

## *News Release*

**CONTACT:** Theresa G. Wiseman

**PHONE:** 410-960-0230

*For Immediate Release*

### **HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCES** **2015 SUMMER READING PROGRAM**

**Belcamp, Md., May 19, 2015** -- Look, up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, it's the Harford County Public Library's 2015 Summer Reading Program, "Every Hero Has A Story."

The program, which runs June 22-August 22, is geared for children from birth to high school to encourage continued learning that inspires a lifetime love of reading. Studies show that children who read during the summer maintain their reading level and are better prepared for school in the fall.

The program's superheroes theme is broad and shows how they save the day, possess extraordinary talent, protect the public and allow good to triumph. Superheroes come in many forms, whether they land on earth from the planet Krypton, perform heroic community acts, such as a firefighter, or simply read a book because reading is an extraordinary super-power. It develops imagination, enhances language skills, supports self-discovery and allows the exploration of new things.

Children may sign up for the Summer Reading Program starting Monday, June 22, at any of the 11 Harford County Public Library branches or online at [hcplonline.org](http://hcplonline.org). All participants will receive a goodie bag with incentives from sponsors. A gift and certificate will be given to all who complete the program and will be available starting July 6.

Program completion is based on the ages of the children who register. Babies from birth through pre-K are encouraged to read or 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 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 gift card from Wegmans.

In addition, the public elementary, middle and high schools with the highest percentage of completers win a trophy.

“Summer is a wonderful time for adventures, especially through the reading of a good book,” said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. “The Summer Reading Program helps students retain their reading skills, and online registration makes it easy for everyone to participate.”

Kickoff activities for this year's Summer Reading Program take place on June 22 at the Abingdon Library from 10 a.m. to noon and at the Whiteford Library from 2 to 5 p.m.

The Abingdon kickoff will feature special guests wearing superhero costumes and “Touch a Truck,” where children can get up close to police cars, fire trucks and other community hero vehicles. Also expected is an appearance by Tales, the library mascot, and the Innovation Lab will be open for use. Sponsors will be on hand to offer additional incentives and talk to families about the Summer Reading Program.

In addition, the kickoff celebration will also introduce HCPL's new Superhero Action Figure Kits collection sponsored by Walmart. Similar to the Library's American Girl Doll Lending Program, boys and girls will now be able to check out kits containing a superhero action figure, accessories, a carrying case, a book and a journal to record a story about their adventures together.

The Summer Reading Program kickoff continues later in the day at the Whiteford Library at 2 p.m. Children are encouraged to bring a picture of their favorite hero to go on the Hero Wall.

Last year, more than 17,000 children participated in the Summer Reading Program, and they read more than 100,000 books.

The Summer Reading Program is funded through sponsor contributions, donations from Library Friends' groups and by funds raised by the Harford County Public Library Foundation.

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.

"It is inspiring to see area businesses and community groups come together for such an outstanding program," said Rebecca Jessop, foundation director for Harford County Public Library. "The sponsors, who make the Summer Reading Program possible,

are also bringing joy and excitement into the lives of many children during the summer months.”

More information may be found at [hcplonline.org](http://hcplonline.org) or by picking up a copy of the *Headlines & Happenings* newsletter at any of the library’s branches.

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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