

experts and scholars were invited to share the experience of the Los Angeles Public Library, the U.K.'s Idea Store, the two branches of the New Taipei City Library, and the Kaohsiung Public Library new main branch on how they evolved to meet the changing needs of society, readers and community development.



*The forum group discussions attracted enthusiastic participation.*

### ■ **NCL “International Picture Book Master’s Seminar”**

This year’s first “International Picture Book Master’s Seminar” was held on February 8, 2015. American picture book master Jon Agee presented a speech on “A Man Jumps into a Hat and Other Incredible Occurrences in Children’s Picture Books” to an audience of more than 400 people.

Agee began his talk with a picture book he produced at the age of six and then proceeded to hand draw and orally recounted each page of the story. With a genius for drawing and inexhaustible eloquence, he vividly presented the content of each story, winning the audience’s undivided attention.



*Jon Agee (second from left), NCL Director General Tseng (second from right) and others at the “Jump into a Hat” venue.*



*Mr. Agee improvises at the event*

On February 15, the NCL invited Jon Agee and a well-known children’s book critic Leonard S. Marcus. Both conversed to analyze the style and qualities that make a good picture book by using five illustrated books as example. The event marked the first time the two men have shared the stage and attracted over 700 participants. Marcus also introduced the art of modern picture books from various periods, as well as the picture book displayed at major fine arts museums and libraries around the world, including rare Russian picture books and children’s picture book that have been banned from U.S. public libraries. The talk presented new insight on the deeper aesthetics and the historical significance of the seemingly simple picture book.



*Director General Tseng (front row, fourth from left) with Leonard S. Marcus and Jon Agee (front row, third and second from left).*



*Audience fills up the room*

## ■ 2014 National Reading Habits Results Announced

Since 2011, the NCL has annually announced an analysis and statistics on the reading habits of public library readers in Taiwan. The latest such data was released at a press conference and model reader commendation ceremony held by the Ministry of Education (MOE) was on February 12, 2015. The event was joined by MOE Department of Lifelong Education Director-general Hsiung Tsung-hua. The findings for 2014 were announced by NCL Director General Tseng.



*Director General Tseng explains the survey findings*

The data showed that the numbers of library visitors, book borrowers, books borrowed, website queries, and applications for library cards all increased in 2014 compared to 2013 (the number of book borrowers increased to 17.22 million, up 590,000 or 3%; the number of books borrowed increased to 63.58 million, up 1,490,000 or 2%; and the number of library card applicants increased to 12.02 million, up 600,000 or 5%). The book borrowing volume by the readers exceeded 1,500 volumes per year.

Director General Tseng further indicated that, in recent years, the MOE, NCL and county and city governments have teamed up to promote three public policies which are: setting up regional resource centers; subsidizing improvements to public library reading environments and facilities, and implementing programs to promote reading and enrich collection resources. In the future, the NCL will continue to expand cooperation with various parties to promote interest in reading. In his speech, Director-general Hsiung thanked the NCL for its efforts. She also emphasized that 2015 is the “Year of Innovative Education” and encouraged