

COMMUNITY

Children celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday

More than 60 people attended Hermiston library event

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD

Children came to laugh and play, in honor of a special day, when Dr. Seuss was born years past, who wrote so many books that last.

More than 60 people attended Hermiston Public Library's Dr. Seuss party Monday on the birthday of the renowned children's author, who was born Theodor Seuss Geisel. The children participated in a variety of Dr. Seuss-themed activities organized by children's librarian Raquel Rodriguez, who said the event went well.

"It was a Monday, so we weren't sure what our turnout was going to be, but I'm pretty impressed," she said. "We enjoy that the kids can come to the library and realize that there's fun things to do here."

Rodriguez said the library has hosted similar events in the past but not for the last couple years. She said schools usually celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday, but she thought it would be a fun event to



SEAN HART PHOTO

Clockwise from left, Natalia LaBelle and Kendyl Inners apply temporary Dr. Seuss tattoos as Jennifer Malcolm watches Ashlin and Nyllee Malcolm receive them at the Dr. Seuss party Monday at the Hermiston Public Library.

bring back to the library again because children enjoy it, and it celebrates an author who encourages them to read.

"I love how (Dr. Seuss) gets the kids excited to read, learning new words," she said. "I love how the schools and the library can celebrate it together."

Rodriguez's son, 8-year-old Jaysen Rodriguez, said he likes Dr. Seuss because some of the characters have "cool hats, because they're so long."

Kendyl Inners, 11, Hermiston, helped at the event, applying temporary Dr. Seuss tattoos, and said

she enjoyed it. "I think it's a good way for kids to learn more about Dr. Seuss," she said. "He has really good books because they're funny, and they're really inspiring too."

While Inners said she did not have a favorite Seuss book, Natalia LaBelle, 13, Hermiston, who was also applying tattoos, said she liked the interesting places in "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" Ashlin Malcolm, 12, Hermiston, who received a tattoo, said she liked the rhymes in "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish."

Her mother, Jennifer Malcolm, said the event



SEAN HART PHOTO

Karlee Marks, 3, Hermiston, fishes between a red fish and a blue fish and ends up with a bag of Goldfish from 13-year-old helper Emma Rodgers at the Hermiston Public Library's Dr. Seuss party Monday on the birthday of the children's book author.

offered children a fun way to celebrate Dr. Seuss, whose books help children learn to read.

"(Dr. Seuss uses) kind of silly words, but it teaches them phonics by sounding them out, so it's perfect for beginning readers," she said.

The next library event is a Traveling Lantern Theatre Company play about the Lewis and Clark expedition at 2:30 p.m. today at 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston.



SEAN HART PHOTO

Hermiston Public Library volunteer Joyce Dye, right, helps 8-year-old Jaysen Rodriguez with a Dr. Seuss activity Monday.

Battle of the Books a tradition for Hermiston family

BY MAEGAN MURRAY
HERMISTON HERALD

For the Hermiston Doherty family, the Oregon Battle of the Books competition has become something of a tradition.

When Hermiston resident Ben Doherty was a student at West Park Elementary School, he competed in the event, even before it had expanded to a state-wide competition. Now that his children, Elizabeth and Gavin, are of age to compete, they, too, have taken on the family legacy.

During a special teacher-versus-student competition at Rocky Heights Elementary School Monday afternoon, Elizabeth Doherty, a fourth-grader at the school, with her team the Little Kickers, took on her mother's team, the A-team, comprised entirely of teachers at the school. Melissa Doherty a second-grade teacher at the school, said it provided the perfect chance to continue the family tradition with a friendly competition.

"It sounded like fun," she said. Monday's match, as it turned out, was one for the ages.

Melissa Doherty joined fellow teachers Ipolito Maloy, Jessica Campbell and Marianne Smith, and Elizabeth Doherty joined fellow fourth-graders Stephanie Booher, Katelyn Wadkins and Ashley Treadwell, and the teams battled it out until the very end.

During the competition, both teams matched each other question-for-question until the last few were given. The students and teachers each answered four questions where they had to name the title and author of a book after given a detail



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

From left, Stephanie Booher, Katelyn Wadkins, Elizabeth Doherty and Ashley Treadwell, all of team Little Kickers, huddle together to figure out an answer to a question for their Battle of the Books competition against a group of their teachers, who were part of the A-team.

of the book as a clue. Then they answered four questions on content from different books. Ultimately, a small detail let the Little Kickers student team slip into the lead.

On the second-to-last content question, the A-team incorrectly answered "barn loft," instead of "hay loft," which the students answered correctly. The right answer gave the Little Kickers the points they needed to beat their teachers, and in Elizabeth Doherty's case, her mother, 25-15.

Melissa Doherty said, while she

wouldn't have admitted to it beforehand, she was actually most nervous about competing against her daughter's team compared with the other teacher team. She said her daughter's team came in to practice in her classroom during lunch every day for the past couple of weeks, so she already knew how prepared they were.

"I think we were just hoping that we would score some points," she said with a laugh Monday.

Elizabeth Doherty said she, too, was most nervous about squaring off

against her mother, but it presented an excellent opportunity to show her new knowledge of what she had read.

"It was scary and awesome at the same time," she said.

Elizabeth Doherty admits the teams did a bit of trash-talking prior to their match, but that it was all in good fun. She said her and her mom's team took turns giving playfully intimidating looks. She said her mom also had told her that she was "totally going to beat her." After the match, Elizabeth also added a bit of trash-talking, herself.



MAEGAN MURRAY PHOTO

From left, Rocky Heights Elementary School teachers Ipolito Maloy, Jessica Campbell, Marianne Smith and Melissa Doherty huddle to figure out an answer to a Battle of the Books question Monday afternoon during their competition with fourth-grade team Little Kickers.

"You did really good, but we still beat you," she said to her mother with a smile.

In their next competition, team Little Kickers will face off against all of the teams in the region in a double elimination tournament at Blue Mountain Community College. And just like in the competition Monday afternoon, Elizabeth Doherty will once again duel it out with a fellow family member.

Gavin Doherty, Elizabeth's brother, a fifth-grader at Highland Hills Elementary School, will be one of the students representing his school in the tournament.

Melissa Doherty said it will be interesting to see how they handle that situation.

"It will be fun to see them go up against each other," she said.

Elizabeth Doherty and her fellow team members said, however, they think they can beat the HHES team.

"I think we're going to do it," Booher said. "We're feeling confident."

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