Introduction

It has been four years since *North Carolina Libraries* devoted an entire issue to children's library services, and as with other types of library service, during those four years, new directions and different methods in children's services have been taken. Recently, children's library services have been influenced by current technological advances such as computers and video materials and by slimmer budgets, which require very cautious spending. More than ever before, librarians are paying special attention to targeting and responding to their particular communities' needs. This issue is devoted to a single aspect of children's services, one that reflects all of these factors and one that plays an important role in children's librarians' lives—*programming.*

Upon first glance the issue may look like a hodgepodge, and quite frankly, it was designed to be exactly that. We wanted to have something valuable for all children's librarians whether they be in large or small communities, in school or public libraries. We also wanted programs that had worked effectively with preschool-aged children as well as the school aged. You will find that these articles are not necessarily scholarly or heavily researched. Rather they are written from practical experience. Most include suggestions or bibliographies to help with particular programming ideas. Also in this issue are more photographs than usual, a change that *North Carolina Libraries* hopes to continue.

The issue starts with Lois Winkel's article about using nonfiction materials in which she uses her years as editor of *Elementary School Library Collection* to produce some excellent booklists. Laura Robbins's piece on branch programming includes many good publicity and planning tips. A survey of "Great Books Programs" and how they work in school settings is the subject of Carol Veitch's article. In her article about computers, Carolyne Burgman outlines, lesson by lesson, her first experiences with computers at Bluford School. Lucy Cutler tells of her school's first author visit and the children's enthusiastic response. Another well-researched booklist is presented by Satia Orange and Sylvia Sprinkle-

Hamlin in their article on programming with black materials. Using both her experience in Wake County and her graduate studies, Cate Howard shares some ideas on serving handicapped children. Finally Diana Young has written a good overview of how the State Library participates in children's programming.

If you are a children's librarian, we hope you find a new idea or method that you can use in your library. Each of the articles has interesting information for both school and public librarians. If you are not a children's librarian, read, or at least browse through, this issue anyway. You will gain a better understanding of the multifacetedness of children's programming and children's librarians.

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