



Posted on Sun, Dec. 24, 2006

WEST MIAMI-DADE

Kids receive educational cheer

Miami-Dade children received educational gifts rather than toys at an annual book giveaway.

BY BIANCA L. CRUZ
bcruz@MiamiHerald.com

The Christmas party had the trappings of a typical holiday celebration: plenty of children and parents, music and refreshments. Instead of toys, however, party hostess Marta Perez gave the kids books, which she hopes will increase their desire to read and learn.

Perez, a Miami-Dade School Board member, throws a Christmas party-styled book giveaway for Miami-Dade students every year. This year's event took place Dec. 14 at the West Dade Regional Library, 9445 Coral Way, where it's been held every year since 1998.

"[At] Christmas, kids get toys, but I think the greatest gift is educational," Perez said.

Elves in the form of more than 30 volunteers and companies helped with the giveaway, Perez said. The books -- about 1,000 -- were donated by Perez, book publishing companies, and the Parent Involvement Office of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Perez said she started the event because she noticed most kids got lots of toys, but no educational presents. Parents from the Redland to Westchester got the message via fliers and school announcements, and decided to bring their kids.

The party included entertainment from the Rockway Middle School band and choir, a juggler, and McGruff the Crime-Fighting dog. Students also took home school supplies and got free snacks.

The books, however, were the focus of the evening. Each child received a plastic bag, then visited different tents filled with books to make their selection.

Titilola Babatunde, 7, who attends Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary School in Sweetwater, browsed through the pile of reading materials. She finally selected a book called *Solar System* and a *Happy Feet* activity book.

"I like science cause I like to look at things, and when I grow up I want to be a doctor," Titilola said.

Maria D. Cedeño, principal of Rockway Middle, hoped the children would get a basic message:

"Reading is the key to success," she said. "Without reading kids won't succeed in other subjects."

© 2006 MiamiHerald.com and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved.
<http://www.miami.com>



Posted on Sun, Dec. 24, 2006

WEST MIAMI-DADE

Kids receive educational cheer

Miami-Dade children received educational gifts rather than toys at an annual book giveaway.

BY BIANCA L. CRUZ
bcruz@MiamiHerald.com

The Christmas party had the trappings of a typical holiday celebration: plenty of children and parents, music and refreshments. Instead of toys, however, party hostess Marta Perez gave the kids books, which she hopes will increase their desire to read and learn.

Perez, a Miami-Dade School Board member, throws a Christmas party-styled book giveaway for Miami-Dade students every year. This year's event took place Dec. 14 at the West Dade Regional Library, 9445 Coral Way, where it's been held every year since 1998.

"[At] Christmas, kids get toys, but I think the greatest gift is educational," Perez said.

Elves in the form of more than 30 volunteers and companies helped with the giveaway, Perez said. The books -- about 1,000 -- were donated by Perez, book publishing companies, and the Parent Involvement Office of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Perez said she started the event because she noticed most kids got lots of toys, but no educational presents. Parents from the Redland to Westchester got the message via fliers and school announcements, and decided to bring their kids.

The party included entertainment from the Rockway Middle School band and choir, a juggler, and McGruff the Crime-Fighting dog. Students also took home school supplies and got free snacks.

The books, however, were the focus of the evening. Each child received a plastic bag, then visited different tents filled with books to make their selection.

Titilola Babatunde, 7, who attends Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary School in Sweetwater, browsed through the pile of reading materials. She finally selected a book called *Solar System* and a *Happy Feet* activity book.

"I like science cause I like to look at things, and when I grow up I want to be a doctor," Titilola said.

Maria D. Cedeño, principal of Rockway Middle, hoped the children would get a basic message:

"Reading is the key to success," she said. "Without reading kids won't succeed in other subjects."

© 2006 MiamiHerald.com and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved.
<http://www.miami.com>



Posted on Sun, Dec. 24, 2006

WEST MIAMI-DADE

Kids receive educational cheer

Miami-Dade children received educational gifts rather than toys at an annual book giveaway.

BY BIANCA L. CRUZ
bcruz@MiamiHerald.com

The Christmas party had the trappings of a typical holiday celebration: plenty of children and parents, music and refreshments. Instead of toys, however, party hostess Marta Perez gave the kids books, which she hopes will increase their desire to read and learn.

Perez, a Miami-Dade School Board member, throws a Christmas party-styled book giveaway for Miami-Dade students every year. This year's event took place Dec. 14 at the West Dade Regional Library, 9445 Coral Way, where it's been held every year since 1998.

"[At] Christmas, kids get toys, but I think the greatest gift is educational," Perez said.

Elves in the form of more than 30 volunteers and companies helped with the giveaway, Perez said. The books -- about 1,000 -- were donated by Perez, book publishing companies, and the Parent Involvement Office of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Perez said she started the event because she noticed most kids got lots of toys, but no educational presents. Parents from the Redland to Westchester got the message via fliers and school announcements, and decided to bring their kids.

The party included entertainment from the Rockway Middle School band and choir, a juggler, and McGruff the Crime-Fighting dog. Students also took home school supplies and got free snacks.

The books, however, were the focus of the evening. Each child received a plastic bag, then visited different tents filled with books to make their selection.

Titilola Babatunde, 7, who attends Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary School in Sweetwater, browsed through the pile of reading materials. She finally selected a book called *Solar System* and a *Happy Feet* activity book.

"I like science cause I like to look at things, and when I grow up I want to be a doctor," Titilola said.

Maria D. Cedeño, principal of Rockway Middle, hoped the children would get a basic message:

"Reading is the key to success," she said. "Without reading kids won't succeed in other subjects."

© 2006 MiamiHerald.com and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved.
<http://www.miami.com>