UGI volunteers visited Tenth and Penn Elementary on Friday, January 20th for the first of three book distributions. Books were distributed to classrooms a few days early so students chose their books. Two volunteers visited our four classrooms to put stickers in the children's books. Most book distributions included a parent volunteer reading a seasonal book and classroom craft. The children love the visits and books.

During our first RIF distribution this year we were visited by the Reading Wizard. All of the first grade classes sat for a story and presentation in the library following the Wizard presentation students went back to their classrooms. The Wizard and the other UGI representatives visited each classroom for an additional story time and book distribution. The students loved the event and were each able to choose a quality book for independent reading. We will continue to have the representatives visit individual classrooms, read a story and help with distributions for our final two events in February and March.
AMANDA STOUT: Susan Higginson

ASE will be dispersing their books and activities over several months. The following were/are their distribution dates and related activities: On Friday, Jan. 13, 2017 the theme was be “Cuddle Up With a Good Book” where the students got to wear their pajamas to school and read! Our second distribution was Friday, March 10th and the theme was “Lasso a Good Book.” The students dressed as cowboys/cowgirls. Ms. Higginson provided the students with the bandanas to go with their cowboy hats! Our last distribution was Friday, May 5th and the theme was “Flip-Flop for a Good Book.” Students broke out their beach attire that included their flip-flops, beach towels, sunglasses and other beach-read ready gear to enjoy their new books!

MILLMONT: April Halligan-Rostek

This distribution was promoted by having the students write book recommendations about their favorite book they have received from RIF this school year. The theme is "Books to Tweet about". We had one volunteer from UGI come visit and read to two first grade classrooms (Ms. Brady and Ms. Lessig). The other 2 classes received books.
"Celebrating 50 Years With RIF" - Thirteenth and Green's Reading Olympics team helped with the distribution to our 1st graders.
NORTHWEST AREA ELEMENTARY: Jen Bertolet

On January 6, 2017 Northwest Area Elementary, Reading Pa welcomed the UGI Reading Wizard to assist with the annual RIF distribution assembly for First Grade. The Wizard was accompanied by two UGI employees. Their role is to read the history of the Wizard, distribute and stamp books, but more importantly the volunteers, along with the first grade teachers, Reading Specialist, ELA Support teacher and Principal guide the students to find "just right books" that not only peak their interests but also are an appropriate reading level.

Each child was sent home with a book of their choice. The staff and Principal look forward to this assembly every year and are grateful for the kindness of the UGI Company. Students are encouraged to write thank you letters for the donations which are very well received by not only the volunteers, but also the management. This partnership motivates young child to read and learn the importance of reading.

RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY: Kimberly Birts

As chairperson of RIF for First Grade, Riverside Elementary, Reading School District, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for all you do for our students. Every year the children are awe struck when the Reading Wizard comes to visit. It is such a wonderful time for them and they are so excited about the many books they are allowed to receive. Thank you for all you do. Many of children do not have books readily available to them in their homes. You help provide for their needs and their education. Sincerely, Mrs. Kase, M.Ed. First Grade Teacher.
13TH AND UNION ELEMENTARY: Margaret Brown

Here at 13th & Union we have approximately 132 first grade students that received RIF books three times during the school year. Twice the UGI volunteers came into each first grade classroom (there were 5 classrooms) to place bookplates inside the front covers of books that the students chose. They also took the time to read to them from the books that the students selected. Students also enjoyed UGI’s Reading Wiz. The Wiz and the UGI volunteers met with all the first graders in the school cafeteria to put on their special show. The students again selected books and also received a Wiz coloring book. Everyone had a nice time. After each visit different classrooms wrote thank you notes which were sent to the UGI Community Relations Department.

GLENSIDE ELEMENTARY: Melissa Fisher

The RIF book distribution is a wonderful program that all first grade students take part in. From this program students grow their love of reading through a visit from the Reading Wizard and by receiving books. At Glenside Elementary School, for each distribution, all the first grade students gather in the gym. Usually at the first event, the Reading Wizard will make an appearance. He will read a book and speak to the children about the importance of reading. After this each child gets to choose a book that is on their reading level and is of high interest. The students also receive a bookmark and the story of the Reading Wizard. Most students take their books home and read them again and again. We encourage the students to share the books with their families and friends. Others students keep their book at school to read during various points in the day however, these books will eventually get sent home. We are fortunate enough to a total of three distributions throughout the year. The students expressed their excitement about the visit from the Reading Wizard and their new books.
16th and HAAK: Traci Webb

This year 16th and Haak distributed RIF books during a special 1st grade assembly on 5/19/17 in our school gym. In addition to the 3 UGI volunteers (which included a parent of older students in our building) we had 5 volunteers from a local community group, Youth Builds, participate as well. One of the volunteers from Youth Builds was a former 16th and Haak student. Our volunteers helped to display the books on 6 long tables. When the approximately 108 children came in and sat down they were greeted by the Reading Wizard and the UGI volunteers read the children the story of the Reading Wizard. Each of the four classes then had opportunities to meet and shake hands with the Wizard, select a book and receive a coloring book and bookmark from the UGI volunteers. The Youth Builds volunteers helped the students write their names on RIF nameplate stickers inside of the books. The volunteers then helped distribute BINGO cards to each student and the UGI volunteers called the BINGO as the teachers and other volunteers helped the students mark their cards. BINGO winners were allowed to go select another book as their prize. After 75 minutes of BINGO children who did not have 3 RIF books yet were sent back to the tables to select a total of three books.
I am the reading specialist at Tyson-Schoener Elementary School in the Reading School District. We have had three book distributions with first grade students this school year. The first two distributions were in the students’ classrooms. The UGI volunteers helped the children with their book selections and affixed the RIF personalized nameplates into their books. The volunteers read some of the stories that the children selected. The final RIF distribution was held this afternoon, May 24, 2017. The Reading Wizard made an appearance, which was very well received by the children. One volunteer read The Story of the Reading Wizard coloring book to the students as the Wizard provided motions and acted out parts of the story. The children were invited to shake the Wizard’s hand and receive their coloring books and bookmarks. They excitedly awaited their turn to choose a book of their very own from a very large selection of books provided by UGI. These books are very important to the children in our building because many of them do not have books of their own at home. The students also benefit from this program as they see caring people from business promoting the importance of literacy and they learn about volunteerism and the kindness of people from the community. RIF is a wonderful program to bring the excitement of books and reading to all children!

- Jodi Charnigo, Tyson-Schoener Elementary School
LAUER’S PARK: Gordon Hoodak

This year, our First Grade team organized three R.I.F. Parent Involvements. At each R.I.F. event, the students participated in five of the following Reading themed rotations: Book Distribution, Thank You Card/Letter Creation, Book Cover Illustration, Reading Bingo, Bookmark Creation, Reading Door Sign, Reading Game, and Read Aloud.

During Book Distribution, the students were guided to choose a book on their ARC Reading Level. The students were then able to use their books during Daily 5 Read to Self and Daily 5 Read to Someone. They were also able to take them along to lunch for Reading during Quiet Time. The students loved the variety of picture books, non-fiction books, and novels to choose from at each event.

10th and GREEN: Susan Lozada

On Wednesday, April 26th, volunteers from UGI came to 10th and Green Elementary to help us celebrate reading and distribute RIF books. The UGI volunteers included the Reading Wizard (Ann Rutowski), Jim Swope (Reading Wizard puppeteer), Hallie Jacobs (Miss Susquehanna Valley’s Outstanding Teen), and Mike Conklin.

The event was held in gym. The gym was decorated with motivational reading posters, streamers and balloons. Each student was given a Wizard hat to wear to the event.

The event started with a brief greeting from Mrs. Lozada. After the greeting, Hallie Jacobs read the story of the Reading Wizard to our first grade classes. After Hallie read the story, the first grade students were divided into groups and attended various stations around the gym. There were five different stations: Power Word Hopscotch, Sight Word Bingo, Sight Word Scavenger Hunt, Sight Word Musical Chairs and Coloring with the Reading Wizard. The students rotated groups until it was time for them to pick out a book.

Throughout the event, Jim Swope circulated around the gym entertaining the students with the Reading Wizard Puppet.

All of the students were given a goodie bag that contained various reading incentives such as bookmarks, pencils and I Love Reading bracelets.
Good Morning Reader

Students’ appetite for reading satisfied at book fair

BY DAN KELLY
Reading Eagle

Christina Ocasio loves to read. So the 7-year-old said she was happy when volunteers with UGI Utilities came to 10th and Green Elementary School on Wednesday as part of the company’s 25th year supporting the Reading Is Fundamental program.

Four six-foot-long cafeteria tables were lined along the north wall of the school gym. There were several copies of probably 100 titles stacked on the tables. One by one the first-graders were invited to peruse the books and pick one that appealed to them.

“I love reading a lot,” Christina said. “I love it because you can learn everything and lots of different words you never heard before.”

“And I like the pictures of places I haven’t seen before,” she said.

If she can’t understand a word her parents help her find the meaning.

Christina agreed to sit for an interview outside the noisy gym where her classmates were alternating between word quizzes, musical chairs and other activities that kept them busy until it was their turn to choose a book.

Joseph J. Swope, UGI communications manager, busied himself by darting around the gym with a hand puppet of the company’s own Reading Wizard. Last year Swope and other UGI employees went to Washington to accept the RIF Legacy award for dedicating 25 years and 1.25 million books to the program.

Christina Ocasio, a first-grader at 10th and Green Elementary School, selects her book Wednesday during Reading Is Fundamental.

The Reading Wizard wasn’t the only royalty at the school Wednesday. Miss Susquehanna Valley’s Outstanding Teen, sporting a silver and pearl tiara, read the “Story of the Reading Wizard” and walked in front of the students Vanna White-style, displaying the book’s pictures to students sitting rapt in near rows on the gymnasium floor. Also known as Hallie Jacobs, a junior at Shy-A-Kill Valley High School, she said she often volunteers for UGI and other reading and book distribution programs.

Adrian Valera, 6, said he is an avid reader and was enjoying the activities in the gym. Raelyn Borz, also 6, was doing a nice job keeping within the lines of the Wizard coloring book.

Both students were very serious about their reading.

And like their classmate Christina, they acknowledged liking the pictures too.

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