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Glendale Public Library

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Canines Offer Support to Beginning Readers

Glendale, Az - Sitting on the floor in the Youth Department at the Glendale Main Library, 5959 W. Brown St., boys and girls sound out words and stumble through sentences, not worrying about being corrected by their patient reading coaches. When finished, the kids give good-bye pats and hugs to their new coaches, and Huey and Wizardo, tails wagging, are off to read with some other children.

These four-legged library volunteers are certified therapy dogs taking part in the Glendale Main Library's Paws to Read program. Wizardo—furry and happy-go-lucky—loves kids and is enthusiastic about reading. Huey—a friendly, laid-back Labrador—also enjoys a good book and thinks children are wonderful.

The Paws to Read program is scheduled one Saturday or Sunday afternoon each month, and gives children ages five and over a one-on-one opportunity to read books with a therapy dog. The dogs have been trained to sit quietly for 15-minute sessions with the children. In addition to their training, they often add their own ideas of encouragement; sometimes a paw on the arm, or maybe even a wag of the tail.

“The program is based on the idea that when reading with a nonjudgmental ‘buddy,’ children will feel less stress to work on their reading skills,” said Glendale Main Library youth librarian Carolyn Grote. “Therapy dogs fit this role perfectly.”

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Glendale Public Library
Main Library
5959 W. Brown St.
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623-930-3530
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To find out more about the Glendale Main Library's Paws to Read program, call 623-930-3530
or visit the library website at www.glendaleaz.com/library.

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