

Kids, adults summer reading programs include fun activities

BY MARILYN THOMAS
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Schools are out for the summer, and that's when reading for fun and enjoyment takes over at Homewood and Flossmoor Public Libraries.

But it's not just the kids who have a reading club. Both libraries also has reading clubs for adults.

In addition to the reading club activities and giveaways, the libraries are jointly hosting a musical performance by Nanny Nikki & The Dapper Dudes at 2 p.m. Thursday, June 23, at Irwin Park. Their joyful music will have kids dancing and participating as they sing along to old and new children's tunes. One of the group's songs is on the album "All One Tribe" that was nominated for a Grammy Award.

"We're super excited to get her to come and perform," said Kelly Campos, a youth librarian at Homewood's library. Before the entertainment, librarians from Homewood and Flossmoor will host a mini story hour.

Homewood Public Library

Homewood is using the theme "Camp HPL" for its summer reading program running June 11 through July 23. Readers will be in youth groups up to sixth grade; teens for seventh grade through high school; and adults for anyone over age 18.

Participants can register through the library's website at homewoodlibrary.org. The staff is using Beanstack, an online program that allows readers to register, keep track of their selections, activities and number of book/reading materials completions that earn them badges for points that convert to prizes. There will be activities both at the library and things that can be done at home.

Beanstack was used during the pandemic, and librarians say they decided to keep it in place because it gives readers a chance to keep track online rather than collecting little tickets and other papers.

Campos said there aren't any restrictions on what counts for points. Readers

can register audio books, magazines and graphic novels, in addition to books.

Adults can earn prizes, too. Homewood has had an adult summer reading program for many years, and Campos said, "Interestingly enough, the adults complete at a higher rate. The adults who commit to doing it—they do it."

Librarian Ashley Sander is planning a special night of fun at an Adult Lock-In event at the Homewood Library on Saturday, June 25. Details will be on the library's website.

Flossmoor Public Library

Flossmoor's library staff is running its summer reading program from June 6 through July 31. The program has three levels: babies and toddlers, kids ages 5 through 12, and teens ages 13 to 18. Readers will keep logs and will get incentive prizes along the way, including coupons to local establishments. Registration can be made through the website flossmoorlibrary.org.

Traditional story hour continues, but Librarian Anna Pauls said summer reading adds special activities, including crafts, STEM projects and an escape room event.

Depending on the age group, special prizes for top readers include tickets to Brookfield Zoo, passes to the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District's Splash Pad, a camera and the chance to be a librarian for a day.

Adults who sign up for the adult summer reading program at the Adult Services Desk between June 6 and June 12 will be eligible to win a yearlong membership to the Art Institute.

Read for a Cause

"In addition, we're continuing our Reading for a Cause program," Pauls said. "Every book reported, either on paper or on our Google form, will earn a donation for the South Suburban Humane Society from our Friends of the Flossmoor Library."

Pauls said readers don't need to be Flossmoor residents to participate in the Reading for a Cause program. In past years, she said the program even drew readers from as far away as Florida.

D161 honors two staff members

BY CHRONICLE STAFF

Above and Beyond awards were presented to District 161 staff members Ashley Somer and Wanda Alexander during an April school board meeting. They were nominated by colleagues for outstanding performance.

Somer, an instructional coach at Flossmoor Hills Elementary School, was rec-

ognized for her assistance at Lunch and Learns that offer students additional tips and strategies, along with cookies and brownies.

Alexander, the district's registrar and transportation coordinator, was recognized for her efforts above and beyond a regular work day schedule, and for her efforts at organizing food deliveries to families during the pandemic.



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