

### ■ *A Look Back on Writing: Professor Lei Xiang Lectures and Donates Manuscripts*

On June 14, 2014 Prof. Lei Xiang donated his manuscripts from recent years to the NCL. He is currently teaching at the Taipei National University of the Arts.

A prolific writer, Lei has published nearly 30 novels and essay collections. In addition, he has also produced over 280 television segments, which show his unique film techniques. After the donation ceremony, Prof. Lei gave a lecture entitled “A Look Back on Writing.” The events helped readers better understand his writings and outlook on life.



*Prof. Lei discusses his manuscripts and his experience as a writer.*

### ■ *Southern and Northern Region Resource Centers for Public Libraries Now Open*

The Southern Region Resource Center for Public Libraries was officially opened on May 22, 2014 in the Zuoxin Branch of the Kaohsiung Public Library. The Ministry of Education’s Deputy Director of Department of Lifelong Education Li Yu-chuan and Director General Tseng of the NCL attended the opening, as did the oversight committee for the Public Library Resource Consolidation Development Project and representatives from libraries from across the southern region.



*Director General Tseng attends the opening ceremony*

The resource center’s holdings can be divided up into four main categories: teenagers, multicultural, culture and creativity, and knowledge. Of these, knowledge books number the most. Currently the center holds over 28,000 volumes, including Chinese, foreign language, and East Asian books (395 in Thai, 464 in Vietnamese, 257 in Burmese, 315 in Indonesian, and 87 in Malay). In terms of material types, there are general books, children’s books, and audio-visual materials. The public has been able to borrow books since January 2014 — a total of 30,000 volumes having been borrowed to date.

The Northern Region Resource Center was officially opened on May 30, 2014 at the Taipei Public Library. Due to the fact that Taipei has been designated the World Design Capital for 2016, the Northern Region Resource Center was built around the concept of “culture and creativity.” It has acquired quality Chinese, foreign language, and East Asian books and audio-visual materials for public consumption, as recommended by experts in relevant disciplines.

### ■ *An Oral Reading Feast for World Book Day*

Based on results from the national reading survey that the NCL conducts every year,

Taiwanese enjoy reading popular literature, which negatively affects balanced development and reading quality. Also, it is not conducive to improving reading habits.

NCL Director General Tseng pointed out that cultural and educational institutions should work hand-in-hand to promote quality reading and to encourage the public to read a variety of books besides popular literature. Improving personal and overall reading habits should mirror advice on a healthy diet: variety is what leads to a healthy body and mind.

To help the public develop a more well-rounded approach to reading on a variety of topics, the NCL brought together cultural and educational foundations and public and university libraries from across the country on April 19 (just four days before World Book Day) to hold “An Ode to Reading: Oral Readings by Famous Persons.”



*Oral Readings by all the honored guests*

Invitations were extended to scholars from Taiwan and abroad, the Italian representative in Taiwan, famous authors and illustrators, celebrities, musicians, librarians, school principals, famous acting troupes, and bands. The 94 performers put on 22 performances of oral reading, acting, and singing. This event had the largest array of performers and text performances since Taiwan

began celebrating World Book Day in conjunction with the rest of the world. Content included new poetry, classical poetry, prose, stories, music, songs, and children’s plays; each performance was simple yet exquisite, helping over 600 people understand the benefits of balanced reading.

This year’s unparalleled reading carnival had five main attractions: authors and poets reading their works, teachers and students from different schools doing oral reading, authors of children’s literature combining their voices with frolicking children, the voices from foreign friends and scholars, and the sonorous sounds of heads of education and libraries combining together. Each voice was enchanting and enabled the audience to experience different flavors of reading.

To encourage the public to read broadly and to develop healthy reading habits, the NCL held a drawing at the end of the event to give away roses and books, which represent beauty and wisdom on World Book Day. The air was soon filled with the fragrance of flowers and books, and an endless and changeless energy that comes from reading.

### ■ *A Report on the Routes/Roots in Southeast Asia & Oceania Symposium*

On June 20, 2014, the NCL co-hosted Routes/Roots in Southeast Asia & Oceania: World Austronesia Symposium. A total of four sessions were held, each showcasing a different topic: development and subjective culture, re-creating tradition and reconnecting broken links, barkcloth and the diaspora of Austronesian groups, and objects, artistry, and museums. Ten papers were read in all, many by young scholars who had received funding from the World Austronesian Studies Project to do field work or conduct further studies overseas.

In the afternoon Ms. Lin You-zhen used a