



The Urbana Free Library

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The Reading Group
Records, 1972-2004

COLLECTION 39

Champaign County Historical Archives

Compiled by: Perry Collins, 2011

Creator/Corporate name: The Reading Group

Inclusive Dates: 1972-2004

Physical Description: 3 boxes, (3.3 linear feet).

Provenance:

The Reading Group Records were donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Access:

The records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

Biographical/Historical Note:

Founded in 1973 by Marilyn Kay, The Reading Group is a not-for-profit organization, which provides educational services to individuals with dyslexia, learning disabilities, and those struggling with illiteracy. Marilyn Kay, with the help of Lou Brown and Mary Hart, provided one-on-one instruction to children with learning disabilities from the instructors' homes. By 1978, the group moved to a storefront at 900 Race St. in Urbana and the group provided additional services such as workshops and training programs.

In 1988, The Reading Group was incorporated as a not-for-profit reading clinic and a board of directors was elected. An increasing number of staff members warranted a move to seven rooms in the lower level of Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana. In 1995, the rooms underwent an expansion and remodel, which included the addition of a computer lab and a large meeting space.

Scope and Content Note:

The collection documents the organization and activities of the Reading Group from 1972-2004, with the majority of documents created during and after the organization's incorporation as a nonprofit in 1987. This event is heavily documented within the collection, as it prompted major organizational changes and collaboration with other institutions. Other available records include those detailing organizational structure, activities of the board of directors and committees, financial history, specific events and programs, media coverage, and publications. Photographs of events and individuals supplement the textual records.

Rich information about the Reading Group's approach to teaching students with reading difficulties or reading or learning disabilities may be found throughout the records, particularly in Series 8, 10, and 13, which includes audiovisual materials documenting events, interviews, and student perspectives. This information comes in the form of informal notes, handouts, publications, etc., and helps contextualize the Reading Group and its services as well as offering a broader perspective on the history of reading education. The leadership and influence of



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Marilyn Kay, co-founder and director of the Reading Group until 2004, is evident throughout the collection, particularly in Series 8 and 12.

The collection currently includes records that are not in regular use by the Reading Group, and additional records will continue to be added in the future. Any records that may impinge on the privacy of former students of the Reading Group have been excluded from the records except in cases where permission was originally given (e.g. images that appear in newsletters). Extraneous or irrelevant documents, including some financial records, have also been discarded.

Arrangement:

Marilyn Kay was responsible for the initial collection of archival records and their arrangement in 2010-2011. The final arrangement of the records reflects Kay's general organization and was completed with her guidance, and the original order of institutional files has been maintained wherever it was apparent. When doing so facilitated easier access and clarified the development of the Reading Group, records have been reordered chronologically at the item level. Loose folders and items have been interfiled within relevant series.

The collection is divided into two series: **Series 1: Administrative records; Series 2: Programming and Events.** Each series is organized by record type, then chronologically.

Subjects Terms:

Books and reading
Dyslexia
Education
Guided reading
Individualized reading instruction
Instruction
Learning disabilities
Literacy
Race St. (Urbana), South, 900
Teaching

Name terms:

Brown, Lou
Hart, Mary
Kay, Marilyn
Lincoln Square (Urbana, Ill.)
The Reading Group

Container List:

Box 1

Series 1: Administrative records



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Administration and History

Folder 1: Early history, 1978-1987

Primarily ephemera related to years prior to incorporation as non-profit.

Folder 2: General history, 1978-2003

Summaries of the history of the organization, mission statements, and ephemera, with some items relevant to process of incorporation.

Folder 3: Articles of incorporation and related documents, 1987, n.d.

Folder 4: Bylaws, 1988

Folder 5: Organizational charts, 1992, 1998-1999, 2004

Folder 6: Locations, n.d., 1988, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001

Folder 7: Handbooks, 1993-1994

Folder 8: Rosters—Boards, 1988-2004

Retyped to remove personal information.

Folder 9: Rosters—Staff, 1991, 2002-2003, n.d.

Folder 10: Rosters—Advisory Councils, 1990, 1992, 2002

Folder 11: Awards to Marilyn Kay, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2003

Folder 12: University of Illinois student projects, 1987-1988

Folder 13: University of Illinois student projects, 1989-1992

Folder 14: University of Illinois student projects, 1995

Folder 15: University of Illinois student projects, 1996, 2004

Fundraising and Grants

Folder 16: Endowment, 1997-2000, n.d.

Folder 17: Fundraising, 1998-2003

Folder 18: Building Blocks Early Childhood, 2001-2005, n.d.

Folder 19: First Presbyterian Church, 1988, 1994-2002

Folder 20: Orange Krush, 2000-2002

Folder 21: Carle Foundation, 1995, 2001

Folder 22: Urban League Champaign, 2001-2002

Folder 23: Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Scholarships, 1992-1994

Folder 24: City of Champaign, 2000-2003

Folder 25: Urbana Community Development Program, 1997-1998, 2001

Folder 26: City of Urbana, 1999-2003

Folder 27: City of Urbana, 2003-2004

Folder 28: Community Foundation, 2003

Folder 29: Wal-Mart, 2002-2003

Folder 30: Illinois Power, 2003

Folder 31: Ronald McDonald House Charities, 1998-2000, n.d.

Folder 32: State Farm Insurance, 2001-2003, n.d.

Folder 33: Saemann Foundation, 2000-2003

Folder 34: STEP Program, 2002

Folder 35: Target Community Giving, 2003

Folder 36: Mentor Grant, 2004

Folder 37: Pilar Grant Proposal, 2004



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Financial Records

- Folder 38: Records Prior to Incorporation, 1986-1987
- Folder 39: Budgets, 1988-2003
- Folder 40: Statements, Feb. 1988-Dec. 1990
- Folder 41: Statements, Dec. 1992-Dec. 1995
- Folder 42: Statements, Jan. 1996-Dec. 1999
- Folder 43: Statements, Jan. 2000-Dec. 2001
- Folder 44: Statements, Jan. 2002-Dec. 2004
- Folder 45: Profit & Loss, Jan. 1999-Dec. 2004

Legal Records

- Folder 46: Documents, 1987-1988, 1999-2003

Board Minutes and Reports

- Folder 47: Annual Reports, 1987-2003
- Folder 48: Minutes, 1987-1988
- Folder 49: Minutes, 1989-1991
- Folder 50: Minutes, 1993-1995
- Folder 51: Minutes, 1996-1998
- Folder 52: Minutes, 1999-2000
- Folder 53: Minutes, 2001-2002
- Folder 54: Minutes, 2003-2004

Box 2

Series 1: Administrative Records (cont.)

Committee Minutes and Activities

- Folder 55: Public Relations/Marketing/Events, 1987-2000
- Folder 56: Special Events/Fundraising, 1991-2003
- Folder 57: Finance/Income, 1987-2003
- Folder 58: Planning/Program, 1987-1997
- Folder 59: Planning (Five-Year Plan), 1995-2000
- Folder 60: Membership, 1988
- Folder 61: Grants, 1988

Correspondence

- Folder 62: Correspondence, 1985, 1989

Series 2: Programming and Events

Speeches and Workshops

- Folder 1: n.d.
- Folder 2: 1976-1981
- Folder 3: 1982-1985
- Folder 4: 1986
- Folder 5: 1987
- Folder 6: 1988-1990
- Folder 7: 1991



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Folder 8: 1992-1996

Folder 9: 1997-2003

Folder 10: Responses and Evaluations, 1979-1994

Events

Folder 11: First Year in New Clinic Celebration, Feb. 22, 1979

Folder 12: Krannert Theater Dessert Evening, April 28, 1987

Folder 13: Open Houses, 1988, 2002

Folder 14: Gotta Dance!, Oct. 12, 1991

Folder 15: Make Way!, Dec. 4, 1992

Folder 16: Board/Staff Parties, 1993-2003

Folder 17: An Evening at Radio Maria, May 20, 1996

Folder 18: Mad Hatter Read-a-thon, Aug. 24, 1996

Photographs removed to Series 14.

Folder 19: "Unbirthday" Party, Aug. 23, 1997

Photograph removed to Series 14.

Folder 20: How Sweet...25th Anniversary, Nov. 25, 1997

Folder 21: Pages for All Ages Bookfair, Nov. 13-15, 1998

Folder 22: "Pot-a-Plant for Mom" Day, May 9, 1998

Folder 23: "Shoot for the Moon," Oct. 14, 1999

Removed flyer to oversized.

Folder 24: Adopt a Bear, Dec. 7-8, 1999

Folder 25: An Evening of Art, Oct. 19, 2000

Removed flyer to oversized.

Folder 26: An Evening of Art, Oct. 18, 2001

Folder 27: Milo's wine dinner, Aug. 20, 2001

Folder 28: Bake Sale 2001-2004

Photo (2001) removed to Series 14.

Folder 29: Adopt a Bear, Dec. 7-9, 2001

Folder 30: An Evening of Art, Oct. 17, 2002

Folder 31: Tea Parties, Jan. 17, 2002; Oct. 2, 2003

Folder 32: Milo's dinner, Aug. 19, 2002

Folder 33: Milo's, Aug. 11, 2003

Folder 34: Art Chairs/Raffle, Oct. 7-18, 2003

Folder 35: An Evening of Art, Nov. 16, 2004

Folder 36: Writing Exhibitions, 1993, 1998-2000

Special Programs

Folder 37: Building Blocks to Literacy, n.d., 1985

Folder 38: Carle Foundation Collaboration, 1984-1985

Folder 39: Gift of Reading, n.d.

Folder 40: Homework Helpers, n.d., 1991-1996

Folder 41: Information Center Collaboration with CFALD, n.d., 1986-1999

Folder 42: Read Across America, Mar. 2000

Folder 43: Scholarships, 1995



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Folder 44: Summer Program, 1977-2004

Folder 45: Turning Point, n.d., 1992-1994

Media

Folder 46: Newspaper clippings

Folder 47: Correspondence re: "Coping with Dyslexia," *Chicago Tribune*, May 13, 1990

Folder 48: Radio appearances, n.d., 1983-1998

Folder 49: Television appearances, n.d. 1990

Folder 50: Advertisements, ca. 1985-2002

Folder 51: Press Releases, n.d., 1979-2001

Publications

Folder 52: Pamphlets and brochures, n.d., ca. 1975-2000

Folder 53: Newsletters, 1988-2003

Folder 54: Web site, ca. 1995, 2000

Folder 55: "Read to Me" product materials and correspondence, 1986-1991

Includes drawings for cards and other products, originally drawn by Barbara Schwulst.

Folder 56: "Phonics You Can Feel" materials and correspondence, 1997-2001

Folder 57: "Overcoming Passivity" article by Marilyn Kay, Sept. 1986, rpt. Jan. 1988

Box 3

Series 2: Programming and Events (cont.)

Audiovisual Materials

Photographs

Object Kit: "Phonics you can feel"