

NEWS

Skype with Great Read author at February 15 program blast-off

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Plainfield – Homer Hickam, author of “Rocket Boys,” the selection for this year’s Great Read community reading program will visit with readers via Skype at a special program on February 15, 2012.

The “blast-off” event for this year’s Great Read will start at 7 p.m. Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at the Joliet Barnes and Noble, 2621 Plainfield Road. The event is free and open to the public. A Nook e-reader will be given away after the program.

Several other special events tied to the book are planned, including special book discussions at each of the host libraries; a “Readers Theater” selection from “Rocket Boys” performed by District 202 students; and a free public showing of “October Sky,” the movie made from Hickam’s book.

Check the Great Read’s Facebook page and the program web site for more information at www.psd202.org/greatread

The Great Read was created in 2004 to promote literacy, reading, conversation and community in the greater Plainfield area.

“Rocket Boys” is an exciting, inspirational and funny memoir about a 1960s teen’s fascination with rocketry by a man who became an actual rocket scientist for NASA.

“Rocket boys” is the story of 14-year-old Hickam’s youth in Coalwood, West Virginia.

Like most of the world, his imagination was captured by the launch of the Sputnik satellite in October 1957.

Hickam started building his own model rockets before hobby stores started selling them in pre-assembled kits.

He made his own rocket fuel (often dangerously) and learned aerodynamics (literally) on the fly as he and his friends perfected the engineering that would let his creations soar higher and higher with each flight.

If that was the only story that Hickam told, “Rocket Boys” would have still be a very successful, entertaining book.

Luckily for readers, “Rocket Boys” is much more.

It is also a heart-rending depiction of Hickam’s need to carve out his own life. It is a story of a boy’s dream, encouraged by his mother and many others in Coalwood who understood Hickam’s very real yearning to escape the coal mines – the only reality his father, the mine superintendent, seemed to understand.

“Rocket Boys” is also a realistic story of father-son relationships as hard and dark as the coal that generations of West Virginians dug from the ground. That honesty makes it a classic.

“The Great Read” is presented by the Plainfield School District 202; the Plainfield, Joliet and Fountaindale public libraries; Plainfield Township; and the Joliet-area Barnes and Noble stores.

“The Great Read” is supported by a generous grant from the Plainfield Foundation for Excellence (www.d202foundation.org); the Friends of the Plainfield Public Library; and additional funding from participating member organizations.