

**STARK COUNTY**

# 'Summer reading is important': Reading programs for all ages underway at Stark libraries

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## Key Points

Libraries across Stark County are offering summer reading challenges for all ages.

Officials say the programs help stop the summer slide in school-aged children.

Programs offer incentives and prizes for those who reach their reading goals.

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MASSILLON – Millie Weaver picked out a fluffy tan and brown stuffed dog and declared his name is Chocolate.

This summer, Chocolate will be the 5-year-old city girl's reading buddy. Her older sister, Emma, picked out a gray cat.

The fluffy friends — including a hedgehog, rainbow fish and lizard — were up for grabs for kids participating in the Massillon Public Library's summer reading program. The reading program kicked off Monday with a daylong celebration that included games, crafts and photo opportunities.

Across Stark County, reading programs and activities are ramping up.

While programs vary, they all look to keep school-aged children's reading skills sharp while school is on break. The programs also help younger children learn about the importance of literacy and build their vocabularies.

Laura Klein, children's services and special projects manager at the Massillon library, said even the youngest children benefit from the program.

Kids up to sixth grade are encouraged to participate in 15 minutes of reading daily as part of the program, she said.

Older siblings can serve as role models for younger kids by reading to them.

"Kids don't have to be on your lap staring at the book to get the benefits of reading," she said. "We know they are paying attention and still learning even if they are running around."

It's important to show kids reading is part of everyday life from making and reading a grocery list to reading a recipe, she added.

Each week, participants meeting their reading goal can cash in for incentives and a chance to be entered to win a grand prize — a bookmobile party.

Readers can sign up at any branch or on the bookmobile.

**Massillon Public Library:** 'A dream come true': Jeff Kreger excited to take on role as Massillon Library director

Millie and Emma Weaver have a lot of fun participating in the summer program, but their mom said the program gives them a chance to enjoy the summer and earn prizes.

During the school year, the family visits the library about every two weeks but in the summer they can go weekly.

"The school year is so busy," mom Erica Davis said. "They like the incentives to read. They look forward to getting prizes (for reading)."

Massillon's reading program for kids and teens through 12th grade runs through July 29. The adult reading challenge begins in late June and runs through September.

## **What's happening at the Stark Library?**

At the Stark Library and its nine branches, adventure awaits readers of all ages with the summer reading challenge.

Besides daily reading, participants are encouraged to complete different tasks such as taking a hike, trying a new recipe they found in a library book and attending a library event. For each activity, readers earn a point. Different levels of points earn participants prizes.

"Summer reading is important," Stark Library literacy manager Julia Shaheen said. "It keeps kids' minds working during the summer when they are not in school lessening the summer

slide."

The activities component in the challenge helps kids who struggle with or are not interested in reading, she said. They continue to learn while having fun.

Shaheen said there is something for everyone from the Akron Zoo visiting the library to arts and crafts to a glow party.

## Here's a look at area reading programs

**Louisville Public Library:** Registration has begun for the library's summer reading program "All Together Now," which runs through July 28. Programming is themed around kindness, community and diversity. To register, visit the library's website [www.louisvillelibrary.org](http://www.louisvillelibrary.org).

**Massillon Public Library:** Participants up to 12th grade can register at the main library, its branches or the bookmobile. Readers can earn incentives when meeting reading goals. Several programs are planned, including "Can you survive the Titanic disaster?" Visit [www.massillonlibrary.org](http://www.massillonlibrary.org) to learn more.

**North Canton Public Library:** The library's Children's Epic Summer Reading Club began last month. Participants are tracking their reading to earn prizes and tickets for grand prize drawings. The program ends July 29. The library is working toward a community goal of reading 275,000 minutes. When the goal is reached, the Friends of the Library, Rotary Club of North Canton and DayStar Atmosphere will donate a combined total of \$1,750 to the North Canton Cares Pantry and the Stark County Pet Food Pantry. Reading programs are available for kids ages 2 to those entering sixth grade; grades 6 through 12, and adults. To learn more, visit [ncantonlibrary.com](http://ncantonlibrary.com).

**Rodman Public Library:** Patrons can register for the program, "All Together Now," which runs through July 29. Three divisions are available for kids up to 12; teens 12 to 18, and adults. Readers can sign up in person at the Main Library, the branch library, or on the bookmobile. Patrons may also sign up online at [rodmanlibrary.beanstack.org](http://rodmanlibrary.beanstack.org), or through the Beanstack app, which they can download on a mobile device. Prizes will be awarded throughout the program and participants will earn entries into grand prize drawings. For more information, visit [www.rodmanlibrary.com](http://www.rodmanlibrary.com).

**Stark Library:** Readers of all ages are welcome to participate in the summer break challenge that includes reading and learning challenges and earn prizes along the way.

Readers who complete their activity and reading goals can celebrate with a cup of Kona Ice. To learn more, visit [www.starklibrary.org](http://www.starklibrary.org).

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