

HPL Stories

Heidi Evans, Adult Patron, HPL, January 2020 [she, her husband and their five children are “Evans Seven”]:

“Evans Seven loves the Hubbard Public Library. My husband Jason and I have 5 beautiful daughters! Our daughters have all grown up in the library. Because of the age difference in our girls, we have participated in almost every program that the children’s room has to offer.

Our 4 youngest daughters grew up in Rhythm and Rhyme where they not only made some amazing friends but also received early reading skills. They also enjoyed Alpha Bop which is another program that made it fun to learn early reading skills. Our daughter Ainsley, she was 3 years old at this time, said she loved that the librarians acted goofy during the song ‘Tooty Ta’ and she loved how they made it fun! Our youngest daughter, Norra, still checks out the CD with the music from this program including the song ‘Tooty Ta.’

From Rhythm and Rhyme, each of our girls graduated up to Storytime. For our girls, they fell in love with Selma the Squirrel and Auggie Doggie. In Storytime, our girls were taught the importance of patience, sharing, and taking turns while continuing to learn reading skills. One of Norra’s most favorite storytimes was prince/princess day! She was able to dress up like a princess. We have a picture of her on this day with her two favorite librarians and this picture hung in her room for years. I still remember that day like it was yesterday.

Another program that has had a huge impact on our girls is the Paws to Read program. Our daughter McKenna really benefited from this program. McKenna was a super shy toddler and she loved reading to the dogs. She used to say “The dogs really listen to me mom!” I remember she would get books out a few days before her allotted time and would practice what she was going to read. It was an amazing tool that was used to promote reading in our house!

Our girls also grew up attending family nights that many times were held at Elmwood Assisted Living, a local assisted living facility. At one of the family nights, each family was paired up with a resident at Elmwood and we were able to make a craft together. Our girls fell in love with Ms. Peg, the resident that we had been paired with and actually built a relationship with her in the months that followed. We not only got to see Ms. Peg at future family nights but also visited her on a regular basis, taking her gifts for Valentine’s Day, Easter and other holidays.

Our family has also benefited from the many craft Saturdays and summer reading programs offered by our children’s room. With a large family, outings can become very expensive. We have most certainly utilizes the library programs to help entertain our girls. Some of their most favorite projects have included glow in the dark painting, pumpkins made from books, snowman milk gallons, the rocket launcher, and the many times they have been able to screen print their own T-shirts.

Tweens is another amazing program offered through Hubbard Public Library. This program is for older kids, 5th – 7th grade. This program has given our girls a safe place to gain independence. With several safety procedures in place, we allow our girls to walk to the library after school for this

program. Tuesdays have become one of their favorite days because they get to hang out with their friends at the library. As a parent, this program is great because it does give our girls a little independence but in a safe way!

Although all of these programs are wonderful and have taught our girls so much, but the most important thing we love about our library are our fabulous children's room librarians. Mrs. Russo, Mrs. Grapevine, Mrs. Tirabassi and Mrs. Balla have and will continue to always go above and beyond for the children in these programs and for our family. Many years ago, my husband and I put together a scavenger hunt which was part of our summer bucket list adventures. I had called and spoke with the librarians and asked if I could hide a clue at the library for the girls. Not only did they say 'yes,' but they actually brought out Selma the Squirrel and Auggie Doggie to participate in our scavenger hunt. Our girls thought this was the best thing in the world. They actually got one on one time with Selma and Auggie! These 4 beautiful ladies have become more than just the children's room librarians to us, they have become friends.

With the library being a constant in each of our girls' lives, they have learned to show kindness, they have gained confidence and independence in themselves and above all they have learned the love of reading."

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