

MEDIA CONTACTS

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Embracing Our Differences Celebrates the 111th Anniversary of Dr. Seuss: Seeking Volunteer Readers!

What better way to celebrate the birthday of such a beloved writer of children's books than reading to a child?

(Sarasota, FL) Embracing Our Differences is partnering with Sarasota County elementary schools to celebrate the 111th anniversary of Dr. Seuss on Monday, March 2, 2015. **The organization seeks community volunteers to read to children in schools throughout Sarasota County, including in Venice, Englewood, Nokomis, North Port, and north Sarasota.** Volunteers should complete an online application form at <http://www.embracingourdifferences.org/> Seuss or contact Brenna at 941-404-5710 or Brenna@EmbracingOurDifferences.org.

According to Michael Shelton, the executive director of Embracing Our Differences, the EOD team selected specific Dr. Seuss books that are designed to “stimulate conversations regarding diversity, bullying, character education, and respect for others. What better way to celebrate the birthday of such a beloved writer of children’s books than reading to a child?” Shelton adds that when we

celebrate Dr. Seuss and reading, “we send a clear message to our children that reading is fun and important.”

The books selected for the school readings are:

- Kindergarten: **Hooper Humperdink...? Not Him!** The narrator's having a party, and there's one kid he intends not to invite. Eventually though, he opts for inclusiveness.
- First Grade: **Horton Hatches an Egg:** Horton faces down danger and derision to hatch an egg that isn't his. A classic.
- Second Grade: **Butter Battle Book:** A grandfather tells a young boy about the giant wall that separates the Yooks and Zooks and why both sides have developed more powerful weapons.
- Third Grade: **The Lorax:** Seuss pleads for the planet.
- Fourth Grade: **Hooray For Diffendoofer Day Diffendoofer School:** The school is at risk of being closed for underperforming on standardized tests.
- Fifth Grade: **The Sneetches:** Originally intended by Seuss as a satire of discrimination between races and cultures, and was specifically inspired by his opposition to anti-Semitism.

Since 2004, downtown Sarasota's Island Park has been the backdrop for Embracing Our Differences' colorful, larger-than-life canvases integrating powerful imagery and thought-provoking messages celebrating diversity. The scale and impact of this outdoor exhibition has continued to grow since its inception. In 2013, the organization marked its tenth anniversary with an expansion of the exhibit to Riverwalk

in downtown Bradenton. **The 2015 exhibition is set for March 29-May 31, 2015 in Sarasota's Island Park and Bradenton's Riverwalk.** *For more information about Embracing Our Differences, call 941-404-5710 or visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.*

Embracing Our Differences' other programs include:

- The **"Make-a-Day-of-It!" program**, providing free bus transportation for area students and teachers to the outdoor exhibit and to other cultural venues, including Florida Studio Theatre, Mote Marine Aquarium and Ringling Museum.
- An **annual teacher workshop** designed to provide teachers with a well-planned curriculum for use before, during and after their students' visit to the annual exhibit.
- An **art teacher retreat** presented in partnership with Ringling College of Art and Design, designed to reinvigorate teaching practices while inspiring teachers' art and art integration skills.

About Embracing Our Differences

Embracing Our Differences is a project of Coexistence, Inc., a local non-profit that began in 2004. The project showcases a community-based outdoor exhibit promoting positive, inspirational artistic and verbal expressions of inclusion, acceptance and respect. The mission of Embracing Our Differences is to use the transformational power of the arts to educate and inspire to create a better world. *For more information, visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.*

