



# Reading Is Fundamental

of Northern Virginia

Spring 2012 Newsletter

## A Message From Our President

By Justina Head

I love the springtime. The weather gets warmer, flowers are blooming and everything seems brighter. Such optimism and hope is how I feel about the future of RIF.

I recently attended a RIF conference in Washington, D.C. called "Fundraising is Fundamental." RIF of NOVA was one of 25 programs asked to attend. The participants came from all over the country and it was interesting to hear all about their programs. We spent a few days meeting with RIF staff, talking to our Senators and our Congressman on Capitol Hill and learning the fundamentals of fundraising. What I took away from the conference was the deep commitment everyone has to ensure children continue to receive books. The energy and dedication of the participants was apparent and it makes me hopeful that RIF and RIF of NOVA have a bright future.

Once again Macy's and RIF are teaming up this summer for a fabulous literacy event. The "Be Book Smart" campaign begins June 22<sup>nd</sup> and goes through July 31<sup>st</sup>. When you shop at Macy's and donate \$3 to RIF at the register, you will receive a \$10 coupon toward your next purchase. As a result, RIF of NOVA will receive \$1 to buy more books for kids. Tell your family and friends about this worthwhile event. The more money we raise, the more books we are able to put in the hands of children. RIF of NOVA is represented at all the Macy's stores in the Northern Virginia area. Thanks in advance for your support.

### Upcoming Events

Book Ordering Deadline:  
June 30<sup>th</sup>

Liaison Workshop:  
October 2<sup>nd</sup>

RIF of NOVA will host a fundraiser, "An Evening with RIF" on September 22 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. This event will be held at *Potomac West Interiors & Antique Gallery*, 1517 Mount Vernon Avenue in Alexandria. RIF of NOVA and The Del Ray Business Association are collaborating on this fundraiser to promote literacy for students in Northern Virginia area schools. Tickets for "An Evening with RIF" can be purchased from Board Members of RIF of NOVA and at *Potomac West Interiors & Antique Gallery*. Ticket prices are \$40 for two; a single ticket price is \$25.

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Del Ray restaurants will serve their delicious fare and the Del Ray gift shops will be offering unique gifts for raffle winners.

Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday to RIF of NOVA!! In 1972, the Reading is Fundamental of Northern Virginia committee of the Junior League began distributing books to five schools in the City of Alexandria. We have grown into an organization that serves more than 31,000 children, bringing them the joy of reading!

Our Annual Luncheon this year celebrates RIF's 40-year history. I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all the liaisons who bring the joy of reading to their students with their creative themes when distributing books. We appreciate all the meetings you attend, the paperwork you fill out, the books you order and the distributions you organize. Your hard work and dedication are evident on the smiling faces of all the children we serve.

As I finish my term as president, I would like to express my appreciation to all the board members who give their time and energy into making RIF of NOVA such a wonderful organization. It is a pleasure working with such a dedicated group of people. You have made my job a lot easier!

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer! Remember to find that relaxing spot and enjoy a good book!

***"There is no substitute for books in the life of a child." — Mary Ellen Chase***

## Potomac View Elementary

Children at Potomac View Elementary School clowned around at their second RIF distribution. The library was transformed into a circus "Big Top" using a large parachute! Students' clown and trapeze collages decorated the circus tent and balloons hung from the ceiling.

Students enjoyed participating in an interactive read aloud using the books *My Circus* by Xavier Deneux and *Circus* by Lois Ehlert. Students also learned circus vocabulary and viewed "real" circus pictures. Older students played circus BINGO, which required them to make inferences and use their knowledge of circus vocabulary. Younger students played "Pass the Circus Monkey" and "Follow the Clown."

All students were excited to choose a book on their own to keep forever and ever!



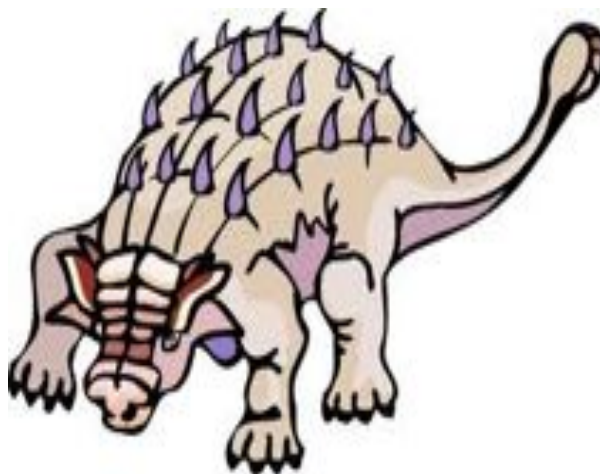
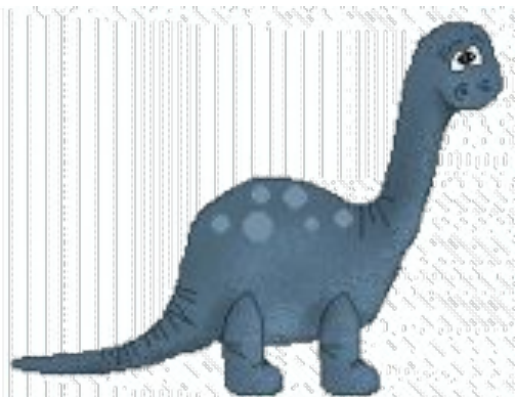
## John Adams Elementary

Classes at John Adams Elementary came up with some never-heard-of-before dinosaur names as part of the dinosaur theme for the school's second RIF distribution. Among the new dinos: Readasaurus, 9-Headed Caterpillarsaurus, and Silly-crazy-flyin'-likes-slidin'-dancing-running-google-eyed-cupcake-cookie-crumb-eating-a-saurus Rex.

Some classes came in dressed up as the dinosaurs they had created, while others made wonderful drawings of their dinosaur. Staff and students were tickled to come into the library to see Ms. Mildred dressed up each day of RIF in a different cavewoman outfit — complete with a bone that served as a bow on her head.

Ms. Yolie and our volunteers wore visors with dinosaurs on them and they escorted students to tables filled with a great selection of books. Afterward, the younger students either watched *Caveland* by The Wiggles or were read age-appropriate books such as *Dinosaurumpus* by Tony Mitton as well as several books from the *How Do Dinosaurs...* series by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague.

Our older students competed in a game to see how many words they could come up with using only the letters in the word "DINOSAUR." Meanwhile, school staff acted as judges and chose a NEW dinosaur from each grade level. A roarin' good time was had by all!



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Classes at John Adams Elementary School turned cardboard boxes, egg cartons, water bottles, empty paper towel rolls and more into their own version of a robot to go along with the theme of the school's third RIF distribution. Some of the newly built robots that made an appearance were Bebebot — whose class rolled her in while dancing like robots to Michael Jackson's "Dancing Machine" — and R2 Read 2, an apparent cousin of R2 D2.



Classes were welcomed into the library by RIFbot, our very own "aluminum" robot. After choosing their books, our younger students watched various episodes of "Rolie Polie Olie," while our older students watched various episodes of "My Life as a Teenage Robot." We also read age-appropriate robot-themed books such as *Swing Otto Swing* by David Milgrum and *The Robots Are Coming* by Andy Rash.

As always, we thanked our helpful parent volunteers with personal thank-you notes and RIF Volunteer Appreciation certificates. All of our teachers signed a thank-you card to show our appreciation to Segovia, our generous donor for the past four years.



Thanks to Segovia, all of our 800+ students from preschool to grade 5 have received three FREE books per year for the past four years. We hope everyone has a safe and relaxing summer. We can't wait to brainstorm for our RIF themes for next year!

## Annandale Christian Community for Action Child Development Center

ACCA CDC's first book distribution in 2012 featured a snowman/winter theme. Snowmen were posted around the CDC's two buildings and students put up snowflakes with their name and the titles of books read. A parent came to read to each classroom.



The second book distribution of the year was all about sunflowers and spring. Huge sunflowers that featured the students' names and the titles of books read went up around the CDC.



## Mount Eagle Elementary

Sometimes a picture can tell a story of a thousand words, but in the case of Mt. Eagle, the enthusiasm of the children for their RIF books is best told by some second and third graders after their Dr. Seuss-themed distribution this spring. Here is a selection of their letters with original spellings (addressed to "Dear RIF"), but sadly, without their wonderful drawings.

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*--Thank you for my book. I really enjoy it! It's nice how you can buy all these books for us. It was generous of you to buy all of these books for us. Your service is great. Thank you for all you do! I can't wait until our next RIF! From, Andrew*

*-- Thank you for donating mony. My class love the books. How much mony did you donat? We apreshait your help. The book I got was Phantane Stallion Mistwalker. Thank you for the mony!! Love, Clara*

*-- Thany u for the Book. I did get scary stories to tell in the Dark. Next time when my friends come and spend a night I am going to tell some scary stories. Sincerely, Ure*

*-- Thank you for the lovely books you gave us! Thank you for donating the money! Our class loves your books. The book I got is called Fairy Blossoms. Your books are the best in this whole intire world! I love books! Books are my Freedom. Sincerely, Sahor*

## Gunston Middle School

More than 300 students received a free book from RIF during Gunston Middle School's first RIF distribution, held Jan 17-20, 2012. The theme was "RIF Supports Community Service," as the distribution was held the same week as the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service. Students learned about the history and purpose of the largely volunteer-supported national RIF program and they heard from 17 different speakers over the week on how volunteering and serving the community had impacted their lives.



Students and staff brought in used books to support the African Library Project and yarn for N Street Village Health and Wellness program with homeless women. We also promoted our school-wide commitment to AFAC (Arlington Food Assistance Center) during RIF, as well as a number of other causes dear to the hearts of our volunteers. Students had the opportunity to reflect on past experiences on volunteering (yellow helping hands) and on ways they planned to help in the future (blue helping hands).



## South County

"Keep Warm with Books" served as the theme of South



County's second book party, which took place on an almost summerlike January afternoon. Books like *Snowy Day* and a flannel board rendition of *Five Little Snowmen* gave enough of a feeling of winter that one youngster insisted that it was snowing outside when he came to the party.

Participants ranged from a one-month old baby to several second graders, but 18-month old toddlers were the most numerous age group. Several pregnant Moms took books for babies who will arrive in the near future. In addition to enjoying stories and refreshments, the children made snow pictures with snowmen, chalk and dark blue paper.



## Woodley Hills

The students at Woodley Hills were treated to their first Reading Is Fundamental book distribution on December 21, orchestrated by reading specialists Judi Elmore and Mary Kate DeRose.

The theme was "Be a Smart Cookie...Read!" A homemade gingerbread house decorated the table where students brought their new books to be stamped with the RIF stamp. Students were also asked to think about their favorite kind of cookie. After selecting a book, each child was given a small paper "cookie," which they glued onto one of three "cookie jars" in the hallway. Then students voted for chocolate chip, Oreo or gingerbread. Gingerbread cookies were overwhelmingly the favorite with 430 votes!

At the end of the day, one child's name was drawn to win a gingerbread house kit to take home and make with his family!



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A second distribution held at Woodley Hills centered around Dr. Seuss' birthday. The SCA teamed with the Reading team and sponsored a Pajamas and Slippers Read In.

The day began with a special poem (see right) read on the news. Guest readers included the School Board student representative, a staff member from Senator Mark Warner's office and parents. The assistant principals, Thing One and Thing Two, joined in the fun.



Students selected their RIF books with the help of the Cat In the Hat and received stickers or bookmarks from him, too!



## RIF Poem for Dr. Seuss's Birthday

Today is RIF Day,  
when we celebrate reading.  
We get a free book,  
which we always are needing.  
We've also worn pjs  
and slippers today.  
It's a Woodley Hills party  
from our SCA!  
And third, it's the birthday  
of one Dr. Seuss,  
the author who wrote  
of a cat and a moose.  
He wrote about fish,  
some red and some blue,  
And wrote about Horton  
who heard a small Who.  
His book of the Lorax  
reminded us please,  
take care of the Earth  
and the Truffula Trees!  
And he wrote about oobleck,  
that slimy old goo,  
and green eggs and ham,  
which you might want to chew.  
So today in your jammies  
your fun's guaranteed!  
Cuddle up with your RIF book  
and have a good read!  
This most special day  
is most special indeed!