

county chiefs, officials of the CCA and NCL, and other dignitaries for the lively inaugural event. Planners decided to use video conferencing technology to symbolize the progress of public libraries and the spread of digital technology to local communities across Taiwan. The project aimed to remodel libraries along the lines of a bookstore, offering a comfortable and inviting place for learning. Library officials illustrated the improvements in the example of the Jhuangwei Public Library, whose collection includes over 32,000 volumes, including a good selection of travel and culinary books. The library was re-designed around three main themes: 1) Library Stroll: an introduction to using the library, arranged in a labyrinthine format; 2) Library Tour: a fishing game introducing the various libraries and rooms; and 3) "Books are My Friends": a guessing game to encourage an interest in reading.

Reading for All Seasons

The Taipei Public Library (TPL) and Taiwan Reading Association jointly kicked off a "Reading for the Four Seasons" activity on March 4. The program will recommend a book for each season in order to stimulate an interest in reading among kids and develop a literary climate in Taiwan.

The organizers will also invite scholars and experts to write book introductions and reviews, as well as hold seminars and workshops to promote the reading of good books throughout the year.

TPL director Tseng Shu-hsien said that according to the library's most recent book lending data, the lending rate for children's books was 32.55%, indicating that encouragement from primary school curricula has helped children foster the habit of borrowing and reading books. She also noted that borrowing rates were lowest among those aged 20 to 30. In addition, the chairperson of Taiwan Reading Association Ke Hua-wei noted that the recommended book for the first

quarter of 2004, *Journey to the West*, is a classic novel suitable for readers of all ages.

As part of the activity promotion, Paper Windmill Theater performed a scene from the *Journey to the West* replete with the main characters the Monkey King, Pigsy, and Monk Sha. The performance attracted a large crowd of children and parents.

To encourage people to read *Journey to the West*, the TPL invited several well-known academics to speak at a symposium on March 7 at the TPL's main branch. Academia Sinica Vice President Ovid Tseng spoke on the topic "Journey to the West and Star Wars", and Mr. Tseng's wife, Professor Hung Lan of the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience at National Central University, and Yuan Ze University Professor Sun Chen all reflected on their experience reading *Journey to the West*.

The TPL said that its recommended reading for the summer (to be formally introduced on June 6) would be *Meditations on Beauty*, its fall selection (Sept. 9) is *X-files of the Mind*, and its winter selection (Dec. 12) is the *Biography of Lin Yu-tang*.

Reviews

Century Old Images of Taiwanese Aborigines: Chieftains, Braves, and Traditional Handicrafts

Book Preface by NCL Director Juang Fang-rong,

This publication consists of two 204-page volumes with a combined 400-plus postcards on aboriginal life in Taiwan during the Japan occupation period. The name of the tribes depicted, the date and place of the picture, and name of the photographer are included with each postcard. The postcards are also arranged