committee members include: Poole, Mizro, Eckert, Dippel, John Robbins, vice president of the Board of Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County; Alex Eligh Community Center Director Mike Muscolino; and Linda Bridgeman, who was deputy clerk of DPW administration for the Village of Newark, before retiring.



Thanks to Chris Mizro for providing a photo from the the event!