



Celebrating 25 Years in Idaho Libraries 1985-2010

2010 Idaho Let's Talk About It Report

Prepared by Betty Hoffman
Idaho Commission for Libraries
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The Idaho Humanities Council and the Idaho Commission for Libraries have been bringing Let's Talk About It reading and discussion programs to communities in Idaho for 25 years. The Let's Talk About It project brings together humanities scholars and adult readers in public libraries to read and discuss literature that explores a variety of topics. During calendar year 2010 the Idaho Commission for Libraries coordinated 89 reading and discussion program series. Total reported attendance for 2010 was 1,168. A total of 43 program scholars from Idaho colleges and universities participated (including a few non-affiliated presenters). Let's Talk About It continues to bring humanities programs to Idahoans and enhances public libraries' visibility in their communities.

Below is a summary of programs for Winter/Spring 2010 and Fall 2010.

Winter/Spring 2010 Programs (see attached program schedule)

10 series / 42 programs / 6 themes

Total attendance reported: 627

Blackfoot Public Library

Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Attendance: 96

Hailey Public Library

Theme: Not for Children Only

Attendance: 26 for 2 programs in Winter 2010 (3 programs were held in Spring 2009)

Kimberly Public Library

Theme: Our Earth, Our Ethics

Attendance: 81

Larsen Sant Public Library, Preston

Theme: We Are What We Eat

Attendance: 76

Lewiston City Library

Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Attendance: 73



Lizard Butte Library, Marsing

Theme: American Characters

Attendance: 14 for 2 programs in Winter 2010
(3 programs were held in Spring 2009)



McCall Public Library

Theme: We Are What We Eat

Attendance: 97

Meridian Public Library, Silverstone Branch /Ada Community Library

Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Attendance: 36

Salmon Public Library

Theme: Across Cultures and Continents

Attendance: 86

Stanley Community Library

Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Attendance: 42 for 3 programs in Winter 2010 (2 programs were held in Spring 2009)

Fall 2010 Programs (see attached program schedule)

10 series/47 programs /8 themes (some programs in the series will be completed in Winter 2011)

Total attendance reported: 541 (through December 2010)

American Falls District Library

Theme: We Are What We Eat

Attendance: 56

Boundary County District Library, Bonners Ferry

Theme: Across Cultures and Continents

Attendance: 37

Cambridge Community Library

Theme: Tough Paradise: Literature of Idaho and the Intermountain West

Attendance: 69

Gooding Public Library

Theme: Not for Children Only

Attendance: 38

Idaho Falls Public Library

Theme: Our Earth, Our Ethics

Attendance: 82

Patricia Romanko Public Library, Parma

Theme: Tough Paradise: Literature of Idaho and the Intermountain West

Attendance: 34

Sherburn Smith Memorial Library, Wendell

Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Attendance: 62

Stanley Community Library

Theme: We Are What We Eat

Attendance: 28 for 2 programs in fall 2010 (3 programs will be held in winter 2011)

Twin Falls Public Library

Theme: Other Americas

Attendance: 36

Weiser Public Library

Theme: Growing Older, Growing Wiser

Attendance: 99



Program Scholars – 2010

Louise Ackley, Boise
Jennifer Black, Boise State University
Mary Blew, University of Idaho
Jan Carpenter, College of Southern Idaho
Paula Coomer, Clarkston, WA
Dustin Crawford, Utah State University
Megan Dixon, College of Idaho
Julie Fanselow, Boise
Alicia Garza, Boise State University
Chuck Guilford, Boise State University
Steven Hall, Idaho State University
Matthew Haynes, College of Western Idaho
Heike Henderson, Boise State University
Dan Hunt, Idaho State University
Alan Johnson, Idaho State University
Bill Johnson, Lewis Clark State College
Margaret Johnson, Idaho State University
Tom Klein, Idaho State University
Scott Knickerbocker, College of Idaho
Leslie Leek, Idaho State University
Helen Lojek, Boise State University
Kim Madsen, College of Southern Idaho

Shelley McEuen, College of Southern Idaho
Ron McFarland, University of Idaho
Barbara Meldrum, University of Idaho
Jette Morache, College of Southern Idaho
Dave Nicholas, College of Western Idaho
Sue Norton, Boise
Susan Nyikos, Utah State University
Jacky O'Connor, Boise State University
Lezlie Park, Utah State University
Diane Josephy Peavey, Hailey
Tara Penry, Boise State University
Brenda Pettinger, Boise State University
Margaret Pettis, Hyrum, UT
Dora Ramirez-Dhoore, Boise State University
Scott Samuelson, BYU-Idaho
Susan Swetnam, Idaho State University
Edward "Mac" Test, Boise State University
Georgia Tiffany, Moscow
Misty Urban, Lewis Clark State College
Scott Weaver, College of Western Idaho
Laura Zuckerman, Salmon

Selected comments from 2010 programs:

American Falls District Library / Fall 2010 / Theme: We Are What We Eat

Many participants commented that they enjoyed reading books they wouldn't have picked out on their own. All of the scholars were very good and encouraged participation of all participants. [Librarian]

It was great to see the keen interest in reading good books! I learned a lot about how these community members can bring so much to the interpretation of texts, providing fresh perspective. [Scholar]



One of the male participants did volunteer a comment – apparently the first time in the whole series, so that was nice moment. [Scholar]

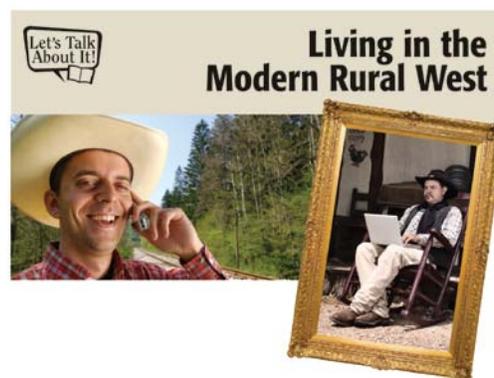
Our group used the books on tape along with written – a wonderful way to share and enjoy the book club. [Participant]

Blackfoot Public Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

LTAI helps us meet our goal to provide worthwhile and interesting programming for the readers, adults in particular. Our participants included people who seldom or never visit the library. We had family members who became patrons as they support participants. [Librarian]

The book had content that some people found hard, so I opened the conversation to allow for their criticism. It put people at ease and we were able to have a good talk. [Scholar]

I see my role as discussion leader – I throw out some ideas and the readers take off with them and add their insights. I learn more about the novel and life in general. These are serious, intelligent readers. [Scholar]



I enjoy reading, and this program gives me the motivation to read something that I probably wouldn't choose on my own. [Participant]

The speakers were fabulous discussion leaders. [Participant]

Boundary County District Library, Bonners Ferry / Fall 2010 / Theme: Across Cultures and Continents

Along with the gratitude of the participants for the opportunity, the LTAI project allowed us to showcase our own collection. The display developed for the project included a wide variety of books – fiction and non-fiction – that was well used during the program by participants and others using the library. As a collaborative effort, it was beneficial in raising general awareness of the broad range of library resources and services available to county residents. [Librarian]



I gained a far better understanding of the different regions and cultures. The programs got me to read books outside my usual range of interests, and I will continue to look for new perspectives in my future reading. [Participant]

The group was enthusiastic, compassionate. Super, super group! Every member participated and expressed so much gratefulness for this program. They stayed afterwards for about 30 minutes still seated, still discussing, even after my final comments. [Scholar]

Cambridge Community Library / Fall 2010 / Theme: Tough Paradise

The library benefited by bringing in some new patrons or people who had not used the library recently. We also had participation from patrons of the neighboring library. The discussions with the scholars brought very positive feedback. The group has had little opportunity to meet with such excellent scholars. [Librarian]

The audience found the book and subject matter very difficult to understand. They said I should have spoken to them before they read the book. [Scholar]

I enjoy our book club group and really enjoyed having guest speakers, which made it much nicer and a better discussion on the books. [Participant]

Gooding Public Library / Fall 2010 / Theme: Not for Children Only

Our library benefited because we were able to start a book club for adults, more books were checked out and we had a new patron sign up for a library card. We have also had participants donate books to our library and for our new book clubs (child and adult). [Librarian]

We talked about the ways books can give us tools to deal with hard times and to know that we aren't alone in the problems we face. [Scholar]



The speaker/presenter was great! She obviously did her "homework" on a biography of the authors and knew how to listen and steer the discussion. [Participant]

Hailey Public Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Not for Children Only

The participants were able to talk about subjects that are sensitive in our society. They had differences of opinion but were respectful of each other. [Librarian]

This experience deepened my appreciation for a book I loved in childhood, and it has inspired me to write a scholarly article on it. [Scholar]

I love the visiting scholars and the information they share with us and the questions they pose to keep the discussion rolling. [Participant]

The facilitators have been great and the discussions lively!! [Participant]

Idaho Falls Public Library / Fall 2010 / Theme: Our Earth, Our Ethics

Participants read books that were new to them, read authors that were new to them and were exposed to thinking that was new and sometimes different from their own. They may not have changed their mind on certain topics, but have at least been exposed to a different point of view. [Librarian]



The group members were intelligent, experienced readers and could and did see “meaning to the human experience.” As we discussed some of the themes and author’s observations and motivations, they revealed understanding of connections to their lives. [Scholar]

Professionally, I find it an invaluable experience to gain hands-on experience with a public humanities program. Personally, I thoroughly enjoy discussing themes and issues relevant to the “Our Earth, Our Ethics” book list. [Scholar]

Kimberly Public Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Our Earth, Our Ethics

I enjoy meeting other readers and hearing their ideas. It’s a good reminder of some ways others think in different ways and, on the other hand, the ways we are similar. [Scholar]

This program allows me to read and have the opportunity to talk about and understand books I wouldn’t normally read. I also find it fun! [Participant]

Larsen Sant Public Library, Preston / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: We Are What We Eat

Many good comments were made about the discussion leaders. They were some of the best! Thank you! [Librarian]

I adore the book [*Chocolat* by Joanne Harris] and participating in a discussion outside of academia about the issues was enlightening and invigorating. Their life experiences were diverse and far more substantial than my usual twenty-something students’. [Scholar]

I love to read and I love the discussions. It’s good to think! [Participant]

I didn’t “love” all the books, but the discussions were still excellent. [Participant]

Lewiston City Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Our participants loved the programs! One new participant exclaimed that LTAI had “changed her life!” She so related to some of the western stories, especially the stories in *Home Mountains*. Others remarked that they just like to hear a different point of view than their own. [Librarian]



When I teach a class I think that I must pass on some information that my students need and that I must have something perceptive to say. In an odd way, I've found it is important not to proceed in that manner with LTAI, even though I must be prepared to proceed that way if called upon. So LTAI is easier and more pleasant for me, especially when the group really gets into it, as this one did. [Scholar]

Lizard Butte District Library, Marsing / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: American Characters

We don't have a lot of programming for adults, so this was a nice addition. Because of the added benefit of the scholar it adds a lot to the experience of a book club. [Librarian]

I found this particular discussion very uplifting and nourishing. It was wonderful to have such a rich discussion with committed readers. I felt renewed energy for going back to my job, working with (often less committed) college students. [Scholar]



McCall Public Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: We Are What We Eat

The McCall Arts & Humanities Council (MAHC) made LTAI a part of its "Cabin Fever Series." The partnership was very successful because the MAHC and the library share many common goals. The MAHC wants to add to their humanities programs, and our library fit that need. Our library needed the matching funds and the added exposure and legitimacy MAHC brings with it. [Librarian]

Book discussions like this one are very energizing for me. It gave me an opportunity to read a book that is outside my field. This required me to reflect differently about what I had read. Also, the audience is different from students in the classroom. [Scholar]

The participants were a remarkable, lively, well-read and well-informed group. [Scholar]

I love to hear/share all the different perspectives from friends and neighbors. It was an opportunity to read books I would not necessarily choose or be exposed to. [Participant]

I enjoy hearing what the scholars have to say as they tend to be more familiar with the books. The citizen readers are enjoyable also as they bring perspectives that are so personal rather than based in academic knowledge. [Participant]

Patricia Romanko Public Library, Parma / Fall 2010 / Theme: Tough Paradise



Because of the region in which our library is located, many of our group members had anecdotal comments and/or information to share, plus recommendations for other reading matter on the theme. [Librarian]

The open format worked very well. I was apprehensive about it at first – the great unknown – but everyone was willing to talk and share opinions and thoughts. [Scholar]

Silverstone Branch, Meridian District & Ada Community Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

As a relatively new library, it was wonderful for us to be able to cooperate with Ada Community to let people know that we were right down the road and provided full library services, including adult reading programs! Besides making us more visible in the community, it gave us an opportunity to get to know more people in the area, particularly the scholar and the Ada Community staff, as well as learn ways in which we can work together in the future. [Librarian]

I love LTAI for introducing me to new people, communities, books – in this case, a new bookstore (community partner, Rediscovered Bookstore) which I had never visited. [Scholar]

It is wonderful to hear other readers' ideas, which expands my rather literal reading of books. [Participant]

Discussions are so enlightening and bring out so many ideas I don't think of on my own. [Participant]

Salmon Public Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Across Cultures and Continents



Our loyal LTAI participants eat up this program! They take it very seriously. In fact, they helped pick the topic we chose this year. They insist we try for the program next year. They think of participating as a regular part of their winter activities! [Librarian]

There are few more fulfilling encounters than watching literature bring to life the mind, generating new thoughts, sparking new insights, all of which this program achieves for the scholar and for the audience. [Scholar]

The book selection this year was exceptional – creative, life experiences, depth, original and exceptional writing. [Participant]

I like the intelligent conversations among people who share common interests including book reading, but have diverse backgrounds and viewpoints. [Participant]

Sherburn Smith Memorial (Wendell Public Library) / Fall 2010 / Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

Patrons were thrilled to have this opportunity in our community. At the last discussion patrons were asking, "What are we going to do now?" [Librarian]

The library gained a higher profile in the community because it involved so many in the program, and the advertising we did in the local newspaper let the community know that good things were happening at the library (it let some people know we have a library). [Librarian]

Stanley Community Library / Winter-Spring 2010 / Theme: Living in the Modern Rural West

New members of the community were made to feel welcomed to Stanley (this doesn't always happen) and were delighted to discover our collection. Our participants are always so appreciative of cultural and educational gatherings, and love participating in intellectually stimulating conversation. [Librarian]

The participants discussed what it meant to be a rural Westerner with intelligence and open-mindedness, as well as touching on the books specific themes. [Scholar]

I enjoy reading and feel that I can get more out of a book by hearing what others have to say about it. Also, I need to be more social. [Participant]

Twin Falls Public Library / Fall 2010 / Theme: Other Americas

As the participants met with others who had read the same book, it fostered a feeling of community. Several participants have remarked that the discussion was their favorite part of the program, especially when it is with others who've read the same thing. The best part is opening the participants' eyes to something they may never have thought to read. One patron said that if we hadn't read it for this series, she never would have picked it up. [Librarian]

These sessions enrich me with new connections and in-depth discussions. [Scholar]

I have absolutely loved the book selections. They've led to great discussions. [Participant]

I enjoyed hearing other points of view and liked that an outside person facilitated the discussion. [Participant]

Weiser Public Library / Fall 2010 / Theme: Growing Older, Growing Wiser

The library benefited from the program because it brought in new patrons. [Librarian]

Preparing programs keeps me active in my teaching/researching skills. I am always appreciative of the readers I meet and their enthusiasm for books, even when they don't like the particular book we're discussing. [Scholar]

Wonderful exchange of thoughts and perspectives. [Participant]

I enjoyed reading the books and hearing the different ideas people discussed. The subject matter was applicable to my life. [Participant]

Great discussion leaders! [Participant]



2010 Winter Statewide Schedule Let's Talk About It Program

Blackfoot Public Library

Living in the Modern Rural West

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

January 13 *Bitterbrush Country*

January 27 *Close Range*

February 10 *Snow Falling on Cedars*

February 24 *Home Mountains*

March 10 *Traplins*

Hailey Public Library

Not For Children Only

Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

January 19 *Charlotte's Web*

February 16 *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

Kimberly Public Library

Our Earth, Our Ethics

Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

January 28 *Desert Solitaire*

February 11 *Indian Creek Chronicles*

February 25 *Who Owns the West*

March 11 *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

March 25 *Prodigal Summer*

Larsen Sant Public Library, Preston

We Are What We Eat

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

January 27 *Choice Cuts*

February 10 *Climbing the Mango Tree*

February 24 *Language of Baklava*

March 10 *The Tummy Trilogy*

March 24 *Chocolat*

Lewiston City Library

Living in the Modern Rural West

Tuesdays at 6:45 p.m.

January 12 *Bitterbrush Country*

January 26 *Close Range: Wyoming Stories*

February 9 *Home Mountains*

February 23 *Snow Falling on Cedars*

March 9 *Traplins*

Lizard Butte District Library, Marsing

American Characters

Mondays at 7 p.m.

January 11 *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

February 8 *Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*

McCall Public Library

We Are What We Eat

Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

January 12 *Chocolat*

January 26 *Choice Cuts*

February 9 *Climbing the Mango Tree*

February 23 *Language of Baklava*

March 9 *Mistress of Spices*

Silverstone Branch, Meridian District Library &

Ada Community Library

Living in the Modern Rural West

Sat at 10:30 am / January 30 / *Traplins*

Sat at 10:30 am / February 13 /

Close Range

Sat at 10:30 am / February 27 /

Sky Fisherman

Thurs at 7 pm / March 11 / *In the Wilderness*

Thurs at 7 pm / March 25 / *Home Mountains*

Salmon Public Library

Across Cultures and Continents

Thursdays 7p.m.

January 14 *Eva Luna*

January 28 *Balzac & the Little Chinese Seamstress*

February 18 *Kite Runner*

March 11 *Waiting for Snow in Havana*

April 8 *The Space Between Us*

Stanley Community Library

Living in the Modern Rural West

Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

January 25 *Home Mountains*

February 22 *The Sky Fisherman*

March 22 *Winter Range*

2010 Fall Statewide Schedule Let's Talk About It Program

American Falls District Library

We Are What We Eat

Tuesdays @ 7:00pm

September 14 - *Language of Baklava*
September 28 - *Mistress of Spices*
October 12 - *Chocolat*
October 26 - *Climbing the Mango Tree*
November 9 - *We Are What We Eat*

Boundary County District Library

Across Cultures & Continents

Saturdays @ 1:00pm

October 2 - *Eva Luna*
October 16 - *Graceland*
October 30 - *The Space Between Us*
November 6 - *The Kite Runner*
November 20 - *Waiting for Snow in Havana*

Cambridge Community Library

Tough Paradise

Wednesdays @ 11:00am

June 2 - *Lives of the Saints in SW Idaho*
July 7 - *Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West*
August 4 - *Home Below Hell's Canyon*
September 1 - *Mountain Man*
October 6 - *Myths of the Idaho Indians*

Gooding Public Library

Not for Children Only

Tuesdays @ 6:00pm

September 14 - *The Classic Fairy Tales*
September 28 - *Little Women*
October 12 - *Charlotte's Web*
November 2 - *Bridge to Terabithia*
November 16 - *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

Idaho Falls Public Library

Our Earth, Our Ethics

Mondays @ 7:00pm

September 20 - *Desert Solitaire*
October 4 - *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*
October 18 - *Indian Creek Chronicles*
November 1 - *Prodigal Summer*
November 15 - *Botany of Desire*

Patricia Romanko Public Library, Parma

Tough Paradise

Saturdays @ 1:00pm

September 11 - *Buffalo Coat*
September 25 - *Mountain Man*
October 9 - *Home Beyond Hell's Canyon*
Nov 6 - *A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West*
Nov 13 - *Where the Morning Light's Still Blue*

Sherburn Smith Memorial Library, Wendell

Living in the Modern Rural West

Mondays @ 5:30pm

September 13 - *The Sky Fisherman*
September 27 - *Close Range*
October 11 - *Bitterbrush Country*
October 25 - *Home Mountains*
November 8 - *Traplins*

Stanley Community Library

We Are What We Eat

Mondays @ 5:30pm

October 25 - *Language of Baklava*
November 22 - *Mistress of Spices*

Twin Falls Public Library

Other Americas

Wednesdays @ 6:00pm

September 22 - *Like Water for Chocolate*
October 6 - *Love Medicine*
October 20 - *Woman Hollering Creek*
November 3 - *Ceremony*
November 17 - *Invisible Man*

Weiser Public Library

Growing Older, Growing Wiser

Wednesdays @ 3:00pm

September 1 - *Balsamroot: A Memoir*
September 22 - *Crossing to Safety*
October 13 - *Having Our Say*
November 3 - *The Stone Angel*
December 1 - *Tuesdays with Morrie*