



NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 330
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 474-2131 Fax: (402) 474-4852
E-mail: nhc@nebraskahumanities.org
Website: www.nebraskahumanities.org

N E W S R E L E A S E

For release: Jan. 16, 2009

Contact: Erika Hamilton, (402) 474-2131 ext. 104

Prime Time reading program returns to Scottsbluff

Prime Time Family Reading Time, a Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) family literacy program designed to help strengthen participants' interest and skills in reading, will return to Scottsbluff with opportunities for Spanish- and English-speaking parents and their children.

The bilingual series will be held on six consecutive Sunday afternoons, Feb. 1 through March 8, at the Guadalupe Recreation Center, 1200 E. Ninth St., in Scottsbluff. Each program begins with a light lunch and continues with storytelling and discussion based on award-winning children's books. The fifth week, March 1, will include a tour of the Scottsbluff Public Library. The program is free and open to the public.

The six-week series is offered to families with children ages six to 10. It includes sessions on determination, fairness, dreams, compassion and kinship. All books are read and discussed in both English and Spanish.

Discussion leader Nancy Escamilla and storyteller Maria Saenz will introduce parents to the benefits and pleasures of reading and discussing stories with their children. Families will also learn about library resources and services. Separate pre-reading activities will be available for younger siblings.

"It's so important for children to learn the joys of reading early in life, especially when it involves reading and discussing books with their families," said NHC Senior Program Officer Erika Hamilton, state coordinator of Prime Time. "A love for learning through reading has a positive impact on how well a child does in school."

In a 2008 survey of Nebraska families who participated in Prime Time, 87 percent indicated that the program changed the way they read and discuss books together, 68 percent improved their attitude toward the library, and 98 percent showed interest in participating again in Prime Time or similar family reading and educational programs.

Initially developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 47 bilingual and English-only Prime Time series have been held in 15 Nebraska libraries and five schools in the last five years, including programs in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, South Sioux City, Norfolk, and Scottsbluff. The Scottsbluff Public Library was one of three Nebraska libraries in 2004 to pilot the bilingual program.

Prime Time is sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC with major funding from the State of Nebraska, Nebraska Cultural Endowment, Nebraska Library Commission, and the Gilbert M. and Martha H. Hitchcock Foundation. Primary funders for Prime Time in Scottsbluff include Platte Valley Bank and the C.W. Yount Foundation.

The NHC is a private, statewide, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information or to register to participate, contact Jackie Cervantes-Guzman, program coordinator, at (308) 632-1475.