
PRESS RELEASE

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VIRTUAL, IN-PERSON SESSIONS NOW OFFERED BY LIBRARY

Musser Library increases reach of children's programs with in-person sessions

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Youth Services Manager Betty Collins stood by the door at the Musser Public Library Monday (June 21) morning, greeting each child and parent by name in welcoming them back to an in-person version of *O Baby Lapsit* and *Preschool Storytime*.

“Welcome, welcome,” Betty Collins said to those arriving. “It is so great to see you again.”

A large crowd of enthusiastic children from birth to three years old along with their parents and care givers gathered once again in the upstairs meeting room of Musser Public Library to sing songs, say rhymes, and listen to short stories under the guidance of Teen Services Assistant Julie Lear.

“It was delightful to hear the sounds of the youngest children back in the Library once again,” Pam Collins, Musser Public Library Director, said. “We waited for this day to be certain that the children, and their parents and care-givers, would be safe and have a great learning experience.”

Hosting the in-person session was not determined until last Friday.

“We have been having a lot of people in the library recently and decided that we should go ahead and reopen these programs to in-person sessions,” Betty Collins said. “We have been evaluating going back to in-person but have not taken this last step out of an abundance of caution.”

Betty Collins, who updated the Muscatine City Council on the summer programs at the Musser Public Library at the Council’s June 3 meeting, said that the decision to reopen the sessions as an in-person activity was made Friday following discussions with Pam Collins and the Library staff.

“We were waiting to see what the summer would be like and determined during the meeting that it was time to open these programs back up as in-person activities,” Betty Collins said.

Betty Collins noted that encouraging children to learn during the summer helps support the education they receive in school from their teachers and the lessons they learn from their parents at home.

Learning begins at birth which is why *Lapsit* is offered to newborns through three-years-old, one of the only programs available to children that young. Similar programs are developed for children 18-months and older.

“We are not replacing the parents or teachers but rather supporting their efforts as best we can for the benefit of the children’s learning experience,” Betty Collins said.

Musser Public Library has been offering virtual *O Baby Lapsit* and *Preschool Storytime* sessions on Cable Channel 5 and on Facebook since the pandemic began nearly a year and a half ago.

“We have had great participation but we know that having the children back in person is important to support their learning at home,” Betty Collins said. “And we have missed them, too.”

Lear said that Library plans to continue to produce the *O Baby Lapsit* and *Preschool Storytime* videos.

“We have had a tremendous response to airing these programs virtually from at home daycare and preschool facilities,” Lear said. “And not only do the children watch and participate, we have heard that older generations also watch and participate too.”

There were some new faces among the old friends who came to the Library for *O Baby Lapsit*, but whether old or new, each was greeted by name and in song to the enjoyment of all in attendance.

“One mother said that getting back to the in-person sessions was great,” Betty Collins said. “Her children really enjoy the social and educational activities and she said that it helps with their learning at home.”

Families from Burlington and Davenport drove to Muscatine for the morning’s session.

“We enjoy these programs just as much as the children do,” Lear said. “They were all excited to be back together. It was a fun day.”

And while Lear was hosting the in-person *Lapsit* session, Betty Collins was livestreaming the virtual session of *Lapsit* followed by Katie Roquet hosting the livestream version of *Preschool Storytime*.

Lapsit wasn’t the only in-person activity for children Monday as *Preschool Storytime* also made a return with songs, games, and books holding the interest of children “3-ish to 5” in the children’s section of the Library.

“It is lovely to have all our young users back and using the library again,” Pam Collins said.

Meanwhile the Summer Reading Quest continues with opportunities for children, teens, and adults to go on adventures through reading books. Contact the Library for more information at (563) 263-3065.



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If you missed the virtual *Lapsit* you can watch it on Facebook by clicking [HERE](#). If you missed the virtual *Storytime* you can watch it on Facebook by clicking [HERE](#).

For more information on Musser Public Library programs visit their web site (www.musserpubliclibrary.org) or like their [Facebook](#) page to keep up with the news and events at the Library.