



The Freeport Public Library is proud to announce that it has received a grant of \$3,500 from Illinois Humanities to support 2017 One Book, One Freeport.

The mission of the One Book, One Freeport program is to encourage a shared reading experience, foster a sense of community, and promote literacy to people of all ethnic backgrounds, economic levels, and ages. Based on similar programs in communities across the country, One Book, One Freeport provides free copies of a selected book and coordinates educational programs and events to explore topics related to the book.

The inaugural program ran in January and February of 2011, featuring the book "Playing with the Enemy" by Gary Moore. The Freeport community enthusiastically embraced the program. Participation was high and reviews were positive.

The second program began January 5, 2013 and ran through April 7, 2013. It featured "I Came A Stranger" by Hilda Satt Polacheck. The displays were a great addition to the program. Copies of the book were given to other libraries and schools in Stephenson County, widening the audience.

The third program ran from February to April 2015, and focused on the book "Rocket Boys" by Homer Hickam, Jr. Displays at the Freeport Art Museum and personal stories of growing up in a coal mining town helped bring the book to life. Readers enjoyed building and launching an actual rocket at the conclusion of the program.

"2017 One Book, One Freeport will celebrate a historic novel that features a protagonist who struggles to find his place in the world, amidst large-scale social and racial changes. It also has a strong ecological message, of nurturing the world around us," said Laura Keyes, Head of Adult Services at Freeport Public Library. "With this grant from Illinois Humanities, we will be able to bring the author, Mr. Johnson, to Freeport for a full day of speaking engagements, including two at our local schools."

The title of the 2017 One Book, One Freeport choice will be announced on Tuesday, January 3, at 10:30 a.m. at the Freeport Public Library. Everyone is welcome to attend.

"Illinois Humanities is proud to support not-for-profit organizations that promote the importance of the humanities in private and public life. Through their efforts, Illinoisans have greater access to lifelong learning opportunities," said Illinois Humanities Executive Director Angel Ysaguirre. "These champions of the humanities make their communities and our whole state more vibrant."

Since 1974, Illinois Humanities' Community Grants program has welcomed grant proposals from not-for-profit groups that have a story to tell about the state or use the humanities to enrich community life. Not-for-profit organizations may apply for Community Grants of up to \$15,000 or Illinois Speaks micro-grants ranging from \$250 to \$1,000. For more information about Illinois Humanities Community Grants program, please visit www.ilhumanities.org/grants.

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