

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Illinois Public Media
WILL Radio TV Online
Campbell Hall for Public Telecommunication
300 North Goodwin Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801-2316



December 16, 2010

Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees
c/o Teena Zindel McWilliams
130 N. Franklin St.
Decatur, IL 62523

Dear Ms. Zindel McWilliams,

I am writing to express my thanks to the Decatur Public Library for co-hosting a Sid the Science Kid family fun night with WILL-Illinois Public Media on December 8, 2010. More than 175 children and families came to the library that evening to meet Sid and explore INERTIA. As you can tell by the smiling, engaged faces in the enclosed photo collage, everyone had a wonderful time.

It is always a pleasure to work with Katie Gross and the rest of the staff in the children's department. Katie and John were on hand during our Sid event, and did an amazing job. Katie helped keep things organized, made sure everything worked properly, and helped us recruit volunteers to help at the activity stations.

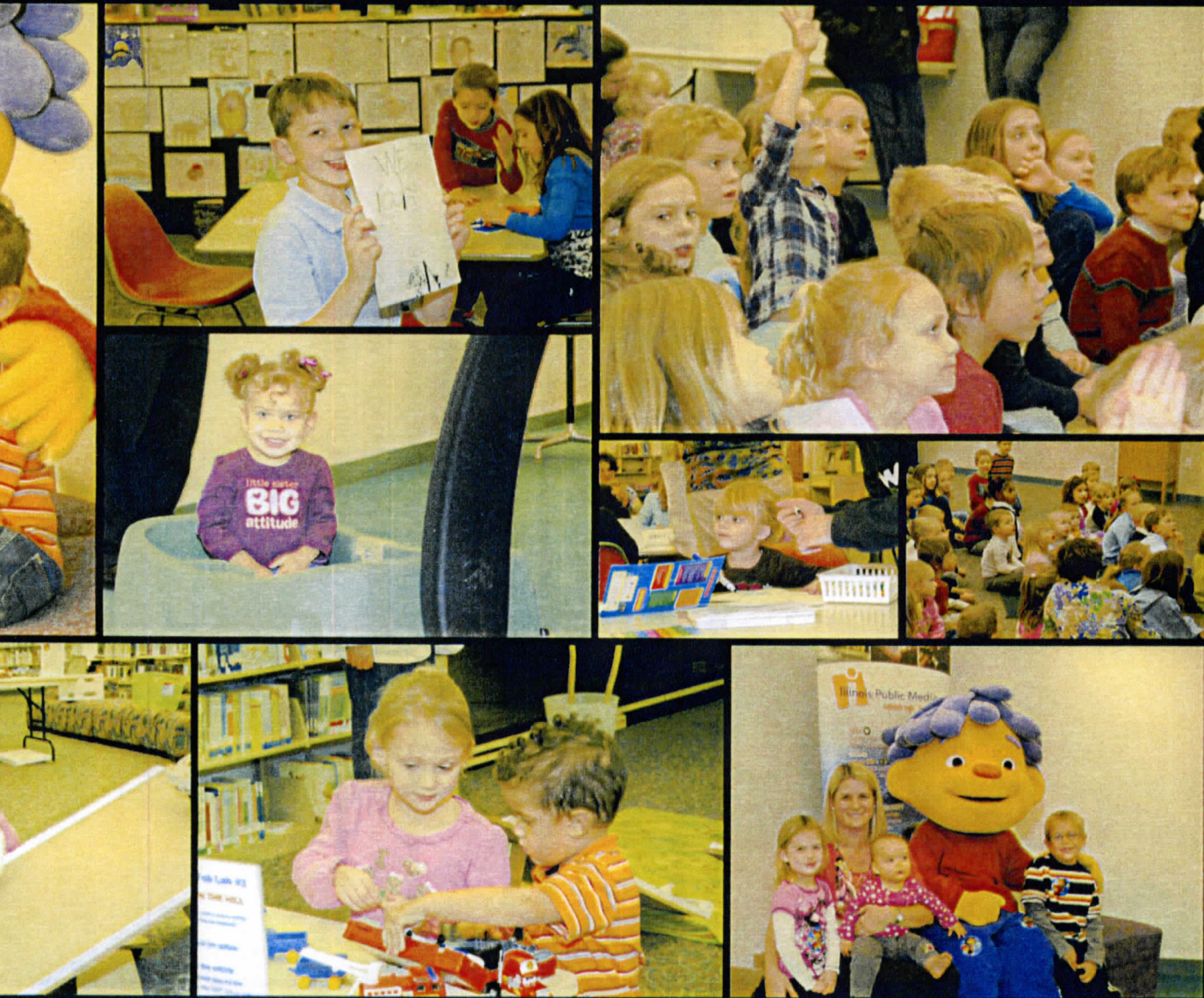
The evening was a tremendous success! In these trying economic times, it is important for organizations like ours to work together to bring resources, like this event, to the community. We thank you, the board and the library staff for partnering with us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Molly Delaney'.

Molly Delaney
Educational Outreach Director, Illinois Public Media

u for hosting a Sid the Science Kid event!



Never too young for science

Sid the Science Kid brings experiments to the Decatur Public Library

By **JIM VOREL**
H&R Staff Writer

DECATUR — The 6-foot, costumed version of Sid the Science Kid who visited the Decatur Public Library on Wednesday evening was significantly larger than the popular PBS preschool character he was portraying, but he brought the same message — science is fun, and no kid is too young to be an amateur scientist.

The show, which is broadcast locally on WILL-TV at 10 a.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. Saturday, features “inquisitive youngster” Sid, who uses basic science experiments with the help of his friends, family and teacher to answer questions about his daily life. These questions include lessons ranging from why it might be a bad idea to eat birthday cake every day to the basic properties of Newton’s Laws. On Wednesday at the library, about 100 children and parents tackled science experiments on the topic of “inertia,” under the watchful eyes of Sid.

“The kids are going to be decorating science journals that they can take home and use for journaling their experiments,” said children’s librarian Katie Gross. “There is also a science reading area over there with books that are appropriate for the range of ages we have here tonight. We carry



some of the DVDs as well, but they’re all checked out by now with so many parents and kids here who are fans of Sid.”

The most popular draws were several more hands-on activities that showed the junior scientists, mostly preschool and early elementary school students, some of the properties of inertia. Using a few small ramps, cars, action figures and masking tape, the kids learned how seatbelts keep passengers from being thrown from a vehicle in a crash.

“We’re fans of the show, very much so,” said Marianne Stehr of Decatur, who was waiting in line to meet Sid along with her energetic 3-year-old son, Alex. “We watch in the morning before we send his older sister off to school. Sid does all kinds of experiments on subjects like textures and pulleys and animals.”

When asked if she believed the

program was a good teaching aid, Stehr said it was very helpful.

“I absolutely feel like he’s learning when he’s watching the show, and he really enjoys it, too,” she said. “I really try to only let him watch the shows I think he can learn something from.”

Decatur resident Matt Hardin said he even had incorporated shows like Sid the Science Kid into lessons for his children as part of their home schooling. His three children, Spencer, 9, Chloe, 6, and Lily, 8 months, were all attending the event and enjoyed decorating their science journals.

“Whenever the library puts on anything like this, we’re almost always here,” Hardin said. “When we teach them science lessons, shows like ‘Sid the Science Kid’ make it more fun and interesting for them. Friendly cartoon characters go a long way.”

The event is not the first of its kind, as previous PBS learning events have included other popular characters such as Dora the Explorer or Clifford the Big Red Dog.

“They’re all usually pretty strongly attended, because the kids are eager to learn,” Gross said. “WILL-TV’s been very good to us by doing these events.”

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EARLY LEARNING



Herald & Review/Stephen Haas

Henry Fawer, 1, of Decatur takes a closer look at Sid the Science Kid while posing for photos during an event in the children's area at the Decatur Public Library. BELOW: Mike Clark of Madison, N.J., a junior history and communications major at the University of Illinois, helps 3-year-old Marianna Owens of Decatur learn about inertia in a 'super fab lab.'