

Nampa Public Library's 'Super Saturdays' Expand Thanks to Wal-Mart Grant

The **Nampa Public Library** recognized that the demographics of families living in Canyon County had changed significantly over the past several years. The county has a high percentage of children living in single-parent households and 65 percent of the children live in households where both parents work. They have also experienced an 80 percent increase in the number of children being raised by grandparents or other relatives. These needs prompted an effort to make more programming available on Saturdays when more working families could attend. NPL staff were also focused on creating programs that would help bridge the gap between generations. The receipt of the \$2,000 Wal-Mart grant allowed them to fulfill their vision.



The library had created a Super Saturday program with the support of a grant in 2008, but it was slated to end and they knew that they needed to find a way to continue to meet the needs of their patrons and expand the offerings. For their new series of Saturday programs, they drew on past experience and included the most successful type of literacy programs as shown by past attendance and surveys.

The programs were open to all ages and included family storytimes, Wii gaming tournaments, special programs by local presenters in science and history, and adult book discussions. They also had a special program called "Reading Tails" where children read to a trained 'listener' dog. Through the 23 programs offered they were able to reach approximately 830 people during the grant period.

In order to assess the impact of the program the library conducted surveys during several offerings. 80 percent of the respondents ranked the Saturday programming as "very convenient" for them. 73 percent of the respondents rated two of the programs - Railroad Family Storytime and Fairy and the Elf Pixie Party – as "excellent."

Camille Wood, project coordinator, wrote: "Overall the need for youth programs offered at a time when families and caregivers of all ages and generations could attend with children was successfully met with this project." She continued, "Good attendance and very favorable comments by participants validates both the need for, and appreciation of these programs."



The Nampa Library Foundation has raised funds to support the bi-monthly Saturday Family Storytimes and a special monthly program through the end of December 2010 with the potential for additional support in 2011.