

At Home with Books



FAMILY READING PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

FALL/WINTER
2005

New Banners and Calendar Feature National Illustrators

When it comes to the promotion of reading, Family Reading Partnership often thinks in big ways, with each new idea evolving into the next. Our new *Read to me...my story is just beginning!* campaign is just one more example.

For the past two years, local buildings have served as gallery walls for billboard-sized banners with artwork designed to inspire families to read to their children. This year those same buildings, and others in cities across the country, will display an extraordinary collection of artwork created by some of the most prominent children's book illustrators in the world.

Our star line-up includes: Aliki, Tedd Arnold, Suzanne Bloom, Sandra Boynton, Marc Brown, Nancy Carlson, Tomie de Paola, Max Grover, David Kirk, Mary Murphy, Todd Parr, and Rosemary Wells. We are grateful to these new friends for helping to connect families and children with the joy of books.

The bright, bold and beautiful artwork of these nationally renowned author/ illustrators depicts animal and human families, both fanciful and real, reading together in a variety of fun and imaginary settings. While families will recognize some images from their favorite children's books, many were created especially for this project.

2006 READ TO ME CALENDARS ARE HOT OFF THE PRESS!

While the banners promote Read to Me across the community and beyond, the 2006 Calendar will bring the read-aloud message and same stunning artwork directly into homes. Each month a new and vibrant Read to Me image will provide powerful encouragement and a reminder for parents to read to their children.

The purchase of the calendar by community members will support many FRP programs and will make it possible for 2,000 local families of low-income to receive the calendar as a gift. Imagine children in Pre-K and Head Start classrooms across the county gift-wrapping the calendar to bring home as a holiday gift to their families!

Both the banners and calendars represent FRP's multifaceted approach to spreading the joy of family reading. Keeping our commitment to share with other literacy organizations, we will make the banners, both large and small, and the calendars available to other schools and communities. We are delighted to share with others so that they can now join us in promoting reading in this grand way.



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Director's Words

Family Reading Partnership's family keeps growing. New friends and old continue to come together around this effort to bring the joy of books to children. It was our pleasure to introduce our old and dear friend, Mem Fox,



Connected by the mission: (left to right) Mem Fox, Deborah Boiardi, and Brigid Hubberman meet in Washington, D.C.

to new and already dear friend, Deborah Boiardi. We met over breakfast before enjoying Mem's keynote address at the national Reach Out and Read conference in Washington, D.C., in May. We had just met Deborah the week before when we were honored to be the beneficiaries of the first annual 21 Run 5K race, created in memory of Deborah's son, George Boiardi.

(Please see story about the 21 Run and Story Walk on page 3.)

The tag line of our new banner campaign and 2006 calendar, "Read to me...my story is just beginning," says it all, doesn't it? Each and every book read to children contributes to their own story...who they are, and who they will become. We cannot underestimate the importance of these early book experiences to our children's life stories.

We are especially fortunate that this extraordinary group of national illustrators has offered to share their artwork to promote family reading in this special way. How proud and grateful we are to partner with them for the "Read to me...my story is just beginning!" banner and calendar campaign. Their fabulous artwork will certainly inspire families to snuggle up with their children on their laps and open a good book!

Brigid



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Family Reading Partnership Programs

Books at Birth

Every baby born at the hospital receives a new book as a gift.



Books to Grow On

Doctors give young families a book at each well visit with a prescription to "read to baby 20 minutes a day."



Welcome to School Book Project

Kindergarteners receive a new book at registration as a gift from their new school.



Kids' Book Fest

The community comes together to celebrate children's books at this fun annual event.



Bright Red Bookshelf

Gently used books are collected and placed on red shelves free for families to select and own.



Children's Book Fund

Community donations fund grants to agencies for books as gifts for families they serve.



Traveling Books

Volunteers read to children at day care and leave crates of books to be enjoyed.



Give the Gift of Family Reading

Low-income families receive new books at the holidays, funded by community donations.



FRP Mission: To create a culture of literacy in which all children have early, frequent and pleasurable experiences with books, together with a loved one, as part of everyday family life.

Accidental Zucchini Completes Growing Series

Wow! The first Books to Grow On babies are already turning four and will now receive their final gift book in the series. Thanks to the support of our book sponsor, the Triad Foundation, doctors and nurses will present these children with the delightful book, *The Accidental Zucchini: An Unexpected Alphabet* by Max Grover.



says Elizabeth Stilwell, Director of the Early Childhood Program at Cornell University, and Books to Grow On committee member. “The beautiful and fanciful illustrations of *The Accidental Zucchini* provide a perfect invitation for four-year-olds to share their own ideas, as they become familiar with the alphabet in a fun and engaging way.”



The Accidental Zucchini is a perfect book for four-year-olds. It introduces the alphabet through a funny juxtaposition of words brought to life by Grover’s whimsical illustrations. Imagine the wonder of Cupcake Canyon and Ice Cream Island...and what it would be like if an Octopus had Overalls!

As children approach their fourth birthday, they are at a developmental stage when they become wonderful storytellers. They have vivid imaginations, a silly sense of humor, and are quickly developing rich vocabularies.

“The opportunity to tell stories and experiment with language is such an important step in literacy development,”

This program milestone has firmly joined healthy physical development with quality children’s books and the inspiration to read aloud to children from birth. Now that the series is complete, 750 children each year at each age level, will benefit from early and rich experiences with books provided by Books to Grow On. As we celebrate the full implementation of Books to Grow On we especially appreciate the funders and medical practices whose partnership makes it all possible!

Please enjoy the Books to Grow On center-spread that celebrates this unique community partnership.

*“This is a silly-willy ABC book and it makes me think of delicious food and funny cars.”
—Ingrid, age 4, a child at Cornell’s Early Childhood Center*

Feedback from Kindergarten Families

As we focus greater attention on measuring the success of our efforts to create a culture of literacy, we seek feedback from families who receive books through our programs. The Welcome to School Book Project is one of our programs that reaches all families and that has become a special community tradition. All area schools and M&T Bank partner with us to present each entering kindergartener at school registration with a copy of *Hattie and the Fox*, a delightful book by Mem Fox.

The special milestone of kindergarten registration is an ideal time to gain feedback from parents. This April, FRP began to formally survey parents at three local elementary schools. A total of eighty-seven parents completed surveys at Beverly J. Martin School, Northeast Elementary School, and Trumansburg Elementary.

The purpose of the survey was to assess family reading habits and FRP’s impact on shaping these traditions.

It was wonderful to find that 78% of the families that responded said they share books with their child at home once or more per day! Over 90% of respondents knew about FRP and/or were familiar with our “Read to Me” banners.

However, an alarming 9% of respondents did not have more than 10 books in their homes. Families who have not had success with reading and have not yet found pleasure in books will need extra support if they are to make books a special part of everyday family life in their homes. It is clear that there is still much more work to be done as we strive to ensure that all children grow up in literacy rich environments.



“I learned a lot about how to teach and play with my child from the hand-outs at the Dr.’s office.”

“When I see the sines hangin up I think I shuld try to read to my kids but I don have time.” [sic]

“Sometimes when I get busy I think about skipping it, but the handouts and info continue to motivate me.”

The Literacy Puzzle Begins at Birth

by Carol Cedarholm

I am currently a reading teacher at Fall Creek and Northeast Elementary Schools in Ithaca. I have taught at Enfield Elementary and Beverly J. Martin Elementary Schools for a total of 22 years. In addition to older students, I teach first grade students who have been identified as needing extra help. My goal for these first graders is to help them catch up by the end of the year. You may wonder what they have to catch up to when they are at the beginning of the process of learning to read. This brief story is my answer to that question.

My daughter's first year in formal education confirmed for me what I had always suspected about literacy learning. The contrast between her school experience in learning to read and the experience of my first grade students dramatically illustrated the importance of early literacy experiences. For many six-year-old students learning to read is a struggle.

For my daughter Lucy, learning to read and write has been a joyful, loving, meaningful and leisurely process that began when she was born. By the time she entered first grade she had been at it for six years. When

she entered school, it was as if she had been working on a 100-piece jigsaw puzzle that was nearly complete. She had maybe 10 or 20 pieces to go. You know how puzzles go when you near the end—it's obvious where the last remaining pieces fit. You barely pause between picking each one up and finding its home. Her puzzle is nearly complete because of the hundreds of stories and the many hours her father and I have spent snuggling close and reading to her. Hearing the delicious words that author after author strung together in fascinating tales helped her learn about and wonder about her world. In first grade, then, it was fairly incidental and like the last pieces of a puzzle for

her to learn that this is the word 'she,' or 'is' is spelled i-s and not i-z like it sounds, or that spaces go between words.

In my teaching, many of my students have not had the luxury of this leisurely six years of experience with books. Our role in school then becomes the condensed, accelerated version. And yes, I can teach them that the word 'is' is spelled i-s, not i-z like it sounds, and that words are written with spaces between them. But then we are starting the puzzle at six. There is a long pause between picking up a piece, finding its home, picking up the next piece and finding its home. Without the large picture, it is difficult to fit in the small pieces. It is by no means easy, fast or incidental.

For many students this is the beginning of a learning trajectory that proceeds with great difficulty. In the schools we have many programs to support children and their families so that their learning trajectories are joyful and successful. It takes many of us, however, not only in schools but also the community at large to help families to have the tools and the time to do this for their own children. Our efforts will ensure a successful and lifelong relationship with books for these students. Family Reading Partnership is one community effort that has succeeded in helping families give their very young children the gift of the joyful, leisurely, meaningful and loving journey towards literacy which must begin at birth.

The best part of teaching first graders is that the students share books with their younger brothers and sisters. When a child comes to school excited after reading a book to her two-year-old sister, I know the puzzle has begun to be pieced together for this little girl. And by the time that little two-year-old is six and a first grader, many more of the pieces will be in place for her than they were for her big sister.

Carol Cedarholm lives in Ithaca with her 11-year-old daughter, Lucy. She wrote this story in 2000.



Carol Cedarholm, A Generous Spirit

by Emily Rhoads Johnson

When Carol Cedarholm invited guests to her 50th birthday party, she asked that instead of bringing gifts, they donate to the Family Reading Partnership. Their donations totaled over \$700 that will be used to provide books for low-income families. For those who know Carol, such a generous gesture comes as no surprise. She has been a passionate supporter of FRP since 1998 when, as a reading teacher at Beverly J. Martin School, she led the effort to organize the school's first book giveaway program. She has also been an ongoing supporter of the Reading Buddies program in which volunteers from the Presbyterian Church read to young children over breakfast in the BJM Library.

In 2000, Carol wrote a powerful message delivered to FRP members at their annual Community Literacy Vision Day in which she compares the learning-to-read process to putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Children, she said, whose parents have read to them

since birth and have shared the joy that comes from books, already have most of the puzzle pieces in place when they enter school. Those who have not, must pick up the very first piece in first grade, and for them the learning process becomes an accelerated version of what should have been "a leisurely six years of experience with books."

Carol's convictions about the importance of early, joyful reading experiences stem from over 22 years of public school teaching. Born in Katonah, NY, she graduated from Ithaca College, earned a master's degree in reading from SUNY Binghamton, and during the early 1980s taught first and second grade at BJM (then Central School). Later she taught reading at Enfield School, then became a reading recovery teacher at BJM. This fall she divides her teaching time between Northeast and Fall Creek schools.

Thanks, Carol, for showing us in so many ways how reading can add to the richness of life.



Carol and her daughter Lucy have enjoyed books together since Lucy was born. Now that Lucy is in sixth grade, they share their love of reading with six other mothers and daughters who meet monthly to discuss books that both challenge and entertain. "I'm always amazed at the girls' insightful responses to the stories and their ability to critically evaluate the quality of the writing," Carol says.

21 Run Helps Establish Boiardi Book Fund

On a beautiful spring day in May, hundreds of people gathered at Cornell Plantations to honor the memory of the late Mario St. George Boiardi, a great Cornell Lacrosse player and team captain, and an extraordinary human being.

While the crowd of runners sped off on a 5K course, families with young children took a quiet stroll along the 1K Story Walk set up by the Family Reading Partnership. Along the path that encircled the scenic pond, children encountered some of FRP's favorite storybook characters and settings, and many book making activities. Wearing their Cornell Lacrosse jerseys, George's teammates welcomed families at each station, read the featured story to delighted children, and encouraged the interactive play. Children swam in fish costumes with *Rainbow Fish* and crawled through the chrysalis tube to become a butterfly in *Waiting for Wings*.

At the end of the day, participants from across the community and many athletic

teams gathered to remember George and to hear the heartfelt appreciation of George's mother, Deborah Boiardi. Young Boiardi was tragically killed in a lacrosse game in 2004. Exceptional in many ways, he intended to dedicate his life to teaching and planned to head off after graduation to a South Dakota Indian reservation to work with children.

It is meaningful that George's fellow lacrosse players wanted this event to benefit local literacy efforts, FRP and Big Red Readers, a group Boiardi helped found in which Cornell athletes read with children at local schools. We are proud to establish the Boiardi Book Fund in George's memory, each year giving children opportunities to connect with books.



Children delighted in hearing stories read by Cornell Lacrosse players along the Story Walk.



Hundreds of people joined in the 21 Run to honor the life of #21, George Boiardi.

Celebrating

BOOKS TO GROW ON

CONNECTING GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD BOOKS

Sprouting Future Readers!

4 YEARS



Sponsored by Triad Foundation

3 YEARS



Sponsored by CircleLink Fun

Long before children are reading machines, they are listening machines.—TRELEA

18 MONTHS



2 YEARS



The fire of literacy is created by the emotional sparks between a child, a book and the person reading.—FOX

Sponsored by Triad Foundation

Attention spans are built minute by minute, page by page, day by day. -RELEASE



12 MONTHS

Sponsored by Tompkins Charitable Gift Fund

Sponsored by Community Foundation of Tompkins County



Literacy development begins in the first days of life, at home.

6 MONTHS



Sponsored by Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library

Planting the seeds of literacy in our community

We are proud to partner with all nine pediatric practices in Tompkins County. Families receive beautiful, new, carefully chosen books at six different well-child visits at these medical practices:

- Buttermilk Falls Pediatrics
- Cayuga Family Medicine
- Drs. O'Shea and Stewart
- Dryden Family Medicine
- Family Medicine Associates of Ithaca
- Family Practice Associates of Dryden
- Guthrie Medical Group
- Northeast Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine
- Trumansburg Family Health



Pass Along Reading Magic

Clearly, children's author and literacy expert, Mem Fox, is a leader and champion of this cause! We share her vision that all children should have frequent and enjoyable experiences hearing stories read aloud long before school.

She has even written a guidebook, *Reading Magic*, to give parents both the inspiration and guidance to make reading aloud a special part of their children's lives.

In her book Mem distills the magic of reading for parents. In simple language, humorous cartoons, and anecdotes she demonstrates how parents can give their children a strong foundation for reading, simply by reading aloud regularly and by

interacting through these stories.

Now we will begin to share this gem of a book with families that have not tried reading aloud to their children, and who

may not have even had books in their own childhood. With a grant from the Social Services League, more than 300 expectant parents who receive WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), a federal supplemental nutrition program, will receive a copy of *Reading Magic*.

Families are invited to read the book, write their names in the inside cover, and then "pass it along" to friends or family. We love the idea that these little books carry "reading magic" from one family to the next, all across our community!

Reading aloud to our children from birth is packed with power and goodness. We know it provides a strong foundation, not just for reading readiness, but also for learning readiness. It's that kind of power that we hope Pass Along Reading Magic will spark for some of our community's most important families.

"Experts tell us that children need to hear a thousand stories read aloud before they begin to read for themselves. A thousand! That sounds daunting. Yet, three stories a day will deliver a thousand stories in one year alone, let alone in the four or five prior to school." —Mem Fox

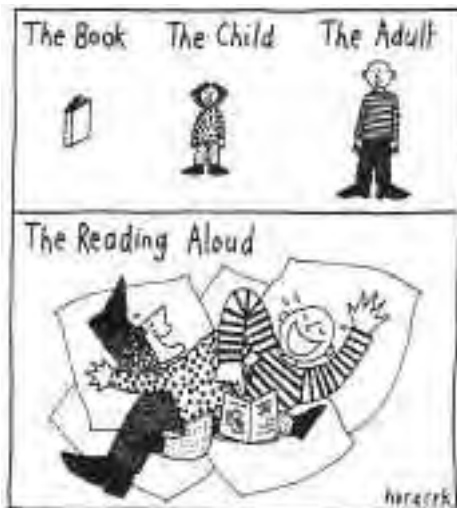


Illustration by Judy Horacek, from *Reading Magic*, by Mem Fox.

Celebrating a Decade of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* for New Babies

Even before the Family Reading Partnership was officially launched as an organization, the vision for promoting family reading with a gift book at birth captured our imagination. That vision quickly became reality when the Tompkins Trust Company recognized it as a great investment in our community and agreed to sponsor the project. Cayuga Medical Center quickly joined in as the perfect avenue to reach new families.

We are especially grateful to Tompkins Trust Company for believing in and continuing to invest in this program from the very beginning. Now for an entire decade we have welcomed new babies into our community with their very own copy of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. That is more than 7,500 babies that have begun life with this new book! The special gift book continues today to carry the same clear message: books and babies belong together, and it is never too early to read to your baby.

Books at Birth is our special local tradition and one we have shared with many other communities. It continues to draw attention across the state and has become a model adopted in Cortland and Chemung Valley, and as far away as California.

The impact of Books at Birth is still significant and greatly appreciated 10 years later. This June, a contingent of families and friends celebrated the 10 years of this wonderful program by marching with our very big, Very Hungry Caterpillar in the Ithaca Festival Parade.

With clear familiarity and affection for the book, the exuberant crowds along the parade route joined in the chorus, "...but he was still hungry!" as a volunteer read the book aloud.

Like babies and caterpillars, all living things grow and experience transformation. Our hope is that Books at Birth, and all of our programs, will help babies grow up and be transformed into readers!



With banner in hand, FRP member Sam Christensen is ready to march with the Very Hungry Caterpillar in the Ithaca Festival Parade. Sam has been a dedicated supporter who has donated money he saved to help make sure all children have books.

2006 CALENDAR AND BANNERS
Read to Me... My Story is Just Beginning!"

ALIKI



TEDD ARNOLD



SUZANNE BLOOM



SANDRA BOYNTON



MARC BROWN



NANCY CARLSON



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MAX GROVER



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MARY MURPHY



TODD PARR



ROSEMARY WELLS



Special thanks to this wonderful group of nationally renowned author/illustrators for sharing your art!

Enjoy images in color on our website www.familyreading.org

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Kids' Book Fest 2005

November 12, 10am-4pm

Boynton Middle School

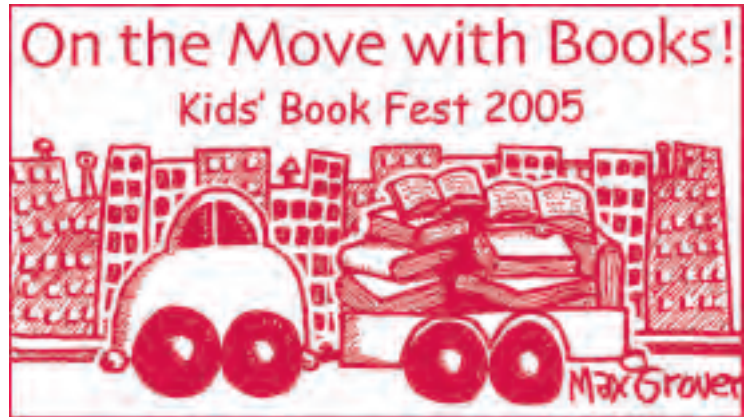
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- Local authors, with special guests Suzanne Bloom (author of *The Bus for Us*) and Tedd Arnold
- Interactive book settings
- Story readings and performances
- Creative bookmaking and art activities
- Books, calendars and food for sale
- As always, admission is free!



Read to Me through the year with FRP's **2006 calendar** that features the illustrations of nationally known artists. **On sale at these locations:**

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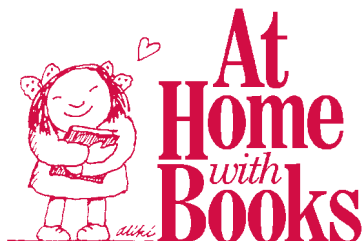


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