

A TALE OF LITERACY.(Springfield Extra)

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The Springfield School District celebrated its third annual Education Day on May 22 with two special events - the Gift of Literacy celebration, where nearly 1,000 Springfield first-graders received new books; and a "Springfield Reads Again" evening reception to honor and thank 250 community supporters.

The Gift of Literacy celebration at Lane Community College featured local celebrities who read books to the children in 30-minute sessions. The celebration is the culmination of the school district's yearlong program designed to inspire a love of reading in children.

Among the numerous celebrity readers were Mayor Sid Leiken; Michael Garland, author of the Gift of Literacy book "Miss Smith Reads Again"; Amy Costales, author of the Gift of Literacy book "Abuelita Full of Life"; Bev Smith, University of Oregon women's basketball coach; Bob Welch, author and Register-Guard columnist; Renee McCullough of KMTR-TV; and Korenza Burris of KEZI-TV.

Greeting the children were such book characters as Curious George, Froggy, Franklin, Clifford the Big Red Dog, Wild Thing and Hedgie the Hedgehog

The "Springfield Reads Again" reception was held at the Royal Caribbean Cruises facility later in the evening. The evening opened with remarks from Springfield School Board Chairman Garry Weber.