

# ink



**JUNIOR LEAGUE OF  
DENVER**

*Women building better communities®*

**Changing Lives Through Literacy**

**Read • Learn • Grow**

**Literacy Issue**

*Volume 1314 — Issue 3*

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**Colorado Literacy Week is May 19–23, 2014**

# Grow:

*to increase in size, number, or degree.*

## A Successful Year for our League Literacy Efforts!



*Children hear a story at a recent JLD Read2Kids event.*

*We have a new literacy page at [www.jld.org](http://www.jld.org)! Click on Community Impact/Literacy to see a listing of our programs, literacy facts and more.*

*By Helen Lutz, ink Reporter*

The 2013–2014 year has been very successful in our community focus area, literacy.

Below are some numbers for the year for all of our League programs. Thank you to ALL members that serve on the Community Council and work tirelessly on behalf of the JLD and our community!

- **Read2Kids:** Seven events were held this year at Molholm Elementary, Colfax Elementary, Swansea Elementary, Fairview Elementary Bishop Elementary, SOAR and McGlone Elementary. A total of 460 children served, 2,000 books distributed and 743 meals served.
- **Kids Connect (Children's Outreach Project and Sheridan Early Childhood Center):** About 100 children served, 700 books distributed and 26 program nights. Also, an average of 13 children read 2,075 books OUTSIDE the program nights, exceeding the original goal of 2,000 books!
- **123 Grants:** The Junior League of Denver will be awarding two \$4,500 grants to qualified Denver metro area schools or organizations in June 2014. The funding for these grants is tied to Senate Bill 09-123 to fund at-risk schools serving 6th, 7th and 8th grades in decreasing high-school drop-out rates.
- **Done in a Day:** 133 shifts have been completed with 612 volunteers participating and 1,628 hours contributed to the Denver metro community.
- **The Gathering Place:** Approximately 5,040 meals served from September 2013 to May 2014. Approximately 5,040 women served since September 2013.

Becky Theis, Community Council Vice President, was also happy to share that our Literacy Committee has been working on a new literacy page on our website that will truly encompass what we do and provide resources around early childhood literacy.

It has truly been a successful year for Junior League Denver as an organization that stands out to help promote literacy efforts in our community. Questions? Email [community@jld.org](mailto:community@jld.org)

# JLD Proud Sponsor of One Book 4 Colorado, April 7–21, 2014

The Junior League of Denver sponsored One Book 4 Colorado again in 2014! This project strives to give away copies of the same book to every four year old in Colorado through public libraries, Reach Out and Read Colorado clinics, and Denver preschools. Last year, about 70,000 books were distributed statewide. The first One Book 4 Colorado program was in 2012. This year's winning book, *Grumpy Bird* by Jeremy Tankard, was given away April 7–21, 2014 at participating libraries, clinics and Denver preschools around the state. We are very proud of this effort to get books in the hands of children while making reading fun! Visit [www.onebook4colorado.org](http://www.onebook4colorado.org) for more information.



*Photo on left and on cover courtesy of One Book 4 Colorado.*

In 2011, only **1/2** of all Colorado students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch scored proficient on the reading

portion of the CSAP, compared to **80%** of students not eligible.



There is a substantial relationship between parent involvement for the school and reading comprehension levels of fourth-grade classrooms is obvious, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Low Parent Involvement

**46 pts** ↓

Below National Average Reading Score

High Parent Involvement

**28 pts** ↑

Above National Average Reading Score

# Give:

*to present voluntarily and without expecting compensation.*



*Little Free Library  
in Montclair  
neighborhood.*

## The JLD Introduces New 2014–2015 Literacy Programs

*By Winifred Leung, ink Reporter*

With the goal of reaching more people in the Denver metro area and expanding our ongoing literacy efforts, the JLD is excited to introduce two new community projects for the 2014–2015 League year. Starting in June 2014, the League will provide volunteers for one-on-one tutoring with children at **Reading Partners Colorado** and **Mile High Montessori Early Learning Centers** through our **Tutoring With Kids Committee**. The League will also start creating **Little Free Libraries** in the Denver metro area. It's a "take a book, return a book" gathering place where neighbors share their favorite literature and stories. In its most basic form, a Little Free Library is a box full of books where anyone may stop by and pick up a book (or two) and bring back another book to share.

Tutoring With Kids will allow JLD members to partner with Mile High Montessori Early Learning Centers at three high-need schools, and will provide volunteers with necessary training in dialogic reading, teaching them to effectively engage children and increase comprehension during reading sessions. Tutoring With Kids will also partner with a second organization, Reading Partners Colorado, to facilitate reading and tutoring sessions in schools and libraries.

**Becky Theis**, current Community Vice President and incoming President-Elect, says that the Tutoring With Kids Committee will start with approximately 12 members, allowing each to focus on building a relationship with her student.

As part of the JLD's other new program, Little Free Libraries, members will work together to increase access to books for children and promote a love of reading by building book-exchange structures. The committee will also identify areas that will benefit most from book-share locations and has a goal of installing a minimum of ten libraries this coming year. It is estimated that each library goes through at least 25 books a month and attracts five to ten people with each selection. "These numbers are on the conservative side," PR&D Chair **Christy Bailey** said, "and we have the potential to place books in the hands of over 12,500 children with our overall goal of creating 100 libraries."

**Little Free Libraries:** [www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org); **Mile High Montessori Early Learning Centers:** [www.milehighmontessori.org](http://www.milehighmontessori.org); **Reading Partners Colorado:** [www.readingpartners.org/colorado](http://www.readingpartners.org/colorado)  
Questions? Email [community@jld.org](mailto:community@jld.org)

# Message from the President

Dear JLD members,

The JLD debuted a very special PSA video on early childhood literacy for children birth through third grade at The Journey on March 13, 2014! We are so grateful to our community partners for their support.

Alison Keiser, JLD Read2Kids Chair, speaks of the importance of literacy at an early age saying, "Literacy is the fundamental currency of a person's success in life." Alison also speaks of her involvement in the program saying, "For me, it is one of the most meaningful and gratifying things I've done in my life." United Way President and CEO Christine Benero also supports the JLD in the video saying, "Everybody can make a difference and can actually change a child's life. We have to get involved early." Colorado Lt. Governor Joe Garcia is also featured in the literacy video supporting the literacy efforts of JLD, "We simply cannot be successful without groups like Junior League of Denver saying we will help provide the man power, the resources, and the focus on these kids before they get to school."

## **Thank you to the following community partners for participating in this very special project:**

- Alex Fenn, DPS 3rd Grade Teacher
- Alison Keiser, JLD Read2Kids Chair
- Charlotte Brantley, President and CEO, Clayton Early Learning
- Christine Benero, President and CEO, Mile High United Way
- Joe Garcia, Colorado Lt. Governor
- Michael B. Hancock, Denver Mayor
- Mitch Morrissey, Denver District Attorney
- Shirley Amore, City Librarian

I would also like to thank Jennifer Jones, Angela Andrews, Vanessa Banker and our friends at Fireside Production for their work on this PSA. If you would like to watch the video, visit [www.jld.org](http://www.jld.org), and click on Community Impact/Literacy.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving as your 2013–2014 President. Thank you for all you do for the League!

Sincerely,



Lisa Lumley  
2013–2014 Junior League of Denver President  
[president@jld.org](mailto:president@jld.org)



*Lisa Lumley, 2013–  
2014 Junior League  
of Denver President*

1 in 10

1 in 10 Colorado 3rd graders enter 4th grade functionally illiterate.



# Get connected:

*join together to provide access and exchange.*



## An Interview with Sustainer Gene Koelbel

*By Priscilla Lichty, ink Reporter*

**Gene Koelbel** knows a thing or two about being a dedicated volunteer in the Denver metro community: she's been working hard at it for more than 55 years.

From serving on the boards of four separate Denver based charities, to writing hand written appeals for donations and for volunteers, Gene has demonstrated time and again what it means to be committed to an important cause. Most recently Gene was awarded the 9News Volunteer of the Month Award for her involvement with the The Denver Santa Claus Shop. The organization was created by the Junior League of Denver in 1931 to ensure that every child would have a toy from Santa Claus at Christmas.

"We're the oldest all volunteer organization in the state and probably one of the oldest in the country... we don't have a paid CEO or an office or anything. We run it out of our homes," states Gene about The Denver Santa Claus Shop.

Gene started volunteering for the Shop in 1956 when the Junior League of Denver asked her to help staff the organization for the coming season. Since then, Gene and her whole family give their time, their energy and their love to The Denver Santa Claus Shop each holiday season.

While discussing the Shop, Gene said, "The Shop is very special and it's just fun to be involved. I've been involved for so long, it's just part of Christmas."

Gene was invited to become a member of the Junior League of Denver in 1954, a time when her Provisional class consisted of only 13 women. Gene feels that the Junior League of Denver's efforts to expose women to volunteer opportunities in Denver left a great impression both on her and on many of the friends she made through the League.

"When we came out of the Junior League, we all learned to do something and we just carried on. A lot of my friends are very involved in different things, different charities, different organizations and they just carried on. And I see a lot of them that are still very involved."

Gene, we are so proud of you! Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our community.

# Learn more about Kids Connect, a Signature JLD Program

*By the 2013–2014 Kids Connect Committee*

Twice a month, JLD members gather at Children's Outreach Project in north Denver for a fun-filled evening of dinner, arts, crafts, singing, and reading with children and their families.

Children's Outreach Project has been serving the north Denver area for nearly 30 years, providing a diverse and integrated early childhood education for children ages 2–5. The Children's Outreach Project's mission is to provide children of all abilities with quality, affordable education — and our community partnership with them helps achieve this.

One of the primary goals of the Kids Connect Committee is to promote early childhood brain development and to arm parents with the tools to help their children succeed. Committee members receive training emphasizing the importance of reading to and with children, along with helpful ways to engage the child, encourage creativity, and enhance comprehension. Each committee member is matched with a family at the beginning of the semester, and they are able to put this training to good use throughout the year.

“We have been coming to Kids Connect for about a year and a half,” said Monica, mother of two children, Conrad and Brielle, who attend COP and Kids Connect program nights. “My daughter has dyslexia, and it has really helped with her reading skills and comprehension.”

Each visit is full of fun activities developed around a different children's storybook. The child, their siblings, and their parents are all provided with a free, healthy dinner. Afterward, the families and JLD members participate in reading, art and music sessions. At the end of the night, each child is sent home with a bag of fun activities and exercises — plus whatever they created at the program night! Children take home the storybook each month to help encourage reading at home, and to facilitate interaction between parents and their children. According to Monica, there are a lot of great things about Kids Connect, like dinner and being able to take the books home at the end of each month. But the best part, she says, is that “it brings families together and helps the kids make new friends.”

This year alone, committee members will contribute nearly 50 volunteer hours each. Thank you to all members who serve on the Kids Connect Committee. You truly make a difference in our community.

Kids Connect™  
A Community Project of the Junior League of Denver



According to NCES2, only

# 53%

of children ages three to five  
were read to daily by a  
family member

*Please visit [www.jld.org](http://www.jld.org)  
and click on Community  
Impact/Literacy for  
statistic sources from  
this issue of ink.*



### **ink Committee**

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*Winifrid Leung, Reporter*

*Priscilla Lichty, Reporter*

*Helen Lutz, Reporter*

To submit content for consideration (article ideas, pictures), please email to [ink@jld.org](mailto:ink@jld.org).

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### **Mission**

The Junior League of Denver, Incorporated (founded in 1918), is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Our purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.



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*Women building better communities®*

**Changing Lives Through Literacy**

**Read • Learn • Grow**

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Denver, CO 80222-7184

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