

More than Books

February is Food for Fines Month

February is Food for Fines Month at Freeport Library. For every can of food or non-perishable food item brought in during the month of February, the library will “forgive” up to \$1 in fines. All food collected stays in the community and will be divided between the Salvation Army and Freeport Area Church Cooperative (FACC).

Library users - and abusers - have a chance to do two good deeds at once: clear those pesky overdue fines from their records and help others less fortunate in the process.

You don't have to have library fines to donate to the drive. Please consider bringing in non-perishable, nutritious food, such as peanut butter, canned meats, chili, tuna, baby food, or baby formula, and help match or even beat our all-time donation record of over 1,000 pounds of food for the needy.

"Why February?" a friend asked me. Well, it allows us to take advantage of a valentine theme and ask that you "Have a Heart and Donate Food for Fines." It is also a good time, post-holidays, to help replenish supplies at the Salvation Army and FACC.

Black History Month

Each year, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) sets a theme for Black History Month. The 2015 theme is “Celebrating our Centennial: A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture.”

It was in 1915 that Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a graduate of the University of Chicago, traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in a national celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of emancipation, which included exhibits highlighting the progress that had been made since the destruction of slavery. Dr. Woodson was inspired by the celebration to form the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization to promote the scientific study of black life and history.

In 1924, Woodson's Omega Psi Phi fraternity brothers, at his urging, created a Negro History and Literature Week, soon renamed Negro Achievement Week. Two years later, in February, 1926, Woodson assumed responsibility for the event and named it Negro History Week.

Woodson selected February to encompass the birthdays Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14). Rather than focusing on Lincoln and Douglass, he wanted the observation to celebrate the various contributions of black men and women to the advance of human civilization.

Dr. Woodson died in 1950. Although he was the founder of Negro History Week, he never viewed black history as a one-week affair and looked forward to the time when an annual celebration would no longer be necessary. He believed that black history was too important to America and the world to be crammed into a limited time frame.

In 1976, fifty years after the first celebration, Dr. Woodson's Association, now the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), used its influence to make the shift from a week long observation to a month and from Negro History to Black History.

The library will be promoting Black History Month throughout February with displays of adult and children's materials.

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