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WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER



Group Spotlight: Making Friends, Writing Stories, and Talking About Self-Advocacy in Utah





The Utah Developmental Disabilities Council sponsors three Next Chapter Book Clubs groups! The first club is in Park City, the second in Salt Lake City at the Columbus Library, and the third in West Jordan. We got to learn a little about each club!

Park City

The Park City club meets in the cafe at the city library. Many of the participants of the club also work at the café, and many library patrons support the club and the library cafe. The facilitators for the club are Kate, a Park City librarian, and Gerd, a community member. The group's favorite books have been *James and the Giant Peach* and *El Deafo*. When they finish *James*, they plan to watch the movie.

For the participants, the favorite things about the club have been the relaxed atmosphere; listening to others read; being with people who are accepting and never laugh at mistakes; and making friends who respect them and are kind. The club members say that the facilitators are patient, kind, and let readers know it is okay to make mistakes. Members look forward to the party after they finish a book. They are hoping the librarians will be able to bring service animals to club events!

Salt Lake City, Columbus Library

Columbus Library's club is a small group. Librarians Liz, Lee, and Jenny are the facilitators. The club has read a number of books, and they also do something very special: they write their own stories! Jenny, who is from Smith Library, came up with the story-writing idea. Here's what she has to say about the experience:

"In the beginning, we were having a difficult time deciding what to read. So, we decided to write our own story. Our members came up with names and attributes. They would suggest favorite songs or foods and other things they liked and I would write those details into the story. I bundled each chapter into its own individual book. I also added some pictures to go along with our stories. We had so much fun reading the stories that contained the names and details that our members recognize.

"The stories are about Ida, a young woman in her 20s, who lives with her older sister, Natalie. Ida is funny, works at a library, and doesn't drive. More than anything, she wants to adopt a cat, but she is allergic! The story follows Ida as she interacts with workmates, goes shopping with her mom, takes a vacation to Hawaii with her sister and parents, and adopts a hairless cat!"

The members enjoy sharing a story or two from their week at the beginning of the meetings. And they end each meeting with a sing-along. They had a fantastic holiday party with sparkling cider and doughnuts, and an hour-long sing-along with accompaniment by a ukulele and two guitars!

The facilitators often say that the Next Chapter Book Club meeting is their favorite hour of the week. Just watching the smiles and hearing the laughter of the members is a joy. The mother of one member told the facilitator that she can't get him to go anywhere, but every Wednesday, he's dressed, ready, and excited to leave for NCBC.

West Jordan

The West Jordan club started out with day program participants, but has grown to include local community members, many of whom ride the train to the library specifically to attend book club. The facilitators are W.J. Mark, a retiree community member, and UDDC staff. The favorite series from the West Jordan club has been the *Seraphina*

series by Robert Beatty. At the end of the last book, there is a Christmas scene that takes place in the Biltmore Mansion. The group got together to watch a special Christmas documentary about the holidays at Biltmore Mansion.

The books have led to discussions of self-advocacy because of all the challenges the character experiences. The club also uses Passports, where participants put stickers into their passports based on the books they've read. Recently, the group has been adding comments in their passports as each book is finished about how the characters practice self-advocacy.

Are you interested in sharing your NCBC story? We love to highlight the incredible stories that are happening in clubs all around the country.

[CLICK HERE: I am interested in sharing my story](#)

Germantown Community Library Awarded Grant for Book Club

In July 2018, the Germantown Community Library in Germantown, TN was awarded \$7,150.00 from the Tennessee Disability Coalition to grow their Next Chapter Book Club. Lisa Hagen, Adult Services Library Associate at the Library, is the NCBC Program Coordinator. According to Lisa, "The grant has allowed us to increase our meetings to weekly from bi-monthly. In addition, the grant has given us the freedom to meet outside the library several times at local restaurants, coffee shops, and other venues." The Library is using the grant to buy new books for the group to read as well as NCBC gear for all members. They are also bringing in presenters relevant to the books they are reading. "I recently brought in a magician to perform for the NCBC and library patrons because we are reading a biography of Harry Houdini," Lisa said. Congratulations to the Germantown Community Library!

Home Office Update

Welcome to Our Winter Newsletter!

Happy New Year! We wish everyone wonderful times ahead. We are pleased to announce that our new book, *New Love, Spilt Milk and Potbellied Pigs*, is now available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble for \$14.99 with free shipping. Our first book, *Lucky Dogs, Lost Hats and Dating Don'ts*, can still be purchased on our website for the same price, along with other great NCBC items like shirts, bookbags, water bottles, and book marks. All of these items make great gifts and can increase book club identity for members and volunteers.

We are pleased to announce that three new part-time people are working for Chapters Ahead to help with a variety of outreach and internal organizational activities. Marilyn Darrow has a background in marketing and sales, Tom Sabol is a former special education teacher, and Rachel Leff is a librarian. They each bring special talents to NCBC that will be extremely valuable. They will help support Tom Fish and Lyna Smith in running our national operations.

Travels with Tom: Rwanda



I'm heading to a small country in central Africa called Rwanda to help them start book clubs. Rwanda is famous for growing great coffee and having one of the largest populations of mountain gorillas in the world. Jack Hanna, a well-known Zoo Director from Columbus, Ohio, has spent a lot of time in Rwanda and has a home there. A close friend of Jack's is also a lifelong friend of mine from Chicago, who has been a huge supporter of the book clubs. My friend helped us connect with people in Rwanda who are very excited about implementing book clubs.

During our week stay in Rwanda, the plan is to do demonstrations in three areas of the country. We will also be talking with government leaders to promote the cause of community inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). What we hear is that most people with IDD in Rwanda live at home and hidden away without services or live on the streets as beggars. Few, if any, have had exposure to formal education, thus do not have reading skills, let alone speak English.

I look forward to the challenge of helping adapt NCBC to a country where the culture and language of participants will be quite different. Many questions keep running through my head as to how to approach the visit. Individuals implementing the program have taken our online training and we have had many online discussions about cultural considerations that will need to be taken into account. I guess I will just have to hit the road running. I look

forward to keeping everyone updated about the Rwanda book clubs.

Too-da-loo!

Tote Bags!

One of our Board members generously donated book bags to be given to randomly selected clubs that are registered as affiliates and appear on our map. Please register your group on our map for your chance to win! So far, four clubs have won:

- Parsons Public Library, Parsons, Kansas
- Germantown Public Library, Germantown, Tennessee
- Carnegie Library, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania
- Verus Health Partners, Melbourne, Florida



Sheila Halter, facilitator for the Carnegie Library group, sent us this picture and a note:

"I received the totes last week and was able to distribute many of them on Tuesday evening. The group members and facilitators were thrilled! They spent the final part of their discussion talking about what they were going to put in their new bags and most decided that they should check out more books and use it to carry them around! Everyone was so excited and I'm very impressed with the quality and the style of the bags. It was really fun for me to pass these out and see how happy they made our group."

Group News

We love hearing from groups about what they're up to!

Here's some news from across the NCBC family...

East Lyme Public Library, East Lyme, Connecticut

From Rebecca Scotka, Children's and Young Adult Librarian

"Friday's group session was wonderful. One of the members who is usually non-communicative signed thank you to me. It was the first time I ever saw him smile."

RCM of Washington, DC

From Holly R. Flickinger, MA, Director of Strategic Development & Partnerships



"Good news to report! Our DC NCBC had an extra special meeting on January 2. Turnout was good (only two missing members) and everyone was in good spirits after the holidays. A customer at our regular meeting location, Peet's Coffee, surprised the whole group with free drinks and pastries!"

NCBC of Loudoun County, Virginia
From Jennifer Alves, NCBC Loudoun Facilitator



"On Monday, October 15th, Loudoun's Next Chapter Book Club celebrated 5 years of friendship. A special visit was arranged to the new Makerspace inside Rust Library. Next Chapter members were introduced to and tried their skills at using a die-cut paper press. Everyone had a fun time. Thank you to Loudoun County Public Library for the cool gifts!"

My Autism Connection, Fort Meyers, Florida
From Kaitlyn Shaker, Program Coordinator

"My Autism Connection is a nonprofit organization located in Fort Myers, Florida that currently serves 35 adults (ages 18-50) with high-functioning autism. We are so excited to now offer a book club to our members! Our organization became an affiliate of the Next Chapter Book Club in 2018 and our members have truly enjoyed it. Our two clubs just finished reading *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio and *Zen and the Art of Faking It* by Jordan Sonnenblick. Our members had a wonderful time learning new vocabulary words and discussing important topics. We just watched the movie *Wonder* and discussed the differences and similarities between the book and the movie. Thank you, Next Chapter Book Club, for allowing us to provide this wonderful opportunity to our members!"

We Want to Hear from You!

Book Reviews

We would love to share some book reviews from our groups. Tell us what you read, whether you liked it, and why. We may include your review in our newsletter!

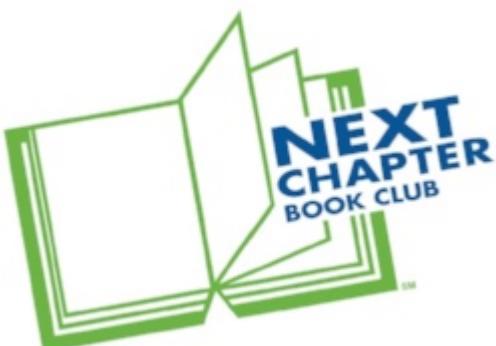
Celebrations

Did you do something fun to celebrate finishing a book? We'd love to hear about it!

Group News

Did your group just have an anniversary or reach a milestone? Let us know! Have you done anything cool to raise money for books? The other groups would love to hear about it!

Send your reviews and news to tfish@nextchapterbookclub.org.



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