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**GET CREATIVE@YOUR LIBRARY THIS SUMMER**

***First Lady Carla Markell launches Summer Library Reading Program, May 28***

(DOVER, DEL) May 19, 2009 — First Lady Carla Markell will kick off the statewide Summer Library Reading Program on May 28, with a 10 a.m. ceremony at the Dover Public Library. The Delaware Division of Libraries, Delaware Library Association, and public libraries have sponsored the Summer Library Reading Program for more than 30 years.

Delaware storyteller and musician Michael Forestieri will also appear at the event, sharing some of his enchanting tales of adventure about creative young people from near and far.

The theme of this year's Summer Library Reading Program is "Be Creative@Your Library," which encourages children to read books that inspire them to express themselves artistically, dramatically, musically, politically or technologically. In other words, summer reading includes *all* kinds of books!

"Reading is a wonderful way to stimulate creativity," says Markell. "Finding books that motivate and inspire children to pursue their interests is a great way to spend time on a hot summer day."

Those who complete the program will receive a free book provided by the Division of Libraries, as well as a certificate signed by Governor Jack Markell and the local librarian.

"Research has shown that children who read over the summer perform better when they return to school in the fall," said Delaware Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock, whose department includes the Division of Libraries. "They are able to retain and even improve upon the reading skills they learned during the past year. When reading is an important part of their summer vacations, kids become better learners year-round."

Participants in the Summer Library Reading Program will receive a reading log to keep track of the books they read, and can check off every 15 minutes of reading they accomplish. Some libraries set a goal for the number of books read, while others focus on the amount of time spent reading.

Young children who cannot read yet can get credit for books that are read to them. Older siblings are encouraged to read to a younger brother or sister, so pre-readers can develop the habit of reading.

"Libraries play an important role in supporting individual talents and guiding children on their path through lifelong learning," said Annie Norman, State Librarian, Delaware Division of Libraries.

For more information about the Summer Library Reading Program and a schedule of events, contact your local library. For information on public libraries in your area, call the Division of Libraries at (302) 739-4748 or go to [www.lib.de.us](http://www.lib.de.us)

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