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OFFICE OF
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Mayor John Tecklenburg to Launch Mayor's Book Club for Kids

Charleston, S.C.—The Mayor's Book Club, a fun new initiative for kids, will launch today as Mayor John Tecklenburg records a virtual reading of the inaugural book selection, "The Freedom Ship of Robert Smalls," by Louise Meriwether, which was selected in coordination with a MOJA Festival exhibit currently on display at the City Gallery featuring the book's illustrations by local artist Jonathan Green.

The initiative, which is available to 4-year-old children throughout the city of Charleston, aims to improve early literacy skills by encouraging reading and helping to prepare children for kindergarten.

Why it matters: With the rise of at-home learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mayor's Book Club seeks to encourage and challenge young children as they begin to read, while providing a fun and safe virtual activity.

Through monthly virtual readings led by Mayor Tecklenburg, the Mayor's Book Club aims to help build children's vocabularies, reading comprehension abilities and overall success with early reading.

How it works: Each month, a new book selection will be announced and a virtual reading with Mayor Tecklenburg will become available on the Book Club website, www.mayorsbookclub.net. The Gibbes Museum of Art will also provide a monthly art activity in coordination with the selected book's themes and illustrations.

Parents or legal guardians may register their four-year-old children for a free membership at Buxton Books, located at 160 King Street, where each monthly book will be available for purchase.

Official membership cards will be distributed to each enrolled child, and certificates of completion will be distributed to participants at the end of the year.

Additional details: In conjunction with this program, The Lowcountry Rice Culture Project, Jonathan Green Studios and Organizational Concepts will sponsor books for children enrolled in early education programs at the Sanders-Clyde Elementary School. Additional sponsorships are being sought to expand the book club to include more children in Head Start and Title 1 Pre-K programs throughout the city.

Support for the Mayor's Book Club for Kids comes from the Lowcountry Rice Culture Project, Jonathan Green Studios and Organizational Concepts. Other partners include Buxton Books, the Gibbes Museum of Art, the Charleston County Public Library and the Charleston to Charleston Literary Festival.

Learn more: For more information on the Mayor's Book Club, please visit www.mayorsbookclub.net.

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