



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **Chelsea District Library Awarded Grant from Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs**

## **Grant Will Help Support Kids Read Comics Event**

February 7, 2011 | Chelsea, MI Chelsea District Library has been awarded a grant of \$5,600.00 from the State of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA). The grant was awarded through the MCACA peer review process and was one of nearly 173 applications to compete for MCACA fiscal year 2010 funding and will support the annual Kids Read Comics event.

Organizations receiving a MCACA grant award are required to match those funds with other public and private dollars. Local support of the project included Friends of Chelsea District Library and Kids Read Comics. Chelsea District Library also receives significant volunteer support from the community. Volunteers come from as far as Chicago to help with Kids Read Comics annual celebration. The Dorsai Irregulars, a fantasy and science fiction service organization, have agreed to help in addition to several librarians from systems outside Chelsea, led by Jocelyn Baldwin from Dearborn Heights. The Chelsea District Library's Youth Service Group will supply as many as 15 young adults to help, not counting the number of adult library volunteers who will participate. The 501st Legion generously volunteers for KRC every year, bringing their Star Wars costumes and help run a children's costume parade.

Comics writer Dan Mishkin, cartoonist, teaching artist and Chelsea District Library's Artist-in-Residence Jerzy Drozd, and comic shop owner and vice chair of the East Dearborn Downtown Development Authority Dan Merritt donate their time for KRC each year.

This grant will allow the Chelsea District Library to introduce young readers to worlds of imagination and foster a love of comics, appreciation of art, as well as literacy and lifelong reading, while unlocking and empowering creativity. Kids Read Comics holds an annual two-day celebration of comics, and this year is joining forces with the Chelsea District Library and the Chelsea Center for the Arts to turn all of Chelsea into a comics-and-kids-loving Mecca! Working collaboratively with our community partners enables us to create programming that is wider in scope than a single institution could provide. "The Kids Read Comics event is quite an undertaking for a small library like ours, so I am very grateful to the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts for their financial support", says Karen Persello, Head of Youth and Teen Services, "I hope that loads of kids who like to read comics and also love superheros will come to Kids Read Comics and have a great time!"

**(more)**



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Additionally, downtown merchants, the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Chelsea and the Downtown Development Authority are ready, willing, and prepared to become engaged in this programming and are excited about the opportunity to show off what Chelsea has to offer. A grant from MCACA must be matched with other dollars. The grant has helped us leverage \$2,500 of support from the Friends of the Chelsea District Library and Kids Read Comics.

The MCACA peer review process allows for each grant application to be competitively considered by a panel of in-state and out-of-state arts and culture professionals. This ensures the taxpayers, who support this project through legislative appropriations, and all other visitors or residents in Michigan will have access to the highest quality arts and cultural experiences.

A complete list of grant awards around the state is available by contacting MCACA at (517) 241-4011, or by visiting the MCACA website at [www.themedc.org/arts](http://www.themedc.org/arts).

### *About us:*

*The Chelsea District Library is nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide equal access to quality resources that serve the lifelong cultural, educational and informational needs and interests of all people. The Library currently serves 14,000 residents in the Chelsea district – City of Chelsea plus Dexter, Lima, Lyndon and Sylvan townships and more than 20,000 individuals visit the Library each month. The Library's state-of-the-art facility is an access point for information including: books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, downloadable e-books, subscription databases as well as access to the Internet. In addition to providing dynamic services to complement and support local schools and other important community needs, the Chelsea District Library strives to present timely, interesting and high-quality programs and events to engage and enrich the Chelsea community.*

*Kids Read Comics (KRC) is a totally free event that unites kids, teens, parents, teachers and librarians with professional artists and writers from the comics and animation fields with the goal to introduce kids to worlds of imagination while unlocking their creative impulses. KRC also works throughout the year to promote comics and creativity for kids and teens. Kids Read Comics was founded by youth and teen librarian Edith Burney of Chelsea, cartoonist and educator Jerzy Drozd of Ann Arbor, comic shop owner Dan Merritt of Dearborn, and comic book writer Dan Mishkin of East Lansing.*

*Chelsea Center for the Arts (CCA) is the only professionally staffed arts center in Washtenaw County outside Ann Arbor, serving primarily the communities of Chelsea, Dexter, Grass Lake, Manchester, Pinckney, Saline, Stockbridge and other nearby areas. It organizes instruction, individually or in groups, by highly accomplished practitioners for learners of all ages. It manages and maintains space for an art gallery, teaching studios, theatrical rehearsals, and occasional special lecture or performance events. It also provides artist-recruiting, administrative, and marketing services to other Chelsea-area organizations engaged in producing community cultural events and public art projects.*

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