

**FIRST BOOK  
MARATHON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
12:30 P.M.**

**THANK YOU.**

**IT IS ESSENTIAL TO RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF  
READING TO INFANTS AND VERY YOUNG CHILDREN. ...  
RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF READING  
TO OUR CHILDREN FROM INFANCY THROUGHOUT THEIR  
CHILDHOOD YEARS. ... TO DEVELOP IMPORTANT  
LANGUAGE SKILLS THEY WILL NEED TO COMMUNICATE  
AND LEAD SUCCESSFUL LIVES.**

**WE KNOW THAT EVEN BEFORE THEY ENTER  
KINDERGARTEN, CHILDREN WHO ARE READ-TO ... HAVE  
LARGE VOCABULARIES, UNDERSTAND THAT PRINT HAS  
MEANING AND KNOW HOW TO USE BOOKS WHEN THEY  
BEGIN THEIR FORMAL EDUCATION. AND MOST  
IMPORTANTLY, BOOKS GIVE CHILDREN THE  
OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT MANY IDEAS.**

**TO HELP FAMILIES GET OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT TOWARD A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION, I RECENTLY STARTED THE FIRST BOOK PROGRAM. ... IT GIVES THE FAMILY OF EVERY NEWBORN A GOLDEN BOOK OF NURSERY RHYMES, WELCOMING OUR NEWEST BADGER AND ENCOURAGING THE PARENTS TO BEGIN READING TO THEIR BABY.**

**EDUCATORS SAY GOOD READING HABITS START AT HOME, AND PARENTS ARE CRITICAL PARTNERS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS OF THEIR CHILDREN. THE BOOKS PROVIDE FAMILIES WITH ONE TOOL TO ACCOMPLISH THIS.**

**THROUGHOUT WISCONSIN WE HAVE WONDERFUL PUBLIC LIBRARIES WITH SHELVES AND SHELVES OF WONDERFUL CHILDREN'S BOOKS FREE TO BE READ AND ENJOYED WITH YOUR CHILD. ... IT DOESN'T EVEN MATTER HOW WELL YOU READ OR IF YOU JUST TALK ABOUT THE PICTURES – BY SHARING BOOKS WITH YOUR CHILD YOU ARE TELLING HER BOOKS ARE IMPORTANT.**

**ALL CHILDREN LEARN BEFORE THEY ATTEND FORMAL SCHOOLING THAT THEIR PARENTS ARE THEIR TEACHERS. ... WE ENCOURAGE ALL PARENTS TO READ TO THEIR CHILDREN FROM INFANCY AND CONTINUING THROUGH AT LEAST ALL OF THEIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YEARS. ... OUR CHILDREN MUST BEGIN SCHOOL READY TO LEARN AND THIS IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN ACCOMPLISHING THAT GOAL.**

**THIS INITIATIVE BECAME A REALITY THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH LIBRARIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE ... SUCH AS THE WAUSAU PUBLIC LIBRARY ... TO HELP US DISTRIBUTE THE BOOKS TO EVERY HOSPITAL MATERNITY WARD.**

**ENCLOSED IN EACH FIRST BOOK ARE BOOKMARKS ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO VISIT YOUR PUBLIC LIBRARY OFTEN WITH YOUR CHILD ... AND TO CALL EdVEST WISCONSIN TO START SAVING NOW FOR YOUR CHILD'S COLLEGE TUITION EXPENSES. ... TO COMPLEMENT THE FIRST BOOK PROGRAM, EdVEST WILL GIVE A FREE TUITION UNIT TO EVERY ACCOUNT OPENED FOR NEWBORNS WITHIN THE CHILD'S FIRST YEAR.**

**WHAT A WAY TO WELCOME THE LEADERS OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup>  
CENTURY ... ON THEIR DAY OF BIRTH IN THIS, OUR 150<sup>TH</sup>  
BIRTHDAY! BOOKS WILL CONTINUE TO BRIGHTEN THE  
FUTURES OF OUR NEW GENERATIONS...TEACHING THEM  
TO THINK AND TO GROW INTO WORLD CLASS WORKERS  
AND CITIZENS.**

**THANK YOU.**