



Ocean County Library 2009-2010

Coretta Scott King Book Awards 40th Anniversary Celebration

Activities in the Library

Thursday, Oct 8 – Sharon Draper author visits

- Toms River Intermediate schools North, coordinated with TR Schools Intermediate Reading Supervisor Christy Downs & Media Specialist Susan Milo, Judy Macaluso, Julie Tozer
- Evening program for public at Toms River branch, coordinated with Susan Quinn, Judy Macaluso, Elise Weber, OCL Public Relations Dept, OCL Foundation

Monday, Nov 2 – Floyd Cooper illustrator presentation

- Lakewood branch for public, coordinated with Zarita Mattox, Tina Andrews, Terri Heebner, Scott Rodas, Elise Weber

Friday, Nov 13 – Gregory Christie illustrator presentations

- Berkeley branch for elementary school students, coordinated with Kathy Erikson, Joanne Grandits, Amy Abella, Elise Weber, Berkeley school district
- Barnegat branch for elementary school students, coordinated with Lisa Taylor, Gigi Hayes, Elise Weber, Barnegat school district

Tuesday, Jan 12, 2010 – Wade & Cheryl Hudson of Just Us Books publishers

- Program for educators and staff at Toms River branch, coordinated with Judy Macaluso, Elise Weber

Thursday, Jan 21, 2010 – Gregory Christie illustrator presentation

- Program for public at Lakewood branch, coordinated with Zarita Mattox, Terri Heebner, Kristen Kirk
- Program at Toms River branch for public, coordinated with Elise Weber

Activities Outside the Library

Oct 20 – Ocean County Reading Council – Integrating Coretta Scott King award & honor books into the curriculum, for elementary and middle/high students; presenters: Priscilla Cordero, Kristen Kirk, Suzanne Maley, Julie Tozer, coordinated by Elise Weber

Jan 21, 2010 – Ocean County Academy of Teaching & Learning – Integrating Coretta Scott King award & honor books into the curriculum, two sessions: elementary and middle/high school; presenters: Priscilla Cordero, Kristen Kirk, Julie Tozer, coordinated by Elise Weber

Jan 30, 2010 – National Association for the Education of Young Children, Ocean County Affiliate winter conference – Understanding Diversity through Literature; presenter: Elise Weber

The Ocean County Library planned and hosted an extensive six month celebration of the Coretta Scott King Book Awards. The celebration was funded through a community grant from the OceanFirst Foundation, the Ocean County Library Foundation and the Ocean County Library. The activities included author/illustrator visits, workshops, discussions and displays and more. The library worked with numerous organizations in the community to plan and execute many worthwhile activities for the benefit of all.

The desired outcomes for the celebration were to celebrate outstanding African American authors and illustrators, bring awareness to the awards and books, encourage the inclusion of diverse materials in the classroom, strengthen the library's relationships with community organizations and of course promote books and reading!

The celebration could not have been so successful and so far reaching without the efforts of so many partners. They were integral to planning and promoting the entire initiative. Community partners included: The N.A.A.C.P. of Toms River, Black Caucus of the American Library Association – New Jersey Chapter, The Ocean County Reading Council, Georgian Court University, the New Jersey Library Association, Ocean County College, N.J. Black Cultural & Heritage Initiative Foundation & the Toms River Schools.

Our celebration kickoff featured author Sharon Draper on October 8th. In advance, Toms River Teen Services staff worked with the Toms River Schools and community groups to have the author's books read in advance. Toms River Schools financially supported the author event and a portion of the book purchases. Books were distributed to students at the Toms River Intermediate North School and youth at both Winteringham Village and South Toms River Discovery Place. Students read Copper Sun & The Battle of Jericho by Draper. Sharon met with over 80 students at the school in the afternoon and with the public in the evening at reception & presentation. Both events were wonderful success!

Illustrator Gregory Christie was hosted by the Berkeley & Barnegat branches in November. Elementary school students from nearby schools and their teachers walked to the library to meet Gregory and participate in activities about art, music & writing. The presentations were truly inspirational to students

and teachers alike. In fact, two teachers from the Berkeley School District travelled to Brooklyn the following weekend to attend his gallery show and reception. "He was absolutely delightful and the kids adored him! Gregory was upbeat, friendly, talented, warm and inspirational." Gregory will also be hosted by the Toms River Branch in late January 2010.

Bringing Coretta Scott King award winners to the library truly inspired the young people that read books in advance and then were able to meet the authors/illustrators. Illustrator Floyd Cooper was no exception. Floyd was hosted by the Lakewood branch in November for a public program that was well received by young and old alike.

The celebration extended to our all of our branches with materials displays and the inclusion of Coretta Scott King award winning books featured at storytimes, incorporated into activities and used for book discussions. Attractive "I Read a Coretta Scott King Book" stickers for children were produced by OCL's Printing and Graphics for use by youth librarians at events.

A very important component of the celebration was for the library to reach beyond its walls out to the community – most especially educators. Library staff prepared dynamic presentations about the Coretta Scott King Book Awards for the Ocean County Reading Council Fall Conference @ Georgian Court University. Upcoming workshops include the South Jersey Academy Conference @ OCC and the National Association for the Education of Young Children Winter Conference - Ocean County Affiliate in Toms River. Not only did our staff benefit by increasing their knowledge in preparation, but by sharing this with educators from across the county. Library staff will also be presenting CSK workshops in our library branches for educators as part of the "OCL 2010 Professional Development for Educators Workshop" series.

We were very fortunate to have a Dr Kathy Frieriep as a strong connection at Georgian Court University. Dr Frieriep is faculty in the education department and advisor to the de La Salle Club (future teachers) at the University. Dr. Frieriep arranged for book displays in the university library and education students having assignments about the history of the awards as well as reading the books. As future teachers their exposure to African American Literature will truly prepare them to serve in tomorrow's classroom.

As educators have such an impact on so many young people we thought it important to offer an additional workshop for professional development credit entitled "Developing a Curriculum of Diversity" given by Wade & Cheryl Hudson founders of Just Us Books, a recognized leader in multicultural publishing. Wade & Cheryl spoke passionately about the "inclusion" of multicultural literature in every classroom to support cultural understanding in our increasingly diverse world.

We were most proud to have as a partner the New Jersey Library Association who gave the first award at their May 1970 dinner gala of the association when Lillie Patterson was honored for her biography, Martin Luther King, Jr. Man of Peace.

The value of our celebration can best be expressed by those that participated. Here are some of the comments and evaluations:

“Wonderful program” & “Have more like this”

“Most students did know about or had not read a Coretta Scott King Book and would like to read more in the future”

“Students were more interested in reading the books because they were going to meet the author” and “would like to meet more authors in the future”.

“The kids were engaged throughout the entire presentation. He was wonderful and we were so lucky to have him. The fifth graders were enthralled and he got rave reviews all around! Great cultural connections for our students.” (Gregory Christie)

“Readers of Copper Sun – overwhelmingly “Felt emotional at times because of the story” and “felt they understood history better after reading Copper Sun”

Our celebration could not have been so successful if it were not for the resources that were made available through the American Library Association’s Coretta Scott King Celebration website.

As the celebration draws to a close with its final activities, one thing is obvious – the celebration is not ending, but continues in our library and community with all the “seeds” that have been planted about the beauty of African American literature, heritage and culture and the need for the inclusion of all cultures in all that we do at the Ocean County Library.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the many staff members who contributed ideas and support for this celebration; the success is directly a result of everyone’s enthusiasm for this project. The original planning group for the Coretta Scott King Book Award celebration was: Pham Condello – Brick branch; Freda Lehman – Jackson branch; Tina Andrews, Terri Heebner, Zarita Mattox – Lakewood branch; Julie Tozer, Judy Macaluso, Sandy Eckert, Suzanne Maley, Elise Weber – Toms River branch; Sally Harrison – Waretown branch; Christina Estlow and Sabrina LaSpata – Manchester branch. The support of Ocean County Library Administration, Heather Andolsen, Scott Rodas, Public Relations, and Printing and Graphics was essential and extremely valuable.

Community members were also vital and included Oscar Creadle & Tanya Mosely – South Toms River Discovery Place; Nancy Seibert – Winteringham Village; Bahiyah Abdullah, President – NAACP – TR Branch; Grace Johnson, Office of Multicultural Services – OCC; Dr. Kathy Frieriep – Education Faculty & Advisor de la Salle Club - Georgian Court University; The Ocean County Reading Council and it’s membership; Trevor Dawes & Nicole Cooke – Officers of BCALA-NJ; Pat Tumulty – President NJLA

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