

# FRIENDS' NEWS

Friends of the Surprise Libraries

September 2014

## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SUMMER READING PROGRAM

By Guest Columnist  
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Youth Services Supervisor

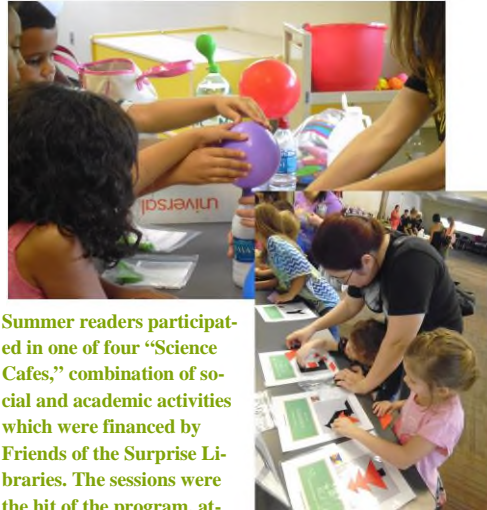
### The Northwest Regional Library

Maricopa County Library District kicked-off a new, research-based Summer Reading Program this year, taking into account what motivates children to read. In years' past, our Summer Reading Program would reward children with small, trinket-type prizes for reaching incremental reading goals throughout the summer. However, we learned that these prizes were not helping motivate children to read, and in fact research shows these prizes turn reading into "work" in a child's mind and may have been discouraging them to read.

With this research in mind, MCLD applied for a grant to revamp our Summer Reading Program- and we did just that. Our new website, [summerreadingaz.org](http://summerreadingaz.org), turns the SRP into an online game format, where kids log their reading minutes and unlock virtual games, badges and activities. The entire program acts as an interactive game that kids can continue playing even after SRP is over- continually encouraging children to read for fun. Children (and adults and teens) still earn a free book upon completion of the program.

At the Northwest Regional Library, we had excellent feedback for the newly designed format and were able to focus our energy on providing stimulating and thoughtful programs for our families.

This year's Summer Reading theme Fizz Boom Read! focused on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). We were able to provide fun, engaging programs that used this theme in a creative way.



Summer readers participated in one of four "Science Cafes," combination of social and academic activities which were financed by Friends of the Surprise Libraries. The sessions were the hit of the program, attracting 829 readers.

John Faser Photo

Thanks to the Friends of the Surprise Libraries' generous support, we offered four Family Science Cafes and three Teen Tech Cafes that allowed families and teens to participate in unique science experiments, crafts and STEM activities at the library.

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# Summer Reading Program 2014

## Statistics

Surprise Library had 3,473 participants register for the program. The overall completion rate was 26.8%.

The number of registrants compared to 2013 decreased by about 18%. The rate of completion decreased by 30% compared to 2013.

## Circulation

Circulation for the Library during the months of May, June and July decreased by 4% from 2013. We circulated 326,463 items in those three months.

The youth department saw increases over 2013 numbers in the circulation of Board Books, Juvenile Fiction, Juvenile Nonfiction, Spanish Picture Books, Spanish Teen, Teen Fiction and Teen Nonfiction books during those three months. Juvenile Nonfiction made the biggest leap. We circulated 11% more this year than last. We saw decreases in the circulation of begin-to-read books and Spanish Juvenile Books. Circulation of our Picture Books stayed the same.



## Children's Programming

The library held 22 youth/family events in celebration of the Summer Reading Program. The total number of program participants was 2,228.

Overall children's programming this summer served 3,779 children at the library.

The Friends of the Surprise Libraries donated \$1,650.00 specifically for children's programming this summer. This means that it cost the Friends approximately \$0.44 for each child that attended a program this summer. (Subtracting programs paid for by MCLD).

## Teen Programming

The library held 7 teen events specifically in celebration of the Summer Reading Program. The total number of program participants was 118.

The Friends of the Surprise Libraries donated \$430 specifically for teen programming this summer. This means that it cost the friends approximately \$3.64 for each teen that participated in a program.

The Friends of the Surprise Libraries donated \$400 in prizes for teens in the SRP Program.

# FRIENDS SPONSOR

## SUMMER READING PROGRAMS

Hundreds of readers, from toddlers to adults, were drawn to the Surprise Library by a series of exciting special events, all financed by Friends as part of a longtime partnership with the Library. The events ranged from a Henna Tattoo festival to a Magic show that played to standing room only, capped by three “Science Cafes” that attracted 829 people.

“Magic” with Eric Giliam played to 374 readers, and “Didgeridoo Down Under” brought in 292 participants.

Surprise Library organizers consider these splashy events, a longtime tradition for Friends, crucial in bringing in the crowds who stay on to form the basis of the reading programs. “We make certain that we tie these presentations to books and computer programs that are related to topics in the programs” said Jacqui Higgins-Dailey.

The Australian-related Didgeridoo Down Under program is accompanied with displays of related books, maps and online publications. Librarians noted that the reading participants came back for even more books on the history, geography and wildlife of the massive continent.

The Friend’s contributions to Summer readers included:

- Teen volunteer T-shirts \$262
- Teen drawing class with Brian Kilgore \$215
- Teen henna tattoo workshop with Prvie Galiya \$215
- Apple I-pad mini (prize) \$270
- Four Amazon Gift Cards (prizes) \$200
- Drop-in Crafts and Teen Wrap Party \$300
- Samsung Galaxy tablet (prize) \$205
- Eric Giliam Magic \$450
- Didgeridoo Down Under \$600
- Three Sciences Cafes \$500



John Faser Photos

# BOOK SALES CONTINUE TO SOAR

During the first eight Months of 2014 Book Sales soared at Friends' Place, in some cases breaking long standing records. During that period, Friends sold \$37,618 compared to \$36,322 in 2013 a \$1,296 increase. Average Monthly Sales have increased from \$3,116 in 2011 to \$4,702 in 2014, a 50.9 percent increase.

This dramatic jump was hardly an accident. In fact, it is part of a two-year reorganization of the Book Store, which relies on regular shifting of the thousands of books in the store. The other key element is an increase in Volunteer Staff from 36 to 73.

Recently the Book Store had special sales on the works of prolific authors such as John Grisham and James Patterson.

Friends President, Alyson Cline, said, "We put more books in easy reach of the public, took others out of storage and accommodated a flow of new books donated by the Library. Hardback fiction has been given the entire Northwest corner of the store, making it a focus.

The continued 2014 increase in sales is testament to these changes.



*SPECIAL GIFTS:* A pair of jazzy, hot orange chairs (left) and a hand-woven rug (right) – both of them gifts from Friends have livened up the Teen Oasis and the children's area of the Surprise Library. The rocking chairs and a special couch, donated earlier by Friends, have attracted new readers to the Oasis. Teenagers call the orange recliners "banana chairs" for their unique shape. "These chairs have made this area cooler," said Jane Wagener who was sprawled across one of the rockers. Other patrons praised the combination of "rocking and reading." Across the library, several youngsters were circumnavigating the new rug which was bristling with color and symbols of the alphabet. "Shortly after we put the rug down, I noticed several of the children striding across the carpet – calling out the letters of the alphabet" said Jacqueline Higgins, Director of Youth Services for the Surprise Library. "We wouldn't have these without Friends."

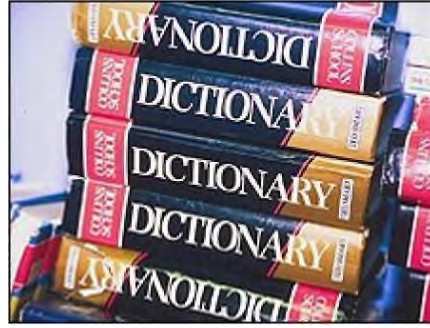
## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SUMMER READING PROGRAM

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Each Family Science Café invited patrons to visit various stations to engage in hands-on activities and offered handouts, books and materials to learn how families could try similar experiments at home, encouraging parents to explore with their kids in new and exciting ways! These cafes were a huge success, drawing hundreds of people each week. The Teen Tech Cafes used a similar format to introduce technology and science in a hands-on way, building off of the “Maker Movement,” in which patrons use the library space and materials to explore, create and learn.

In addition to our home-grown Science and Technology Café programs, support from the Friends of the Surprise Libraries also allowed us to invite special guests into the Library for fun presentations and interactive shows, including Didgeridoo Down Under, a science-based, multicultural show about aboriginal Oceania, and the Magician Eric Giliam, who used magic to uncover some of the mysteries of science. These programs drew crowds of more than 650 people!

Overall, the 2014 Summer Reading Program was a huge success. Although we saw an anticipated slight drop in sign-ups, due to adjusting to the new format, our overall circulation for youth books and materials went up! That means that our patrons read even more this year than last year, an exciting outcome, due to the amazing work by our Library staff and the support of our Friends.



## GIFT OF WORDS

Friends donated a library of Dictionaries and Thesauruses to Imagine Prep School after they organization ran an advertisement seeking special funding to purchase the reference books.

Friends President, Alyson Cline, responded to the request by checking out the reference section at Friends' bookstore. There was a respectable number of old-fashioned Dictionaries; the kind that pre-date the online revolution.

“Most schools have a class where students are asked to use an actual Dictionary to expand their knowledge of words and improve their literacy,” said Alyson.

Friends donated them directly to Imagine Prep School. “This fits our mission of literacy and reading,” said Alyson.