

The READ Review

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

What's New with READ?

*READ's mission has expanded to include digital literacy! Our new mission statement is as follows:

“Our purpose is to increase reading, math, English, and digital literacy skills in the community through tutoring and through advocacy.”

This change reflects our recognition that in today's world, individuals must have a working understanding of technology to take advantage of all the opportunities our society has to offer. Many job applications must be completed online, and some states are requiring that the GED test be taken online.

Accordingly, READ seeks to improve the digital literacy of its students and the community in 2014 and beyond. If you have a solid understanding of technology, we'd love to have you join our tutoring team!

*READ would like to formally welcome Mark Hargrave, the newest member of READ's Board of Directors. We're happy to have you, Mark! READ is always looking for a few good Board members. Email readlaportecounty@gmail.com if you are interested in learning more.

*We are in the process of updating READ's website, www.readlaportecounty.org. Come check out our new look!

Coming Soon...

*Want to see READ on TV? We'll be appearing on ALCO's "La Porte County Live" with Jane Daley from the La Porte County Convention & Visitor's Bureau to discuss Scrabble and other READ news and events. The show films on Saturday, September 14th but will likely rerun multiple times.

*Be sure to turn your radio dial to WLOI (1540AM) on Monday, September 16th, to hear READ on Breakfast Showcase! This program begins at 8:30 a.m. and lasts approximately thirty minutes.

*La Porte's 15th Annual Sunflower Fair takes place Saturday, September 21st. Stop by the READ booth to pick up a student/tutor application, bid on the Silent Auctions items that will be awarded at our Scrabble Tournament, or just say hello!

*Join us for a Tutor Roundtable on Saturday, October 26th from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the Small Meeting Room at the La Porte County Public Library. Share your joys and concerns, get some questions answered and exchange tips with other tutors. Light refreshments will be provided through our grant from the Bethany Lutheran Church of La Porte Foundation, Inc.

*All 2013 READ volunteer tutors and coordinators are invited to attend a tutor recognition luncheon on Saturday, December 7th at 1:00 p.m. at Louie's Café on the corner of Lincolnway and Madison. Guests can choose an entrée, soup or salad, dessert, and beverage. We had a nice group of people last year for this event, which is also funded by our grant from the Bethany Lutheran Church of La Porte Foundation, Inc. Please RSVP to Mary Hedge at mhedge8@comcast.net or 325-0875.

READ Success Story By Greg Fruth

“So what is the best part of our tutoring sessions?”

A long pause.

“There is none.”

“Well, what is the worst part of our tutoring sessions?”

“The reading.”

Those words ripped into my heart.

I had decided to tutor this young man because he reminded me of myself at the same age. I struggled with reading. I was an even worse speller. My frustration turned to anger. Yet I never quit. Nor did neither my parents nor my Maple School teachers quit. Twice a week I met with a special teacher who helped me with sequencing and with phonics. At first these sessions were torturous, but with time, I overcame my reading problems. Many of my spelling problems remained, but not as severe. I headed to the public library, where I read every book about sports. I was on my way to becoming a reader.

So when I gained background on this young man going into fifth grade, I saw the same problems. He struggled with multi-syllable words, struggled to remember where he was in the reading, struggled with what he had read, and rearranged letters or forgot letters when he spelled. He also loves sports. I was looking at a mirror of myself at the same age. I decided to tutor him twice a week in the La Porte library.

He amazed me with some of his reading skills. He can draw lines to separate multiple-syllable words and he can fly through lists of sight words, words a reader must recognize immediately. Put these words into paragraphs and he struggled.

First, we checked out two novels about baseball. He loves baseball. He’s good! A catcher and a pitcher, he made a travel squad this summer. We soon discovered that one of the novels was too difficult so we read the other one.

During each session, we worked on reading, writing, and spelling skills. For the first half of the summer, little progress was made. Working on his reading fluency, he read and

reread aloud a selection on Babe Ruth. At first, he paused between words. We focused on the words that stumped him. He reread aloud until the words rolled off his tongue.

He then followed the same procedure on an article about playing catch with a runner between the two catchers, who try to tag the runner. From the beginning, he struggled less with this article. In a short time, he was reading this one fluently.

Along the way, I think he started to enjoy the reading, or at least it wasn’t as torturous as it had been. He checked out a Sports Illustrated for kids, which at home he read (or at least looked at the photos).

We worked on recalling the sequence of events in an article. After reading, he would take strips of paper with the events typed on them and tape them in the correct order. Never did he struggle with these activities.

The cognitive and the affective must equal to become a reader. In other words, mastering skills is only part of the equation. A reader has to enjoy the experience. His comments after our third session revealed he did not enjoy reading.

Then he went on a vacation, and for a week, we did not meet. When he returned, he told me he had read ten pages of his novel during his vacation. Ten pages! For some, ten pages is not many, but this young man had earlier told me the worst part of our tutoring sessions was the reading. I was ecstatic! During our last week, I had to cancel the Tuesday session due to an emergency. When we met for the last time that Thursday, he and his mother told me he had read all of the book except the last chapter. He and his mother would sit together, and he would read aloud.

I’m proud of his progress with developing the reading skills we attacked this summer. He still has to improve. I’m even prouder that he has taken the initiative to read at home. Would he rather be outside playing ball? Certainly. Would he rather play an electronic game? Certainly. But hopefully, at times he will pick up a book and read it. In my book, he is a Success Story.

What We're READING...

A Review of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" by Michelle Shirk

It almost seems silly to review a book that was originally published in 1925 and has long been a staple on high school reading lists, but thanks to the recent release of a new film of the same name, "The Great Gatsby" is hot again. If you've never read this classic novel or haven't revisited it since reaching adulthood, consider adding it to your library request list.

Narrated by relative outsider Nick Carraway, "The Great Gatsby" recounts the lifestyles of the rich, famous and reckless. The plot centers around Nick's investigation of his next door neighbor, the mysterious Jay Gatsby. Gatsby's unique personal characteristics and complex motivations are gradually revealed as the story progresses, as are those of Nick's cousin Daisy and her husband Tom Buchanan. The book's 1920's New York setting is as richly

developed as any of the novel's characters, and will fascinate modern readers.

"The Great Gatsby" continues to be adapted and readapted for a reason – it offers something for everybody. Fitzgerald has managed to combine carefully crafted language, a love story, a revenge story and a surprising amount of action into a book that can easily be read in a long weekend. This certainly isn't a "feel good" book or a fun beach read, but it is a unique, intricately crafted tale that will make the reader think.

While Leonardo DiCaprio may be partially responsible for "The Great Gatsby's" current surge of popularity, Fitzgerald deserves the ultimate credit for creating a novel that has stood the test of time.



Set-up for READ 2013 "Silver Anniversary" Scrabble Tournament.
Join us for this year's event – tutors play for FREE!



Join us for our 10th Annual Scrabble Tournament!

This year's theme – Fall Into Reading!

Thursday, September 26, 2013

6:30 p.m. – Doors open

7:00 p.m. – Tournament begins

Best Western Plus Hotel & Conference Center

La Porte, Indiana

Two-person teams compete in two rounds using traditional Scrabble rules (scrabble-assoc.com). Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams, top word scorer, and the team that creates most words from our themed list. We will also have a Silent Auction with a variety of prizes for those who wish to participate. Complimentary appetizers will be provided and a cash bar will be available. We look forward to seeing you!

Please send registration forms by September 23, 2013 to:

Mary Hedge, READ La Porte County, Inc.

904 Indiana Avenue

La Porte, IN 46350

Questions? Give us a call at 219-325-0875.

A check in the amount of \$25.00 for each player, made payable to READ La Porte County, Inc., must be returned with this form. Please feel free to photocopy this form.

Team Member #1: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Team Member #2: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name of Organization (if any): _____

____ Instead of registering a team, I am enclosing a donation of _____ to support literacy tutoring.

____ I would like to help teams in need of sponsorship so I am enclosing a donation of _____.

____ Please send me more information about READ La Porte County, Inc. and how I can volunteer to help.