



## East Baton Rouge Parish Library

7711 Goodwood Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
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### NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LIBRARY'S SMOKIN' HOT KICK-OFF "THE BIG READ: ONE BOOK/ ONE COMMUNITY PROGRAM"**

The Library is proud to announce the kick-off of its second annual, community-wide reading program, *The Big Read: One Book/One Community*, sponsored by The Big Read, the East Baton Rouge Parish Library, and The Baton Rouge Area Chamber. The spring selection is *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and the opening kick-off marks the first of many hot events to come!

The Smokin' Hot Kick-Off will take place at BREC's Independence Park Theatre and Cultural Center, 7800 Independence Boulevard, on Saturday, February 9, at 2:00 p.m. The first 25 people to arrive will receive a free copy of the Library's Firemen Calendar featuring firemen from the Baton Rouge Fire Department. Several door prizes from Random House Publishing Group, will also be given away. Admission is free and open to the public.

The event will begin with a reception of hot chili, and continue with the presentation of François Truffaut's film version of *Fahrenheit 451*. Truffaut is considered one of the most popular and successful French film directors ever. *Fahrenheit 451* was his first and only English language film. It features Oskar Werner, who plays the fireman with a conscience, Guy Montag and Julie Christie who takes on two roles as Linda Montag, Guy's wife, and Clarisse, the teenage girl who changes Guy's life.

After the movie, audience members will participate in an open discussion, led by a panel of community leaders including Danny Heitman, columnist, *The Advocate*; Derek Gordon, CEO

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## **LIBRARY'S SMOKIN' HOT KICK-OFF**

**ADD 1**

of the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge; and Craig Freeman, LSU Professor and moderator of LPB's Public Square. The panel will be moderated by Beth Courtney, President and CEO of LPB. The panel discussion will be filmed and air at a later date on LPB.

Christine M. Taylor, Program Director for The Big Read and Jennifer Lehmkuhl, Program Assistant for Arts Midwest will also be in attendance to express their enthusiasm and encouragement for participating in The Big Read: One Book/One Community program.

The Library and the Chamber have partnered with libraries, school systems, religious and community organizations, and key leaders of industry and commerce throughout the nine-parish area—Ascension Parish, East Feliciana Parish, East Baton Rouge Parish, Iberville Parish, Livingston Parish, Point Coupee Parish, St. Helena Parish, West Baton Rouge Parish, and West Feliciana Parish—to implement this comprehensive program.

“The stark contrast between the lyrical language of *Fahrenheit 451* and the provocative and disturbing subject matter make this novel a perfect choice for our second Big Read,” says Mary Stein, assistant director of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library system. “We hope this novel will spark a discussion that captures the attention of the entire nine-parish region and creates an opportunity to build community.”

Public programs and lively discussions for a wide range of readers and interest, from middle school age students through retirees, will extend over this region from February through April. Reading Discussion Groups will meet at libraries, bookstores, coffee shops and cafes, businesses, churches, schools, clubs, and homes. Reading and Discussion Guides will be provided and Discussion Leaders are being trained to guide conversation on key themes of *Fahrenheit 451*.

Copies of *Fahrenheit 451* have been placed not only in libraries, but in classrooms,

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## **LIBRARY'S SMOKIN' HOT KICK-OFF**

**ADD 2**

churches, clubs, community centers, and businesses in the nine-parish region. The book is available in multiple formats including print, audio, and movies, and located at local libraries and bookstores throughout the region.

*The Big Read: One Book/One Community* website, [www.ReadOneBook.org](http://www.ReadOneBook.org), includes a master schedule of events and tool kits for teachers and discussion leaders. Resource guides and a generous supply of multiple book sets for participants will be made available to classrooms, organizations, clubs, etc. for class or group use.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest. Additional funding for this program has been provided by the Farnbacher Memorial Fund of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

For more information on participating in the program, and for businesses and organizations who wish to partner with the East Baton Rouge Parish Library and the Baton Rouge Area Chamber, contact Mary Stein at (225) 231-3700 or [mstein@ebr.lib.la.us](mailto:mstein@ebr.lib.la.us).

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