

The READ Review

A Quarterly Publication of READ La Porte County, Inc.
Winter 2013 Edition



***We're online!** Head to www.facebook.com/ReadLaPorteCountyInc and "Like" our page to receive regular updates on READ and learn about upcoming events. There are two different pages titled "READ La Porte County," so be sure to select the one that ends in "Inc." and has a stack of books as the icon.

What's New with READ?

*The READ Board of Directors held elections for the 2014-2016 term. Congratulations to our new and continuing officers! We appreciate all you do for READ and for literacy in our community.

President – Greg Fruth

Vice President – Miriam Dydo

Recording Secretary: Mark Hargrave

Corresponding Secretary: Christine Rosario

Treasurer: Stephanie Stout

We are looking for between one and three new Board members to join our fabulous group of leaders. Email us at readlaportecounty@gmail.com to learn more.

*It was a beautiful day for the 15th annual Sunflower Fair on September 21st. READ manned a table and passed out student and tutor applications, Scrabble registrations and a variety of prizes for young fairgoers. We look forward to next year's festival!

*Thank you to Michiana Antique Auto Club and Board Member Christine Rosario for supporting READ with generous donations during the month of November. Donations like these allow READ to continue pursuing its mission to increase reading, math, English, and digital literacy skills in the community through tutoring and through advocacy.

2013 Scrabble Recap

*READ's 2013 Scrabble Tournament, held on September 26th, was a huge success! We had 26 teams in attendance and the total profit for the event was approximately \$2,000. Tournament winners were as follows:

*1st place, Patricia Tucker and David Wittchen, who received two certificates for a free night donated by the Best Western Plus Hotel & Conference Center;

*2nd place, Sarah Scherberg and Susan Schab, who received two \$25 gift cards for Kroger donated by board member Christa Pinkepank; and

*3rd place, Connie Conjalka and Jane Wickstrom, who received gift certificates for two dinners at Options Buffet donated by Blue Chip Casino, Hotel & Spa.

The team of Cee Cee Kaylor and Elizabeth Bernel won an award for "Highest Word Score" with a whopping 125 points! In our new lightning round, Julianne Bergland, Susan Schab, Dianne Carpenter and Sarah Scherberg tied for the highest score, with Schab receiving the grand prize as winner of the tiebreaker drawing.

Thank you to all our tournament participants and sponsors! Save the date for next year's tournament, which will take place on Thursday, September 25, 2014, again at the Best Western Plus Hotel & Conference Center.



SCRABBLE

Coming Soon

*If you volunteered for READ as a tutor or coordinator in 2013, you are invited to our tutor recognition luncheon on Saturday, December 7th at 1:00 p.m. at Louie's Café. Each guest can choose an entrée, soup or salad, dessert and beverage. Please RSVP to Mary Hedge at mhedge8@comcast.net or 325-0875 by November 29th.

*READ is looking into the possibility of starting a bilingual book club. The current hope is that the selected books would be made available to members in their language of choice, with club discussions held on a quarterly basis. Reading the books would facilitate literacy in general, while the discussions would allow members to practice language skills.

If you have ideas for the club (format, book selection, etc.) or might be interested in joining, email Michelle at readlaportecounty@gmail.com. If you are a READ tutor, please let your students know about this opportunity!

*The following tutor events are scheduled for 2014 at the La Porte County Public Library:
Saturday, April 26th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Adult & ESL Tutor Training

Thursday, July 24th from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. – Tutor Roundtable

Saturday, November 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Adult & ESL Tutor Training

*Board member Mark Hargrave was able to secure a donation of five pounds of semi-precious gemstones. A huge thank you to Sharon Starr of Sisters in Sync for her generosity!

The LaPorte High School Art Club will use these stones to make jewelry that will be sold to benefit READ. We'll have more information and pictures related to this exciting project in the near future.

*The La Porte County Library is planning a Community Read event for 2014. This project would allow the community to read a chosen book and then attend events and discussions related to the selection. Given READ's commitment to literacy in La Porte County, we are very excited about this initiative!

So far the top five choices are *Unbroken* (a bestselling biography about two men, one from La Porte, who survive on a raft for 47 days in World War II), *The King's Speech* (a biography about the man who helped King George VI), *The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* (fiction about the Japanese in Seattle in World War II), *The Same Kind of Different as Me* (a biography about a man held in plantation-style slavery until the 1960's) and *Rocket Boys* (a biography about a NASA man who was fascinated with rockets as a boy).



READ's President, Greg Fruth, and Director, Mary Hedge, ready to pass out materials at the 2014 Sunflower Fair

READ Success Story

By Aileen Stiller, M.D.

A young man was assigned to me to learn English. He was seventeen years old and really wanted to read and speak English better. The best technique turned out to be simply asking him what was it that he most wanted to say.

Shortly it became apparent that he was interested in a young woman and wanted to ask her for a date. He was REALLY anxious to get these words learned and pronounced correctly. "What beautiful eyes you have, etc." It was a pleasure to help a person who really wanted to learn.

What We're READING...

A Review of James Lee Burke's "Dixie City Jam" by Mark Hargrave

So here's the mix: Take a WWII Nazi submarine sunk off the coast of New Orleans; a recovering alcoholic ex-cop and his family; throw in a psychotic holdover from the Third Reich, along with a cast of characters as eccentric as any in modern fiction, and you have the makings of Dixie City Jam, the seventh novel in the Detective Dave Robicheaux series. In this installment, Dave Robicheaux, a retired detective with the New Orleans police department, who now operates a bait shop and boat rental business in rural New Iberia, aims to collect the ten-thousand dollar reward offered for locating, of all things, a Nazi submarine. The sub, lost with all hands in 1943 during a sea battle at the mouth of the Mississippi River, is sought after by one Hippo Bimstine, a local businessman with heavy connections in the local Democratic Party (read corruption).

Ostensibly wanted by Hippo to create a money-making media sensation, the sub represents other, darker motives lurking behind Hippo's desire to capture this artifact. Hippo's reward money becomes a matter of life and death after Battiste, Dave's bait shop tender, is arrested for assaulting a local crack cocaine dealer, and is trapped in a brutal New Orleans jail. Robicheaux is a sensitive, complex and conflicted man, a recovering alcoholic, balancing a precarious mix of guilt-edged ethics, Cajun pride, and a repressed penchant for renegade justice. Along with his wife, Bootsie and daughter Alafair, Dave has carved out a lifestyle back in the Louisiana bayous that provides a measure of peace and normalcy in the otherwise tempestuous world of South Louisiana.

Before long, Dave and his family become mired in a battle with Will Buchalter, a mysterious and savage sadist, who perpetrates a series of harrowing attacks against Bootsie, leaving her tormented and despondent. We gradually learn that Buchalter wants the submarine for entirely different reasons, employing a string of terrorist tactics calculated to force Robicheaux to capitulate to the Dark Side. As Robicheaux and his old detective partner, Cletus Purcel (a man whose lifestyle and police methods are as wildly unorthodox as a football bat) pursue the ghostly Buchalter, the narrative crescendos to a nerve-wracking high voltage showdown.

The author doses up the plot of Dixie City Jam with New Orleans mafiosi, corrupt police officials, hookers and junkies, saturated portraits of a quality recognized as the stock-in trade of James Lee Burke. Burke's prose is uniquely his own. Powerful and compelling, his narrative style is by turns vividly colorful, darkly comic, and brutally confessional.

Both New Orleans and its surrounding Bayou Country are beautifully delineated, serving as quasi-characters in this, one of the finest of James Lee Burke's Robicheaux series.

Stats Update

We have 54 tutors on record this year. So far our tutors have reported serving 204 students, up from 197 last year. The actual number is probably even higher since tutor reports for this school year aren't due until the end of December. Thank you to our tutors for making a difference in the lives of so many students!

We can always use more help, so please encourage any friends who may be interested in tutoring to email us at readlaportecounty@gmail.com or print a tutor application from our website at www.readlaportecounty.org.