



## Children’s Literacy Foundation (CLiF)

*Nurturing a love of reading and writing among children throughout New Hampshire and Vermont*

## CLiF’s Year of the Book Kicks Off with a Bang!

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*Duncan McDougall pauses while telling a story to students at Brown School in Berlin, NH*

In September, hundreds of children, teachers, and parents gathered in six lucky elementary schools across New Hampshire and Vermont to celebrate the kick off of **CLiF’s Year of the Book**.

This new CLiF program weaves a web of literacy support for one year in schools where children could use a boost. The schools CLiF selected each have a significant percentage of students scoring below state standards on reading and writing tests, as well as a high number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Schools in **Berlin, Pittsburg, and Pittsfield, NH, and Brownington, Johnson, and Newbury, VT**, are each receiving at least \$25,000 in literacy support from CLiF throughout the 2012-2013 school year. The range of potential activities includes **author visits by professional authors**,

**multi-day writing workshops, parent seminars to encourage reading with children, new children’s books for the school and public libraries, storytelling sessions, open mic nights for young poets, and much more.**

In addition, during the year *every child will be able to select ten brand new books to keep from a CLiF collection of hundreds of fantastic titles!* Many children in these schools have few, if any, books at home, and studies show children who select the books they want to read, and children who have access to books outside school, are more likely to be strong readers.

Recognizing the critical roles played by parents and teachers, we also provide **\$2,000 per school in grants for teachers** to help them pursue literacy-related projects (e.g., helping students publish their own

books), and **we ask all parents to sign a “Read to Me” contract promising to read with their child at least twice a week.** Once 80% of the parents have signed, CLiF helps fund a family fun night.

Early feedback for this new program is glowing. *“CLiF’s Year of the Book could not come at a better moment or to a population of kids any more deserving,”* said Rosemary Rancourt, reading specialist in Berlin, NH. *“Young families here struggle to cover the necessities of life and book purchases are often not a possibility. Duncan, a skilled storyteller, enchanted our students (at the kick-off event)... and children then selected two fabulous books to keep. I cannot fully express how much joy and anticipation our children felt that day.”* More updates to come soon!

# CLiF's New and Improved Website!

Over the past year CLiF has celebrated several exciting new developments:

- > The first year of our three-year Community Literacy program (see article on p. 4)
- > The kick-off of CLiF's Year of the Book program (see article on p. 1)
- > Our blog, Inspire Kids!, and increased Facebook and Twitter engagement
- > Hiring our new office manager, Gretchen Stern
- > New members of the CLiF Board of Directors: Mitzi Barrett, Glenn Currie, Dan Lynch, and Matt Rightmire

I'm now delighted to announce CLiF's new website! It was designed by SP!KE Advertising of Burlington and represents the culmination of almost a year of work led by CLiF's Matt Bushlow. Quite honestly, it's worth visiting just to view the striking images shot by Vermont photographers Glenn Moody and Paul Reynolds at various CLiF events!

When you visit [www.clifonline.org](http://www.clifonline.org) you'll find engaging information and content:

- > Descriptions of our programs
- > Children's literacy research and facts that support CLiF's activities
- > Profiles of more than 40 professional children's book authors and illustrators, poets, and storytellers who give CLiF presentations
- > A calendar of upcoming events
- > Bios of CLiF staff, advisors, and directors
- > Ways your financial donation can support specific groups of children
- > Other ways you can help (e.g., organize a book drive)
- > Lists of outstanding children's books
- > Past CLiF newsletters and annual reports
- > An easy way to sign up for CLiF E-News



A peek at our new home page at [www.clifonline.org](http://www.clifonline.org).

We'd love to see you and hope you'll stop by our office in Waterbury Center, VT or attend a CLiF event soon. Until then, you can visit CLiF virtually at [www.clifonline.org](http://www.clifonline.org).

Thanks, as always, for your loyal support of CLiF and the low-income, at-risk, and rural children we serve!

  
Duncan McDougall  
CLiF Executive Director

## Apply for CLiF's At-Risk Program

Do you know an organization in New Hampshire or Vermont that serves low-income or at-risk children from birth to age 12?

Please let their staff know it's easy to apply to CLiF to receive at no cost: 1) an engaging storytelling presentation, 2) an opportunity for each child to select two new, high-quality books to keep, and 3) a library of new children's books that will remain on-site.

Eligible organizations include affordable housing, family shelters, Head Start, community centers, and refugee services.

For more information, contact Julia Rogers at [julia@clifonline.org](mailto:julia@clifonline.org) or 802-244-0944.

## Who's Who

### CLiF News Staff:

Matt Bushlow                      Julia Rogers  
Suzanne Loring                    Gretchen Stern  
Duncan McDougall

### CLiF Staff:

Duncan McDougall • Executive Director  
Suzanne Loring • Program Director  
Matt Bushlow • Communications Director  
Julia Rogers • Program Coordinator  
Gretchen Stern • Office Manager

### Board of Directors:

Beth Healy • Chairwoman  
Bill Tine • Treasurer  
Michael Gerling • Secretary

Mitzi Barrett                      Duncan McDougall  
Glenn Currie                        Matt Rightmire  
Dan Lynch                            Jennifer Williams

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Toni Eubanks                      Mary Catherine Jones  
Kathleen Finn                     Jane Knight  
Grace Greene                      Joanna Rudge Long  
Ann Hoey                            Sarah Putnam

## To Contact CLiF

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Do you tweet?  
Then please follow us @cliforg  
We'd love to stay in touch!

# Summer Readers up 24% in 2012

Over the course of the summer, CLiF presenters visited more than 2,600 children in Vermont and New Hampshire as part of our Summer Readers program. That's a 24 percent increase over last summer!

Every year, CLiF seeks out day camps, summer lunch programs, and other sites that serve low-income, at-risk, and rural children when school is out of session. The goal of Summer Readers is to energize kids to read outside of school and prevent a lull or even a "summer slide" in reading comprehension during school vacation.

Each Summer Readers event provides a fun, interactive storytelling presentation and the opportunity for a child to choose two new books to take home and keep.

After an event at the municipal pool in Barre, VT, recreation director Stephanie Quantara said, "The program was fantastic and very well received by the children. I have seen more books coming to the pool ... It is now becoming 'cool' to have a book and read!"

Debbi Lambert of Canaan, VT, echoed this sentiment, adding, "I was touched by the number of students who brought their new books to camp the following days and read at every spare moment they could ..."

## New CLiF Directors

Four longtime members of the CLiF Board of Directors stepped down in 2012. Sonja Hakala, and Harry and Sylvia Nelson all completed their full six-year terms. Jason Patenaude moved to the Midwest after serving for five years.

Sonja was a founding director who had returned for her second stint. Harry served as CLiF's investment advisor, thank goodness! He and Sylvia hosted many board meetings and offered sage advice on numerous topics. Jason, who had been a CLiF summer intern in 2002, was our treasurer. All four individuals contributed a great deal to CLiF's success, and we will miss them!

After a search throughout New Hampshire and Vermont, we are happy to welcome four exceptional individuals to the CLiF Board of Directors.

**Roberta "Mitzi" Barrett** is an educator who has served as a member of the New Hampshire State Board of Education,

as New Hampshire Commissioner to the Education Commission of the States, and as a member of the board of directors of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. She lives in Nashua with her family.

**Glenn K. Currie** is a humorist, essayist, and poet. After a corporate career, he and his family settled in Concord, NH in 1986, where he maintained a private consulting business and became a freelance writer. Currie serves on the board of the New Hampshire Historical Society and has had a long association with Concord Hospital. He lives in Concord with his family.

**Matt Rightmire** is a managing director of Borealis Ventures. He began his internet career in 1995 as an early member of the team at Yahoo!, where he played a critical role as the company grew to 4,000 employees and more than \$1 billion



SOAR participants choose their new books at the Integrated Arts Academy in Burlington, VT

*We even had to tell one student to put it down while walking across the street!"*

For more information about CLiF's Summer Readers program or to recommend a site for next summer, please contact Julia at [julia@clifonline.org](mailto:julia@clifonline.org) or 802-244-0944.



(L to R:) Mitzi Barrett, Glenn Currie, Matt Rightmire, Dan Lynch

in annual revenue. He also serves on the global board of directors of Grassroot Soccer, a Norwich, VT based nonprofit dedicated to stopping the spread of HIV. Matt lives in Norwich with his family.

**Dan Lynch** began his career at Cambridge Associates LLC where he spent ten years before moving to Hanover in 1995 to attend the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. He currently serves as an advisor to a Hanover-based investment fund and works with start-up companies at the Tuck School. Dan is also a trustee of the Converse Free Library in Lyme, NH and a volunteer at the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth. He lives in Lyme with his family.

# Presenter Profile: Erin Moulton

CLiF presenter and author Erin Moulton has been a tutor, a lighting technician, an after-school program coordinator, and a librarian. But as with many true passions, writing gripped Erin at a young age. *She wrote her first book in second grade!*

*Erin credits her teachers in Moretown, Vermont, with inspiring her to start writing.* Mrs. Hartshorn encouraged Erin to write that first book, while Mr. Alligator gave her confidence when she struggled with grammar. (Yes, that was his real name.) And in high school, Mr. Stahl taught her to “*revise, revise, revise.*”

Now Erin is playing the role of teacher, imparting her wisdom upon a new generation of writers. After a recent CLiF-sponsored author presentation, teacher Tristan Upson said, “*Erin did an amazing job. Her presentation to students was engaging and relevant. She brought samples of her own writing from when she was the age of the students, which completely caught their attention.*”

It isn't always easy to captivate reluctant writers, but Erin has a few tricks up her sleeve.

*“When presenting, I ask the kids, ‘Who here likes music? Who likes comics? Who likes to listen to ghost stories around the campfire?’”* Erin explains. *“These are all story delivery systems. Sometimes it is just about recognizing that you appreciate some form of it.”*

Erin really enjoys engaging kids. *“I have had kids come up with ideas that run the gamut from personal memoirs, to zombie apocalypse stories, to every day schoolyard stories. Writing can be hard, but telling stories is natural to everyone.”*



*CLiF presenter and author Erin Moulton in Vermont*



*Duncan McDougall leads a Community Literacy kick-off event in Colebrook, NH*

## The Results Are In

When we started CLiF's three-year Community Literacy program in northern New Hampshire and Vermont in September 2011, we hired a team of evaluators from the educational research firm **WestEd** to take a detailed look at the impact our programs would have on the reading and writing habits of local children.

The results after the first year are very exciting. Here are a few:

- **Classrooms in two of the three towns began visiting the public library on a weekly basis.** Many classrooms had not visited the town library in years, if ever.
- **Children are writing more.** After attending our Writer in Residence programs, students have shown a new enthusiasm for writing. Their enthusiasm has prompted some teachers to make journaling a part of each school day.
- **Relationships between the elementary schools and Head Start programs are growing.** Principals now call local Head Start programs to find out if they would like to be involved in school events. These new connections have led to more local children of preschool age attending CLiF storytelling presentations and choosing new books to take home and keep.
- **Members of the community are more involved in education.** Some families that have participated in a CLiF-sponsored literacy workshop are now interested in partaking in the town's Ready for Kindergarten program. Higher attendance at GED classes and presentations at the public library are also being attributed to CLiF's programs.

*CLiF will continue to work with WestEd over next two years of the Community Literacy program to ensure that the positive outcomes found in year one are strengthened.* We also want to learn what we can do to improve our programs from year to year to bring reading and writing for enjoyment into the lives of as many children as possible.

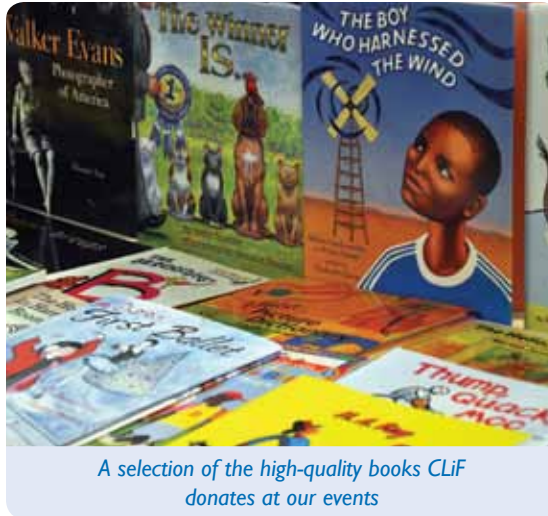
# How to Host a CLiF Book Drive

CLiF gives away nearly 20,000 books each year to low-income, at-risk, and rural children, as well as the organizations that serve them. CLiF works with public libraries, refugee programs, prison visiting rooms, low-income housing, shelters, Head Start programs, and many social organizations in New Hampshire and Vermont.

That's a lot of books for a great cause. **One fantastic way that any CLiF supporter can contribute to that cause is to organize and champion a book drive at work, school, local bookstores, or even birthday parties.**

Would you like to host a book drive? Here are some quick tips to get started:

➤ **Contact CLiF.** We only accept new, high-quality books. Check in with us to learn about our simple guidelines. Then we can send you detailed information and suggestions for how to run a successful book drive, as well as brochures and other CLiF materials to promote your drive.



A selection of the high-quality books CLiF donates at our events

- **Choose your dates.** We have found that between 10 days and one month is a good length of time for a successful book drive.
- **Invite others to participate.** Colleagues, classmates, local service clubs, businesses, and youth organizations can participate and help promote your book drive.

- **Choose one or more locations where donated books can be dropped off.** Make sure your signs are easy to read and include adequate explanations of the parameters for donations. And place them close to your labeled and decorated donation boxes!
- **Spread the word and the excitement!** We can help you put together a flier. Also, look into ways to spread the word through local newspapers, radio stations, Facebook, email, newsletters, and other media where you can run short articles or public service announcements. We can help you with that, too.
- **Contact Gretchen** at [gretchen@clifonline.org](mailto:gretchen@clifonline.org) or 802-244-0944 for more information.

Thanks for helping CLiF place books in the hands of more young readers and writers!

## Bolton's Own Little Free Libraries

Steve Madden stood in front of a class of elementary school students at the Smilie School in Bolton, VT and asked how many of them had heard about Bolton's Own Little Free Libraries project. Sixty hands shot up into the air. Word had gotten around!

CLiF's Executive Director Duncan McDougall sat next to Steve. Between the two of them was one of the six little libraries. It was about the size of a dollhouse and was freshly painted and ready to hold some of the \$2,000 in new, high-quality children's books CLiF had donated.

Steve created the project because he had been worried that the lack of a local public library might cause Bolton's children to neglect their reading over the summer. The libraries are little replicas of houses mounted on posts that can hold books that children can borrow for free, just like at a traditional public library. They will be placed in several locations throughout Bolton.

Duncan gave a stirring presentation to the eager young audience and discussed favorite books and prime summer spots where the



A Bolton Little Free Library and an ingenious delivery bike!

kids liked to read. "In the shade of a tree" and "in our cool basement" were popular answers.

Then he read a story aloud and became so animated that students couldn't help but laugh and shout out answers to his questions. **When the event was done, students began to ask Steve where they could find the closest little library.**

CLiF thanks Michele Gravelle and the Brownstone Book fund for their generous support of this project!



Simon Brooks tells a story at Lutheran Social Services in Concord, NH

# Simon Brooks Shares Stories with Refugee Families

For decades, Vermont and New Hampshire have welcomed refugee families displaced from their homelands by war, natural disasters or political instability. CLiF often partners with organizations in each state to provide fun literacy programs for refugee children, who often struggle to keep up with native English speakers in school.

Lutheran Social Services in Concord, NH, was the recent recipient of a CLiF At-Risk Children grant. The grant entitled them to a storytelling program, a book giveaway, and \$2,000 worth of new books for their on-site library.

LSS Coordinator Kerstin Ahlgren arranged a wonderful afternoon of storytelling, which featured CLiF storyteller Simon Brooks, Bhutanese storyteller Mon Maya, and two refugee children.

Interpreters were on hand to translate Simon’s retelling of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” into a variety of languages.

*“Simon was wonderful and the kids laughed hysterically,” said Kerstin. “I loved seeing the new kids, mostly from the Congo, listening intently as the Swahili interpreter told them the story. They’ve only been here a couple of weeks!”*

Bhutanese elder Mon Maya also had the kids rolling in the aisles with her story, “The Jackal and the Bear.” As she told the story in her native Bhutanese, a young interpreter struggled to keep a straight face, as the storyline involved the bear battling a terrible case of diarrhea!

*“What might be taboo in one culture is seen as high comedy in another,” Simon explained. “By exploring other cultures through their stories we gain insight into their lives and heritage. By gaining that insight we get a better understanding of what others’ values, dreams and wishes are.”*

# Great Book Gifts for Children

This holiday season, treat a young reader in your life to a new book. CLiF has some suggestions of great titles for kids of all ages, courtesy of Julia Rogers and Grace Greene at the Vermont Department of Libraries.

## Board & Picture Books

***Are You a Cow?*** By Sandra Boynton (Ages 0-3)

A clever chicken narrates this charming story that improves a child’s animal recognition.

***One Cool Friend*** By Toni Buzzeo (Ages 4-8)

When Elliott asks his father for a penguin at the aquarium, a misunderstanding leads to hilarious consequences.

***Me ... Jane*** By Patrick McDonnell (Ages 5-8)

A young Jane Goodall discovers the joy and wonder of nature while watching birds and squirrels in her yard.

## Chapter Books

***The Land of Stories*** By Chris Colfer (Ages 9-11)

Twins Alex and Conner get transported to a magical world, home to the fairy tale characters they grew up reading about.

***One Boy and His Dog*** By Eva Ibbotson (Ages 10-13)

Hal must take matters into his hands when his busy parents refuse to give him the one thing he truly wants: a dog.

***Chomp*** By Carl Hiaasen (Ages 11 & up)

Adventure, intrigue, humor, and environmental concerns combine to make one terrific story.



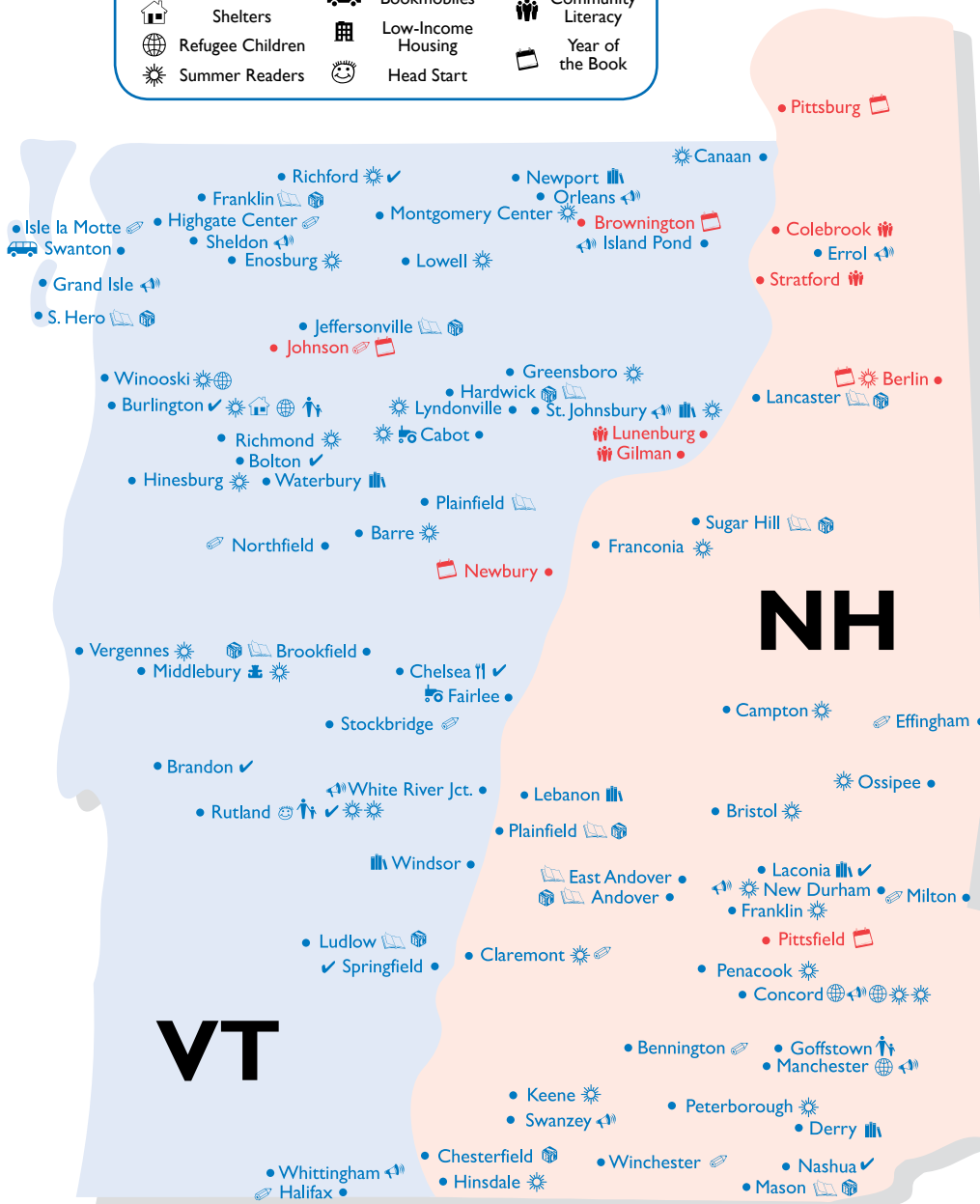
Hiata Defeo, owner of Bridgeside Books in Waterbury, VT, holds two of CLiF’s holiday gift recommendations

# CLiF Sponsorships (January - December 2012)

Since 1998 CLiF has touched the lives of more than 135,000 children in almost 400 towns across New Hampshire and Vermont. CLiF provides sponsorships to rural public libraries as well as to children served by homeless shelters, women's shelters, low-income housing, and bookmobiles. CLiF works with children's book authors and illustrators to provide presentations to children in rural areas. We send writers-in-residence to elementary schools, support towns facing severe economic challenges, and provide new books and literacy support to children of prison inmates, migrant children, refugee children, children in poverty, Head Start children, children in childcare, families with newborns, and many more.

## Legend

 Rural Public Libraries	 Children of Prison Inmates	 Childcare
 Author / Illustrator Visits	 Migrant Children	 CLiF Choice
 Writer-in-Residence	 Families with Newborns	 Book Giveaway
 Shelters	 Bookmobiles	 Community Literacy
 Refugee Children	 Low-Income Housing	 Year of the Book
 Summer Readers	 Head Start	



Below are some of the exciting programs that take place this school year in our new **Community Literacy** and **Year of the Book** Towns:

## Community Literacy Towns



**Lunenburg-Gilman, VT:** Book Giveaway (3), Yoga Storytime, Author/Illustrator (5), Reptiles on the Move, Summer Readers, magazine subscription for each child, Storykeepers, Library

**Colebrook, NH:** Author/Illustrator, Writing Workshop (3), Parent Literacy Workshop (2), Teacher Mini-Grant, Summer Readers, Winter Reading Program, Book Giveaway (2), magazine subscription for each child, Library

**Stratford, NH:** Author/Illustrator (2), Traveling Theatre Group, Book Giveaways, magazine subscription for each child, Writing Workshop

## Year of the Book Towns



**Berlin, NH:** Storytelling, Book Giveaway, Teacher Mini-Grants, Library, Daycare, Parent Literacy Workshop

**Pittsburg, NH:** Storytelling, Book Giveaway, Teacher Mini-Grants, Library, Author Visit, Writing Workshop

**Pittsfield, NH:** Storytelling, Book Giveaway, Teacher Mini-Grants, Library, Parent Literacy Workshop, Author Visit

**Brownington, VT:** Storytelling, Book Giveaway, Teacher Mini-Grants, Library, Storykeepers

**Johnson, VT:** Storytelling, Book Giveaway, Teacher Mini-Grants, Library, Author Visit

**Newbury, VT:** Storytelling, Book Giveaway, Teacher Mini-Grants, Writing Workshop, Storykeepers, Library, Author Visit, Student Film about Favorite Books



Children's Literacy Foundation  
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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

Have you made a year-end  
gift to CLiF yet?  
If not, we hope to hear  
from you!

A young reader chooses a new book to keep at  
a CLiF Summer Readers event in Barre, VT



Note from a young CLiF reader

Dear CLiF,  
Thank you for my free book,  
it was so nice of you to visit I really like  
that book where the pig outsmarted  
that fox.

