

News from Taiwan Libraries

■ *A Love for Reading and the Earth: Taipei International Book Exhibition Will Showcase Green Reading Next Year*

The Taipei International Book Exhibition (TIBE) will be held for the 20th time next year. The TIBE Foundation has announced that it will be themed Green Reading. While there will be no designated theme country, model countries that are leading the way in green reading and policies will be showcased. In terms of exhibitions, there will be nature and ecosystems, environmental protection research, spiritual exploration, trendy lifestyles, and literature and novels. Mediums related to green reading (such as the development and use of organic paper, e-paper, and cloud knowledge) will inspire viewers in alternative ideas for life. The exhibition will run from February 1-6, which falls during winter break. The TIBE Foundation has planned a series of celebratory activities for this milestone, including “20 Most Loved Authors” from both Taiwan and abroad, who will make appearances at the exhibition and join in the celebration.

■ *Library Lending Out Laptops to Reduce Distance between Urban and Rural Areas*

The Research, Development and Evaluation Commission of the Executive Yuan has instituted the second phase of its Creating Equal Digital Opportunities: Pilot Program for Wireless Internet Services for Outlying Towns. A total of 8 cities and 16 townships and elementary school libraries in Jiayi County now have free laptop rental services. An achievements meeting was held on May 3 in the Chu-chi Public Library to display the results. Jiayi County Commissioner Chang Huan-kuan commented that the public's response to this project has been very favorable, with many coming

to borrow laptops. It has succeeded in lessening the distance between urban and rural areas. Jiayi County is one of the poorer counties in the country. This effort is to ensure that children there don't lose before they've even started, and even senior citizens in rural areas are being taught to get online, to set up blogs or Facebook accounts. Chu-chi Public Library became a pilot library for this project due to the recommendation of the county government. It was given 40 laptops that have 3.5G wireless cards. Since August 19th of last year a total of 736 people have borrowed laptops, a rate of 90%. This exceeds original expectations.

■ *System Renovation at Taichung Allows Users to Visit Any County Library with Just One Card*

Cultural Affairs Bureau of Taichung City Government has recently completed a renovation of the Taichung Library system. As of June 1, patrons only need one account to access any of the 44 branch libraries or National Taichung Library. They can even borrow books from one branch and return them at another. The motivation behind this is to encourage the public to read more. Currently the 45 libraries share a total of 3.2 million books. Before the renovation, restrictions on the total number of books that can be borrowed varied between libraries. Under the new system, this has been standardized and raised to 15 books and 5 audio-visual media per card. In addition, users can reserve up to 4 books and 2 audio-visual media. Also, as a way to reduce users from having to visit various locations for books, starting on June 1 all 45 libraries offer borrowing and returning services, regardless of the books original location. Originally this service was only available at the 13 locations in Taichung City, but now it has been extended to such areas as Dachia, Shalu, Wufung, Wuji, Shigang, and the Huludun Cultural Center.