

## Dog Day Afternoons @ Your Library

Kids who sign up for an appointment will enjoy the rewards of improved reading skills and very special companionship with dogs like our registered therapy specialist “Libby.”

Our Library’s **Libby** is a graduate of the R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs) program, a national organization sponsored by Intermountain Therapy

Animals based in Salt Lake City, Utah. In the decade since Reading Education Assistance Dogs first walked into the Salt Lake City library, in November of 1999, thousands of children have awakened to the joys of reading and books, and laid the foundation for a lifetime of discovery and learning, through the simple but profound experience of reading to a dog.

Research with therapy animals indicates that children are often more willing to interact with an animal than another person. They focus better on an activity or discussion when an animal is present, and refer back to the sessions many times in later conversations. Further, during such interaction they are inclined to forget about their limitations. There are also psychological benefits to interacting with animals, including increased relaxation and lower blood pressure. We have seen that children find reading to an animal less intimidating, a special time for them that is helpful and fun and which transforms the formerly dreaded reading experience into a positive environment in which learning is facilitated.

Oxford Public Library will host R.E.A.D. therapy afternoons every other Saturday beginning April 10<sup>th</sup> until the Summer Reading Program begins. This promises to be another wonderful no fee social and educational program at your library. Please contact Nancy or Leanne at the Children’s Services Desk for reservations and more information. 610-932-9625 or visit our website at [www.oxfordpubliclibrary.org](http://www.oxfordpubliclibrary.org).

