

NEWS

True “community” literacy: “Great Read” collecting books for Mexico library

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FOR INFORMATION, CALL
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Plainfield – District 202-area residents are invited to share their love of great books and to help support and promote literacy across the continent by donating books to help supply a community library in Guanajuato, Mexico.

This special book drive is being done as part of the 2009-2010 “Great Read” community reading program, which this year features the novel, “Into the Beautiful North.”

“Into the Beautiful North” tells the story of a trio of modern Mexican girls inspired by a classic American movie to immigrate to the United States and bring back old-fashioned warriors to save their tiny village.

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

Community members are encouraged to buy and donate Spanish and Spanish/English books for younger children and easy English texts for older readers.

New or gently used books can be dropped off at the Youth Services Department at the Plainfield Public Library, 15025 S. Illinois St. Plainfield; the District 202 Administrative Center, 15732 Howard St., Plainfield;

The Black Road branch of the Joliet Public Library, 3395 Black Road Joliet; the Shorewood-Troy Library, 650 Deerwood Drive, Shorewood; and the Bolingbrook branch of the Fountaindale Public Library, 300 W. Briarcliff Road Bolingbrook.

Donations will be accepted through March 31, 2010.

The donated books will benefit a small community, La Colorado, in the municipality of Dolores Hidalgo in the northern part of the state of Guanajuato, Mexico. This community comprises about 1,000 people (120 children) and their small library has few books and many empty shelves.

“The Great Read” is presented by the Plainfield Public Library, Plainfield School District 202, Joliet Public Library, Fountaindale Public Library and Shorewood-Troy Public Library; and the Joliet, Bolingbrook, Plainfield and Naperville Barnes and Noble stores. The program is supported by a generous grant from the Plainfield Foundation for Excellence.

“Into the Beautiful North” is a wonderful story about immigration, changing community and similar issues relevant to the Plainfield area, which has experienced significant cultural and racial change in recent years.

The main characters’ town is being overrun by bandits because the men left years ago to find work in “Los Yunaites.” Along the way they meet a cast of characters as interesting as any in modern literature.

Their journey also provides a thought-provoking overview of the many-faceted issue of immigration; changing community; and the kind of challenges and opportunities experienced by the Plainfield area in recent years thanks to its growing cultural, racial and ethnic diversity.

Urrea is a master story teller who knows first-hand about living in both Mexico and America. The book is rich, charming and inspirational.

He also knows quite a bit about cultural diversity, having been born in Tijuana, Mexico to a Mexican father and American mother, and raised most of his life in the United States.

Urrea now lives in Naperville and teaches creative writing at the University of Illinois-Chicago. He is a critically acclaimed author of 11 books, and award-winning poet and essayist.

More information about The Great Read 2009-2010 is available at www.psd202.org/greatread.