

Reading's Rocker

In 2004, Chicago-based singer-songwriter Alice Peacock founded Rock for Reading to fight illiteracy and renew interest in reading. The organization has raised nearly \$100,000 and recently made its first round of annual grants to support Chicago-area literacy programs. Beneficiaries include Sit Stay Read, an organization that gives children the opportunity to read out loud to therapy dogs; Casa Juan Diego, a youth center in the Pilsen neighborhood whose "The Little Saints Readers" program serves 225 Latino children per year; and Literacy Works, a collaborative group of Chicago agencies that provide adult basic education, English as a second language, and family literacy services.

"I played Farm Aid with John Cougar Mellencamp one year, and witnessed firsthand the impact of this concert series' fundraising efforts and how it helped farmers and really made a difference in their lives," Peacock said. "I thought I should use Farm Aid as a model and use my music as a way to promote reading and libraries as well as to raise money to help combat growing illiteracy rates in the United States."

Peacock is supporting fundraising efforts with a CD single, *Might As Well Have Fun While You're At It*, and a Rock for Reading concert in Chicago in October. Information about Rock for Reading, including volunteering, donating, or applying for grants, is available at www.rockforreading.com.

This was excerpted in part from an interview by former North Suburban (Ill.) Library System librarian Susan Franke. The full interview is available at www.susanfranke.com/alicepeacock.html.



Alice Peacock