

# NEWS

For Immediate Release



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## Illinois Doubles Number of Advocates for Illinois Library Day, March 1, 2006!

That roar from Springfield, Illinois, our State Capitol, on March 1, 2006 was not that of the March winds. It was the sound of over 600 library advocates meeting and lobbying with their state legislators. The chants of “libraries are important” and “libraries matter” could be heard throughout the day.

A highlight of the day was a library rally. Stepping off at 11AM from the famed Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the sea of librarians carrying blue and white umbrellas with the Library Day theme, **I Love Libraries**, printed on them was an amazing site that went on for blocks.

The group was so large in numbers that the police were needed to stop traffic to allow the parade to move through the streets. Citizens of Springfield stopped to cheer and encourage librarians as librarians led chants about the importance of libraries. Librarians were heard to say that it was outstanding to see how many people were in support of libraries.

The rally ended at the Lincoln statue on the east side of the State Capitol building with speeches from Jesse White, Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian, Keith Michael Fields, Executive Director of the American Library Association, Anne Craig, Director of the Illinois State Library, and several other leaders in Illinois libraries. All provided overwhelming support and validation for the value of libraries.

Library Day was a joint effort of the Illinois Library Association, the Illinois Library Systems and many others who worked tirelessly to organize the event. “It was an awe inspiring experience to see so many librarians on hand to meet with their legislators and to know that their message was strong and being heard, said Shirley May Byrnes, Director of the DuPage Library System. “We will continue to stand up for libraries. Libraries matter, yes, they do,” she said.

For a video news clip of the day, visit <http://www.nsls.info/advocacy/libraryday>.