

Title:

Re-ignite Your Passion For Reading

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509

Summary:

Insight into what we need to do as a nation to regain our passion for reading and world-class education.

Keywords:

reading, illiteracy, education, books, newspapers, magazines, blogs, wireless reader

Article Body:

One of the greatest memories of my childhood is spending time among books and paper. I've enjoyed books since I can remember. The best place to spend quality private or family time is in the library.

Over the last 10 years, however, the Internet has irrevocably changed both access to and obtainment of information. We have the capacity to take a trip to our nearest wireless device rather than a trip to our local library to get the same information and possibly more. We have the equivalent of the volumes of books in a library at our fingertips through various electronic mediums. This opportunity has both positive and negative impacts on our society.

The inarguable convenience of information retrieval by way of the Internet, on the one hand, is an infomaniac's paradise. And, I am certain that there are a numerous parents who appreciate not having to make those late-night trips to the library to whiz from shelf-to-shelf as the lights flicker with impatience. On the other hand, we severely lack respect for our educational blessedness and as a result, tend to take advantage of the privilege of having such tremendous access to education resources.

I have a saying, "Convenience is essential to utility." The way we value a person, place or thing in our lives has to have some basis in their availability to us at any given moment. But, we cannot automatically equate accessibility with value. There is a lot of information that we can readily access, but has no inherent value. It does not teach or edify us in any way, so its value is misrepresented because of its accessibility. Ironically, the educational intelligence available to us today in libraries and on the Internet is often underappreciated.

America is a nation rich in culture and community. In heritage and history. Nothing saddens me more than to think that our propensity for material gain has overshadowed our appreciation for the national treasury of knowledge, education and wisdom we are privy to. The illiteracy rate in this country is alarming at least, unacceptable at best. We need to become a nation of readers again. We need to read and teach our children to read. We need to take the family trips to the library to explore the wonders of the world as written by many well-known and not-so-well-known authors. It is important to make that a priority just to experience the sheer joy of being around books as knowledge and information ooze from them. Libraries and museums will always be part of the fabric of this country.

For those who are most apt to read electronically, there is now a tidal wave of wireless readers coming ashore. They boast of instantaneous access to countless thousands of newspapers, books, magazines, blogs, and even, wikipedia. A civilization is defined by the quality of its education. It's defined by accessibility to information, but even more importantly, the applicability of information for educational purposes. We need to become a nation of readers again. I challenge you to rekindle your love affair with reading.