

LIBRARY INTRODUCES FAMILY BOOK CLUB

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In recent years the Skaneateles Library has been working to add more programs, offering a wide variety of offerings from lectures to musical performances, meditation sessions to book clubs.

Most recently the library introduced its family book club on Feb. 3.

Mary Beth Schwartzwalder, librarian for kids and teens, said this is a new program for the library with plans to run it every month until at least July if not beyond.

"We do a lot of story times and things like that for toddlers and we wanted to do more to reach out to first and second graders and involve the whole family," Schwartzwalder said.

The idea to do something more for this particular age bracket with a focus on bringing the family together to read was already being explored when Schwartzwalder took part in a webinar.

"Another library was doing this," Schwartzwalder said. "This was what we were looking for. The other library said people love doing it and we thought it was something people might really enjoy."

In planning for the new book club, Schwartzwalder reached out to Waterman school library for suggestions for books.

The first selected was "Power of the Fire Dragon" by Tracey West.

This book is part of a larger series called "Dragon Masters."

"I talked to the Waterman librarian and this is popular with a lot of kids," Schwartzwalder said. "First and foremost we needed to make sure we had enough books, but we wanted to do something kids would enjoy."

The idea has been well received.

Schwartzwalder said a number of people came in to the library to check out copies of the book.

The idea is that families will check out the books and spend some time reading together.

When the book club meets, Schwartzwalder said there will be a number of activities and discussions around the book that is being read that month.

For example to go along with "Power of the Fire Dragon" there were activities like Mad-Libs as well as some discussion about the book.

The discussion aspect will offer different opportunities based on the themes explored in the books.

"It is a way to look at the book and see how it can connect to their lives," Schwartzwalder said.

While it might be difficult to make a connection with dragons, Schwartzwalder said the book lends itself to fun discussions with young readers on topics like what kinds of powers they might like to have or they would like a dragon to have if they existed.

Future books will explore other topics like self esteem.

By encouraging families to read together, Schwartzwalder said it can help parents approach these kinds of issues with their children in an easy manner.

"It is really important to spend that time together," Schwartzwalder said. "Having that time, maybe 20 minutes a day uninterrupted is special. Parents can ask how their kids relate to the book and they can see those insights."



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The Skaneateles Library recently launched a family book club which will be held the first Sunday of each month with a focus on books for first and second grade readers and their families.

There is also the valuable educational aspect of reading together, exposing children to new words, characters and topics is invaluable when it comes to helping young readers develop an interest in reading as well as a positive connection to the act of reading.

Next month's selection will be "Nurse Watson Fights Crime" by Kate DiCamillo.

The book club is planned to be held the

first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p.m. at the library. Books will be available and Schwartzwalder said everyone is welcome to take part.

"We hope it goes well," Schwartzwalder said. "Everyone gets busy, so even if you haven't finished the book you are still welcome to come and take part in the activities and discussion."



'Soup' er Bowl champs

For the third year in a row Waterman students have been collecting cans of soup, placing them in boxes marked with the team they believe will win.