CHAPTER NAME: Junior Auxiliary of McComb

POSTMARK ON OR BEFORE: MARCH 15

U.S. MAIL ADDRESS TO:
NAJA HEADQUARTERS
P.O. BOX 1873
GREENVILLE, MS 38702-1873
OR
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845 SOUTH MAIN
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OR
nmame@bellsouth.net

• POPULATION CATEGORY: between 15,000-29,999

NAME OF PROJECT: Ready to Read/Bookshelf Boogie

CATEGORY: (Check One) (A) x (B) ___

TOTAL HOURS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY MEMBERS: 105

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP OF CHAPTER: 41

NUMBER OF MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: 10

PURPOSE OF PROJECT: __________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

COST OF PROJECT: $121.45

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED: 890

DESCRIBE THE PROJECT IN NARRATIVE FORM INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION (1000 WORDS OR LESS, DOUBLE SPACED; WRITTEN IN THE SEQUENCE AS LISTED BELOW): Send one digital photo per entry either email or on disc.

1. HOW YOUR CHAPTER DISCOVERED THE NEED FOR THIS PROJECT
2. PLANNING AND PREPARATION INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING THIS PROJECT
3. HOW AND WHEN PROJECT WAS BEGUN/AMOUNT OF TIME TO COMPLETE PROJECT
4. HOW MEMBERS WERE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT
5. WHAT THE PROJECT ACHIEVED/DID IT MEET THE NEED
6. PLANS FOR FUTURE WORK WITH THIS PROJECT

IT IS UNNECESSARY TO SUBMIT ANY SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL. THE AWARD WILL BE JUDGED ON THE NARRATIVE ONLY.
The Junior Auxiliary of McComb believes that the children of Pike County are one of its greatest assets and wants to help these children prepare for their futures in the best ways possible. One way that the chapter has helped the children in our area is through our new service project Ready to Read/Bookshelf Boogie. When researching needs in our community and literacy rates, our projects chairperson, Tammy Gillihan, found overwhelming statistics showing that many young children in Mississippi grow up fighting illiteracy. Tammy decided to roll up her sleeves and solicit the help of her JA sisters to create a project that would help fight this problem and leave a lasting impact on many children in our area. A partnership with Excel by 5 was rekindled and the work began! Excel by 5 is a local program that prepares children for their educational career by five years old through various reading activities. Our local Excel by 5 has a house with resources, books, and programming for children and their families. In the past, Junior Auxiliary of McComb and Junior Auxiliary of McComb’s Crown Club have found many ways to provide service and help to Excel by 5. This year, JA of McComb impacted Excel by 5 in a big way!

Junior Auxiliary of McComb began a reading project in conjunction with Excel by 5 in which Junior Auxiliary members went into local schools to promote a love of reading. A group of eight active members and two provisional members prepared craft materials and spent time in the schools reading to the children ages three through five. The lesson plan included a story time in which the JA members read the children’s book Where the Wild Things Are and a craft time for the children to make that they could take home to remind them how fun reading can be!

However, the project didn’t stop there. The committee members also placed a bookshelf in local businesses in order to solicit book donations for Excel by 5. Each month, the bookshelf “boogies” to a different location. During the month of September, Bookshelf Boogie began at the Early Childhood Education Department at our local college, Southwest Mississippi Community College. This allowed future educators to get involved in the book drive, as well. During the
months that followed, our bookshelf boogied to many businesses throughout Pike County including a pharmacy, doctor’s office, jewelry store, coffee shop, bakery, and local boutique. These businesses have been gracious to welcome our bookshelf and many included special incentives for their customers who donated books. To date, over 400 books have been collected for Excel by 5 through Bookshelf Boogie.

Ready to Read/ Bookshelf Boogie began in September of this year, and already over 650 children have been impacted by this project. We are pleased to have chapter participation in this project and will continue this project throughout this school year. Ready to Read/ Bookshelf Boogie has been a wonderful way for our chapter to communicate with one of our local school districts to work toward fighting illiteracy. It has given us an opportunity to get businesses in our area involved with this worthwhile service project and has given us another avenue to work with local organizations to provide vital resources and activities in reading for these students. We hope that we can continue to work with McComb School District and we plan to expand to two other school districts to provide reading fun for the children in our area. It is our hope that we are igniting a love for reading in every child this project reaches!