

## NEWS RELEASE

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## Idaho Commission for Libraries expands summer Literacy in the Park program

BOISE, Idaho — Literacy in the Park, a summer learning initiative the Idaho Commission for Libraries introduced last year, is in full swing once again, offering kids storytime, activities, and books to borrow from traveling lending libraries.

The effort runs through Aug. 8, and this year ICfL has expanded it beyond Boise and Garden City to include Burley, Caldwell, Jerome, Lewiston, Nampa, Shoshone, and other Idaho communities. Piggybacking on the Idaho Foodbank's Picnic in the Park initiative and the Idaho Department of Education's Summer Food Service Program, ICfL and participating libraries stage Literacy in the Park events weekly at numerous summer-feeding locations. However, Literacy in the Park is open to all children in the community.

ICfL's traveling lending libraries, which they've dubbed "Little Libraries," are large plastic bins filled with a variety of books of interest to children 1-18 years old. They offer a generous read-and-return process, where kids can borrow a book for as long as they want and return it to any Literacy in the Park location and choose another one.

The Commission secured 10 AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) Summer Associates to help librarians and community volunteers conduct the summer learning efforts throughout the state.

According to State Librarian Ann Joslin, last year's pilot project was quite successful. "Parents and children really enjoyed the activities and the books, and there's solid evidence the program caused a sizable number of kids to read more compared to previous summers," she said. "They work hard to become better readers over the school year, and it's important those gains aren't squandered. Children who read six or more books over the summer hang onto their reading skills better than those who don't."

The Literacy in the Park schedule for Boise and Garden City is:

- Mondays — Veteran's Park (930 N. Veterans Memorial Parkway) from 12:15-1:30 p.m., Sunset Park (2625 N. 32nd St.) from 11:15-11:45 a.m., Owyhee Park (3400 W. Elder St.) from 11:30 a.m. to noon, Oak Park Village Apartments (2888 Cherry Lane) from 12:45-1:15 p.m., Cassia Park (4600 W. Camas St.) from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.), Phillippi Park (2299 S. Phillippi St.) from 12:15-1:15 p.m., and River Pointe Park (6125 River Pointe Dr., behind Garden City Library) from 11-11:30 a.m.)
- Tuesdays — Borah Park (801 S. Aurora Dr.) from 1-1:30 p.m., Liberty Park (520 N. Liberty St.) from 12-12:30 p.m., Mountain View Park (7006 W. Ustick Rd.) from 11:30 a.m. to noon, Latah Village Apartments (3905 Alpine St.) from 11-11:30 a.m., and Valley View Elementary (3555 N. Milwaukee) from 12:15 -12:45 p.m.

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- Wednesdays — Ivywild Park (416 W. Ivywild St.) from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Redwood Park (2675 N. Shamrock) from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Northwest Pointe Apartments (3475 N. Five Mile) from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., Wylie St. Station Apartments (4683 Wylie Lane) from 12:15-12:45 p.m., and Pierce Park School (5015 N. Pierce Park Lane) from 12:45 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.
- Thursdays — Manitou Park (2001 S. Manitou Ave.) from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., Fairview Crossing Apartments (8519 W. Fairview Ave.) from 12-12:30 p.m., Mystic Cove Park (4750 W. Mystic Cove Way) from 1-1:30 p.m., Waterfront Park (308 E. 36th St., next to Learning Lab) from 11:30 a.m. to noon, and Pioneer Square Apartments (1220 Grand Ave.) from 12:30-1 p.m.
- Fridays — Winstead Park (6150 W. Northview St.) from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Davis Park Apartments (970 N. 29th St.) from 12:45-1:15 p.m., and Elm Grove Park (2200 W. Irene St.) from 12-12:30 p.m.

The Hidden Springs Branch of Ada Community Libraries is hosting its Picnic in the Park event at noon every Monday through July 21. Participants are invited to bring their own lunch and join in storytime and other activities and check out books from their Little Library. Kids can choose a book to keep the last two weeks.

The Nampa Public Library is conducting its Literacy in the Park program every weekday through Aug. 8 except July 4. The schedule for the effort, which piggybacks on Oasis Food Center's Summer Feeding Program, is:

- Mondays — Lakeview Park (1304 7th St. N.) at 11:45 a.m.
- Tuesdays — Liberty Park (600 Constitution Way) at 12:15 p.m.
- Wednesdays — Lions Park (409 Lyons Dr.) at 12:30 p.m.
- Thursdays — West Park (27 S. Park Dr.) at 12:20 p.m.
- Fridays (except July 4) — Mary Ellen's Meadows Park (714 W. Iowa Ave.) at 11:45 p.m.

The Caldwell Public Library is also staging Literacy in the Park events twice a week through Aug. 8 that piggyback on the Oasis Summer Feeding Program. The events are held 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays at Sebree Park (the corner of 12th and Grant streets) and Fridays except July 4 at Brother's Athletic Park (4099 S. Indiana Ave.).

Both the Nampa and Caldwell Literacy in the Park events include storytime and related activities, and their Little Libraries include a good collection of Spanish-language books.

For events in other Gem State communities, check your local library's website or Facebook page for details.

The Literacy in the Park project is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The Idaho Commission for Libraries helps libraries build the capacity to better serve their clientele by supporting statewide databases and online resources, continuing education, consulting, programming, early literacy skills, and building library community. Visit [Libraries.Idaho.Gov](http://Libraries.Idaho.Gov) to learn more about ICFL.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Its mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. IMLS grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. Visit [www.imls.gov](http://www.imls.gov) to learn more about the IMLS.

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