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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES EXPERIENCE A "SUPER" TIME AT THE LIBRARY!

(Belcamp, Maryland – June 30, 2015) Not even the scorching temperatures could keep babies, children and teens from signing up for the Harford County Public Library's Summer Reading Program, *Every Hero Has a Story*, on June 22nd. More than 4,000 readers signed up by the first day of the program at all 11 branches! Close to 1,000 children took part in opening day festivities at the Abingdon and Whiteford libraries which featured special guest appearances by Bat Woman (aka Library CEO Mary Hastler), Batman, Super Girl, Tales (the Library mascot), and Ferrous (the IronBirds mascot). Program sponsors were on hand to talk with attendees and provided additional incentives for the children's goodie bags.

Festivities at Abingdon Library featured a Touch-a-Truck with vehicles provided by the Abingdon Fire Department, Harford County Division of Highways, Harford County Sheriff's Office, the Library's Rolling Reader, and Waste Industries.

In addition to being the official Summer Reading kickoff, the day also served as the introduction of the newest addition to the Library's collection: Superhero Action Figure Kits, which were available for check out for the first time. Sponsored by Walmart, children now have the opportunity to borrow a Superhero Kit which includes a 12-inch superhero figure. They can choose from Batman, Captain America, Falcon, Hulk, Iron Man, Superman, Thor, Wolverine, Armored Spider-Man and Ultimate Spider-Man! The Kit also includes books featuring the superhero and a journal to record a story about their adventures together. To learn more about the Superhero Action Figure Kits, visit www.HCPLonline.org.

"Summer is a great time for our youth to relax and explore adventures through a good book," said Library CEO, Mary Hastler. "Research shows that reading through the

summer helps students retain their reading skills and online registration makes it easy for everyone to participate!”

Children and teens may sign up for the Summer Reading Program at any of the 11 Harford County Public Library locations or online at hcplonline.org. Program completion guidelines are based on the age/grade-level of those who register. Babies from birth through pre-K are encouraged to listen to 25 books. Elementary school participants are asked to read 10 books, and middle and high schoolers’ goal is three books. Every child who completes the program (beginning July 6th) will receive a ticket voucher to an Aberdeen IronBirds game. Children through middle school will also receive an age-appropriate book selected by Harford County Public Library librarians. High school students who complete the program will receive a \$10 Wegmans gift card. Completers who turn their reading logs in can also be entered into raffles for tickets to the Maryland Science Center and Baltimore Orioles. In addition, the public elementary, middle and high schools with the highest percentage of completers win a trophy

“The Summer Reading Program is made possible through the dedication and support of our many sponsors, Friends groups, volunteers and staff,” stated Library Foundation Director, Rebecca Jessop. “It is so gratifying to see the excited faces of so many young customers signing up for the program.”

Sponsors of this year’s Summer Reading Program are Aberdeen IronBirds, Bel Air Friends of HCPL, Berardino Family Trust, Rosedale Federal Savings & Loan Association, Wegmans, Ripken Baseball, HAR-CO Credit Union, Jones Junction, Rotary Club of Aberdeen, Huether-McClelland Foundation, Morris A. Mechanic Foundation, Advanced Eye Care, APG Federal Credit Union, *The Aegis*, Growing Smiles Pediatric Dentistry and Darlington Friends of HCPL.

The Harford County Public Library Summer Reading Program runs through August 22nd. Please visit HCPLonline.org or pick up a *Headlines & Happenings* Newsletter at any of the Library’s 11 branches for more information on programs and other events.

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout the county. The library serves more than 191,000 registered borrowers of all ages and has an annual circulation of more than 4.1 million. Harford County Public Library is committed to connecting people with information and promoting the love of reading within the community.

The Harford County Public Library Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization established to raise funds to augment the financial resources of the Harford County Public Library and to promote awareness of its services. For more information call 410-273-5601 x2283.

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Photo caption #1: Summer Reading Program sponsors and members of the Harford County Foundation Board gather for the Summer Reading Program Kickoff.

Photo caption #2: The new Superhero Action Figure Kits collection is now available.

Photo caption #3: A few of the special guests at the Summer Reading Program Kickoff at Abingdon Library- Ferrous, Andy, Bat Woman and Tales.

Photo caption #4: A young library customer gives thumbs up to the Touch-a-Truck at the Abingdon Library.

Photo caption #5: Two young superheroes meet two other superheroes- Bat Woman and DFC Greg Young from the Harford County Sheriff's Office.