

News Release: The Big Read Night of One-Acts to Star Local Thespians

On Thursday, April 24, the Massillon Museum, with the collaboration of the Massillon Public Library, Washington High School, and the Lions Lincoln Theatre, will present "An Evening with Jack London," a program of dramas by and about Jack London. All events that are part of The Big Read are free and open to the public. No reservations are necessary.

The evening will open at the Lions Lincoln Theatre (156 Lincoln Way East in downtown Massillon) at 7:00 p.m. with "Lullaby" by George Gershwin, performed by the Canton Symphony String Quartet: Nathan Olson and Emily Cornelius, violins; Jonathan Kim, viola; and Gabrielle Athayde, cello. They will play throughout the evening between the one-act plays, presenting music by Antonin Dvorak, Leroy Anderson, and Scott Joplin--all selected to enhance the dramas.

John Kiste, Executive Director of the Canton/Stark County Convention and Visitors' Bureau, will take the stage first to perform his original one-act play, "Traces," based on Jack London's dogsled experiences in Alaska. Three additional one-acts will be presented, including "The Birth Mark" by London himself; "On a Cold Night," by George Nicholis, a play based on London's short story, "To Build a Fire;" and "Flora's Fortune," a monologue by Margy Vogt depicting the Massillon native who became the mother of adventure author Jack London. Washington High School students--Daerek Condo, Doug Remley, Joey Morales, Dan Condo, Erin Leffler, Luther Copeland and Samantha Jobe--under the direction of Eric Myers, Drama Advisor, will fill all roles in the London, Nicholis, and Vogt plays.

The Lions Lincoln Theatre concession stand will be open; proceeds will benefit Massillon's historic theatre.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. The NEA presents the Big Read in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in cooperation with Arts Midwest. The Big Read brings together partners across the country to encourage reading for pleasure and enlightenment. The Massillon

Museum's project for all of Western Stark County is one of 127 communities nationwide participating in the Big Read from January through June 2008.

Local organizations and individuals collaborating with the Massillon Museum include: the Massillon Public Library; the Lions Lincoln Theatre; Mayor Francis H. Cicchinelli; John Kiste; Massillon Parks and Recreation Department; Rotary Club of Massillon; the Massillon Area Chamber of Commerce; The Independent; the Fairless, Tuslaw and Massillon school systems; State Representative Scott Oelslager; Massillon Cable TV; the Chit Chat Coffee Shoppe, Canal Fulton Public Library; the Canal Fulton Senior Center; Ashland University; George Nicholis; Eric Myers; Margy Vogt; Richard Gercken; The Canton Symphony Orchestra; The Wilderness Center; Bocca Grande Restaurant; Massillon Commission to Advance Literacy; Kozmo's Grille; Boy Scout Troop 913; and many community volunteers.

Copies of *The Call of the Wild* may be checked out at the Massillon Public Library, which has bolstered its Jack London collection for The Big Read. Books may be purchased at the Massillon Museum (121 Lincoln Way East in downtown Massillon), the Massillon Public Library (208 Lincoln Way East in downtown Massillon), and The Village Bookshelf (746 Amherst Road Northeast in Massillon). Free readers' guides are available at the Museum, the Library, and at offices and businesses throughout the area. Everyone who reads the book will be encouraged to sign a "dog tag" to be displayed at the Museum or the Library.

For more information about western Stark County's Big Read project, call the Massillon Museum at 330-833-4061 or visit www.massillonmuseum.org or www.NEABigRead.org.

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