

All levels of bookworms welcome



Jody Wilson/Independent

This Thursday photo shows the R.E.A.D. (Read, Empower, Adventure, Dream) in Beauty Bookmobile set up outside Hubbell's Trading Post in Ganado, Arizona. In an effort to encourage literacy, Chinle Planting Hope, a nonprofit organization, has expanded its outreach using the bookmobile. The wrap on the bookmobile was designed by illustrator Jonathan Nelson who authored "First Laugh – Welcome, Baby!"

READ in Beauty Bookmobile brings books to children in rural communities

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GANADO, Ariz. — Chinle Planting Hope is a nonprofit organization looking to bring the magic of reading with their R.E.A.D. (Read, Empower, Adventure, Dream) in Beauty Bookmobile. The grassroots organization out of Chinle, launched its library-on-wheels project a little over a year ago and has made various stops on the Navajo Nation.

"This year, we have really been out in the communities," said Janice Dunn, President and Executive Director of Chinle Planting Hope. "So we have gone to Rock Point, Tsaile, most of our local schools, and Ganado has been welcoming us. Our bookmobile is available for all communities, events and schools – if they want to have us, we'll be on their site."

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Carmelita Austin and her daughters Skylar and Dinay Curtis browse books on display outside the R.E.A.D. (Read, Empower, Adventure, Dream) in Beauty Bookmobile in Ganado, Arizona, Thursday.



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Chinle Planting Hope Intern Iesha Tsosie reads a book to a couple of children during the R.E.A.D. (Read, Empower, Adventure, Dream) Bookmobile's stop at Hubbell's Trading Post in Ganado, Arizona, Thursday. In an effort to encourage literacy, Chinle Planting Hope, a nonprofit organization, has expanded its outreach using their bookmobile.

READ in Beauty Bookmobile

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On Thursday, they stopped by Hubbell's Trading Post in Ganado to register locals for library cards. They have now issued over 1,000 cards out of their colorful bookmobile. The wrap on the bookmobile was designed by illustrator Jonathan Nelson who authored "First Laugh - Welcome, Baby!"

"All books here are free, all you do is sign up. There's no penalty, you can return your books back in if you want to. If you love your books, you can keep them but when you do return your books, we have a little incentive," said Dunn.

All ages welcome

Dunn said they offer a variety of books and all bookworms are welcome.

"Children, adults and elderly are welcome," said Dunn. "A lot of community members really enjoy it. We have over 1,000 books. We get donation books, we get grants and a lot of times we have donations coming in from our own communities. The schools and people drop off books."

Dunn said the benefits of reading are manyfold. "Literacy is important and we want to give every kid out there a book so they can start reading to help set themselves up for a better future," said Dunn.

She shared her personal story of how reading improved her son's confidence.

"It took him out of his shell, out of being shy. He likes to read now. Before, his teacher was telling me that he was really shy in school and class. Now his hand is the first one to go up to read out loud," said Dunn.

A nice bonding activity

Skylar and Dinay Curtis browsed the shelves and picked out a book. Their mother, Carmelita Austin said this was not their first time in the bookmobile.

"I already knew about it. We first noticed them here during Christmas or Thanksgiving when they had an event happening, that's how we found out about the bookmobile," said Austin.

Austin said reading is a good opportunity to bond with family.

"It's important for their vocabulary. Both of us learn sometimes, we have to Google what a word



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means so that's one thing that we enjoy doing together," said Austin. "It doesn't matter what kind of books, sometimes we read scary books and then all the way down to cartoon stuff. We try to figure out the meaning behind the story."

Austin said as a family, they will definitely return to the bookmobile and she encourages others to check it out.

'Good for everyone'

"It's really nice and exciting that they have this. It's all new and I really do like it. I wish more people knew about it. So they can come out and have their kids take a look at and check out books. It's a really

good program for everyone," said Austin.

Dunn said the Bookmobile is open every Tuesday and Friday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. next to Chinle Memorial Baptist Church on South Hwy 191 in Chinle. The next stop will be in Tsaile, Arizona, March 25.

Chinle Planting Hope has other programs and initiatives including a community garden, farmers market, imagination station, bike shop, and thrift store. Upcoming community events will be announced on their Facebook page. Dunn said donations are always welcome and can be made through their website.

Information:
chinleplantinghope.com



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Staff man the R.E.A.D. (Read, Empower, Adventure, Dream) Bookmobile during its stop at Hubbell's Trading Post in Ganado, Arizona, Thursday. In an effort to encourage literacy, Chinle Planting Hope, a nonprofit organization, has expanded its outreach using their bookmobile.