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Casandra Norin poses briefly as she sorts through the children's section Friday at Memorial Library. Norin arrived in Liberal less than a month ago to take on duties as the children's librarian at Liberal Memorial Library. L&Tphoto/Rachel Coleman

Casandra Norin moves halfway around the world to take position as children's librarian

By RACHEL COLEMAN • Leader & Times Casandra Norin is all about fun. Eight and a half years of teaching English to Chinese school children did not erase her love of songs, games and outdoor activities. Living halfway around the world from her husband and 4-year-old daughter hasn't wiped the smile from her face.

Norin arrived in Liberal less than a month ago to take on duties as the children's librarian at Liberal Memorial Library, and she hit the ground running. The new Thursday-night program for parents and children, "Family Place Library," kicked off last week, and Norin was pleased to see more than 20 children arrive with their parents. The group spent an hour playing with educational toys.

"I don't think learning ever has to be boring," Norin said. "We took all the furniture out of the children's library [for Family Place Night] and got down on the floor to play with the kids."

Having spent most of the last decade working with elementary-age children in the Chinese school classroom, Norin said she enjoys the best of both worlds as a children's librarian.



Family Place Library program begins

The Family Place Library is a five-week, evening workshop for children ages birth to five and their parents. The program includes free play time for parents and children, who can explore the library's recently improved educational toy selection, and time to consult with local professionals who serve as resources for parents. A relaxed format allows parents time to visit with the visiting "speakers," ask questions and learn about local resources. Visiting professionals scheduled for the next month include Steven Sitz, bilingual family trainer from Families Together; Kay Burtzloff, executive director of Seward County United Way; Elisabeth McAfee, La Leche League; and Holly McCarter, USD 480 Speech Pathologist.

Openings for the free program are still available. Sessions are scheduled at 6:30 p.m. each Thursday, April 18 through May 9. Registration is required. To sign up or get more information, contact children's librarian Casandra Norin at childrens@lmlibrary.org, or call at 620-626-0180.

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