

# LITERARY LIONS GALA

## CELEBRATING READERS WRITERS & LIBRARIES

Pulitzer Prize-winning Author  
**RICHARD RUSSO**

Emcee

**NANCY PEARL**

40 Talented  
Northwest Authors

Literary Silent Auction

**BELLEVUE LIBRARY  
MARCH 6, 2010**

Unite talented authors and devoted readers with the opportunity to dine and celebrate in the library and you have the key elements of a premier Northwest event: the KCLS Foundation's Literary Lions Gala.

The Gala is a "literary feast" that features talented writers, celebrates the joy of reading, offers opportunities to meet new and favorite authors and raises funds for literacy and lifelong learning programs.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Russo will join 40 talented Northwest authors and popular emcee Nancy Pearl at the event.

Mr. Russo's novel *Empire Falls* won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. He has written five other novels: *Mohawk*, *The Risk Pool*, *Nobody's Fool*, *Straight Man* and *Bridge of Sighs*. Russo co-wrote the 1998 film *Twilight* with director Robert Benton, who also adapted and directed Russo's *Nobody's Fool* into a 1994 film of the same name, starring Paul Newman. His most recent novel, *That Old Cape Magic*, was released in 2009.



Photo © Elena Siebert

This is a rare opportunity to meet the renowned Mr. Russo, a resident of Maine, who is retired from the faculty of Colby College.

The Bellevue Library on Saturday, March 6, 2010 is the perfect setting as you discover and meet authors, buy their books and enjoy a unique literary-themed silent auction. A fabulous array of food will feature buffets on both floors.

Invitations will be in the mail soon. For more information or to reserve your tickets, contact Claire Wilkinson, [cwilkins@kcls.org](mailto:cwilkins@kcls.org), 425.369.3448 or visit [www.kclsfoundation.org/literarylions](http://www.kclsfoundation.org/literarylions).



# Foundation Focus 2010: Literacy, Learning, Libraries

The Foundation supports programs that reach out and encourage residents of all ages to enjoy reading and learning. This year, more than 150,000 children, youth and adults will benefit from the Foundation-supported programs in our libraries and in our communities. Here is a snapshot of activities:

The Foundation will provide funding for opening day collections in the four **Library2Go!** vans. These units will visit apartment complexes, community centers and other venues where residents gather and will bring books and materials for checkout. For many residents, this will be their first encounter with the library's collections and resources that can provide educational and entertainment titles.

**Books for Babies** provides reading tips, packets, books and an Early Literacy DVD to low-income parents of newborns.

The **Ready to Read** program brings Early Literacy training to parents and caregivers. New in 2010 will be a reprinting of the Guidebooks (in English and Spanish) for participants and a launch of a **Read Me A Story** program for preschoolers.

**Fiestas** (Early Literacy Parties) offer Spanish-speaking parents and caregivers workshops and resources featuring peer-to-peer training.

The **Summer Reading Program** is a popular and effective way for young readers to maintain and enhance their skills over the summer and gain a love for reading.

The **Study Zone** recruits volunteer tutors who work with students in the libraries and online. The Foundation funds free SAT classes for teens in South King County.

**Read 3, Get 1 Free** encourages teens to read all year round; special incentives in the summer promote reading and creating video reviews and trailers.

**Global Reading Challenge** involves 238 teams in 18 school districts participating in local, regional and grand challenge events.

**Ready, Set, Read** encourages elementary school students to develop the reading habit and helps parents be 'reading coaches.'

**Literacy Toward Citizenship** offers workshops and workbooks to residents seeking citizenship.

With reading at the heart of the Foundation's mission, a new initiative is in the planning, with a launch in late 2010. More details will be available later this year, or contact me for more information, [jthorsen@kcls.org](mailto:jthorsen@kcls.org).



Jeanne Thorsen,  
Executive Director  
KCLS Foundation

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**KCLS Foundation**  
960 Newport Way NW  
Issaquah, WA 98027

425.369.3448  
[www.kclsfoundation.org](http://www.kclsfoundation.org)  
[foundation@kcls.org](mailto:foundation@kcls.org)

# Transforming Lives – The Story of One Young Reader

*“Will is a young neighbor of mine and his story shows the benefit of supporting reading programs in our community. Thanks to Anne Desler for sharing her son’s powerful story.” Dean Smith, KCLS Foundation Past President.*

Given his unique challenges, nothing has ever come easy to our son, Will. Diagnosed at birth with a profound hearing loss, Will benefited from an early diagnosis, intervention services, hearing technology and a specialized oral-deaf preschool. Now Will can hear and understand spoken language, and he communicates at levels above his age group and rarely stops talking.

Will picked up a board book and at 2½ years old sounded out his first word. We assumed reading was around the corner. But as he got older, and the print in his books became smaller and more words appeared on each page, Will began to resist reading—vehemently. We chose to home-school him for kindergarten and to focus on basic skills in a pressure-free environment. Then we discovered that his vision was impaired, making reading difficult and frustrating.

After several months of vision therapy, phonics training and hours and hours reading aloud to him, Will slowly dropped his resistance and cautiously showed an interest in trying to read. He asked to try school again and started Kindergarten in June. During Will’s second week of school, local librarians gave a presentation to his class about the summer reading program, Be Creative @ Your Library. Will came home very excited and he explained how you track your reading time by coloring

in circles on an artist’s pallet for every 20 minutes that you read, and best of all, there were prizes: a Pizza Hut personal pizza when the reader reaches 500 minutes and an 80-piece art kit at 1,000 minutes. The summer reading program provided Will the incentive to read and read and read.

Each morning we discussed how much we had read at bedtime the night before and Will would fill in the circles. Throughout the day, we would track the amount of time Will read. He used the same crayon, Crayola pine green, to color in his circles.

Will was so proud once he completed his first pallet in early July, and enthusiastically went on to filling in another. Mid-month, when the prize day arrived, Will was already at 1,260 minutes. Soon after his “home” library branch (Fall City) opened, Will entered the library and was greeted warmly, and he proudly showed his completed pallet, which the librarian initialed at the 500 and 1,000 minute marks. Ceremoniously, Will received his certificate of completion, a bookmark, his Pizza Hut coupon and his treasured art kit. He was told that he was the first person in Fall City to claim his prizes and this made him feel like the most accomplished reader on the planet.

Will completed three more 1,000-minute pallets. He used the same crayon, until it snapped in half



under the pressure of a dedicated hand. Each time, the librarian initialed his pallet and congratulated him with words full of praise, respect and enthusiasm. Instead of prizes, Will would write his name on a construction paper cut-out of a crayon or a paint splotch, which were displayed in the library window.

On September 15th, Will completed his final pallet. A full-time first grader, Will now reads at a 4th grade level.

Be Creative came along at the perfect time for Will. He moved from being a cautious reader who just needed a little confidence, incentive and praise (from people other than his parents) to a thriving and voracious reader whose skills are more developed and whose interest in learning more is limitless. The program really got through to Will and turned his emerging reading skills into a love of reading! And all this happened between June 15–September 15, 2009.

*“The program really got through to Will and turned his emerging reading skills into a love of reading!”*

# Empowered by Open Source: IMLS Grant Boosts KCLS Evergreen Project

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded KCLS a \$998,556 grant to expand open source integrated library systems. The open source model provides an alternative to the current proprietary integrated library system software business model used by most public libraries. This new model empowers libraries to actively engage in the design and optimization of their own system software, spreads the development work across a wide range of contributors, extends the potential pool of service providers and empowers libraries to optimize service to their customers.

“We are redesigning the system to respond to the changing demands of our library users, to make it easier to use and to allow us—and other libraries—to benefit from collaborative future innovations,” said Jed Moffitt, KCLS Director of Technology. “This is one of the

most talked-about technology projects in the country because it allows any partner to make their own changes and then suggest enhancements for others,” added KCLS Director Bill Ptacek.

King County Library System, a nationally recognized leader in public library service and technology, will partner with Peninsula Library System (San Mateo, California), Orange County Library System (Orlando, Florida), and Ann Arbor (Michigan) District Library to create and develop the critical infrastructure components that have traditionally been provided by vendors and will establish a robust peer-to-peer support model. The project will stimulate a growing community of libraries that will benefit from and contribute to software applications and support infrastructure in an open source model.

## InfoBiz

KCLS received a Renew Washington Project grant from the Washington State Library to offer InfoBiz, an online resource center to help struggling small business owners and entrepreneurs. The \$50,000 grant is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

InfoBiz will feature videos, tutorials and podcasts on demand that detail business strategies, resources and concepts presented by local business experts. Topics for the InfoBiz library of online resources will be selected in consultation with community partner agencies; online resources will be supplemented by PowerPoint presentations, sample business forms and other information. For more information, contact Jeff Kempe, KCLS Adult Services Coordinator, [jhkempe@kcls.org](mailto:jhkempe@kcls.org).

*“Reading makes immigrants of us all.” It takes us away from home, but more important, it finds homes for us everywhere.” ~Hazel Rochman, Reviewer and Author*

## Yes! I want to help create a community of readers!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) would like to support the King County Library System Foundation with a gift of:

\$35     \$50     \$75     \$100     \$200     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My (our) gift is made by:  Check (enclosed)     Credit Card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Diners Club, Discover)

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