

Office and other agencies to promote reading. He expressed hope that the mobile library service would complement the government's efforts and urged communities to take part in the program.

The "Hopeful Reading Alliance" was formed by several major corporations and educational foundations to donate resources and funds for promoting reading at 100 schools in remote areas of Taiwan. The alliance has donated about 20,000 new books for children, trained 600 seed teachers, and recruited college volunteers to support various reading activities.

China Motor President Su presented the NT\$10 million bus to Common Wealth Educational Foundation at a donation ceremony.

■ Puli Library Reopens with Five-star Facilities

The public library in Puli, Nantou County has re-emerged from the rubble of the 921 Earthquake, bigger and better than before. The newly rebuilt library not only boasts a larger collection of books, but also has a café, restaurant and spacious reading areas that distinguish it from the typically cramped township libraries in Taiwan. In fact, the local residents proudly compare the library to Eslite, an upscale local bookstore chain.

The original Puli Library was damaged by a major earthquake on September 21, 1999. In order to revive the area's literary climate, Puli town mayor Ma Wen-chun worked to get NT\$12 million in funding from the Cabinet-level Council for Cultural Development to support the town's library redevelopment plan.

Now opened to the public, the new library features well-equipped facilities, large full-length windows, comfortable sitting areas, and LCD-screen computers. It has also has an expanded collection of 80,000 publications and other amenities, all carefully arranged like a five-star bookstore.

The new library occupies five floors, including a first floor periodical and newspaper area; second floor children's reading area and performance stage; third and

fourth floor reading rooms; and fifth floor classrooms.

Moreover, the library has organized activities aimed at attracting volunteers and encouraging book donations to further enrich its services and collection.

■ Four-year Children's Reading Cultivation Plan Enters Second Year

By Tseng Hsueh-e, Principal of the Hsinhu Primary School in Neihu, Taipei

The Education Bureau of the Taipei City Government embarked on a four-year plan to cultivate an interest in reading among children. The program will run from 2003 to 2006 and be implemented by eight schools.

The objectives of the program are as follows:

1. To provide book information and guidance to schoolchildren to facilitate development of grade 1 to 9 curriculums
2. To expand the life experience, horizons and world view of children
3. To encourage creative reading and creative thinking ability
4. To launch reading exchanges among schools, train reading seed teachers, and share reading education strategies to enhance reading education knowledge
5. To encourage parents to actively participate in parent-child reading activities and expand resources for reading facilitators
6. To integrate information networks and share reading resources to enhance reading depth and scope
7. To develop diverse reading promotion activities, nurture the habit of reading, and establish mechanisms for independent lifelong education.

Completed and upcoming program activities for 2003 are as follows:

1. On April 23-29, 2004 (Shakespeare's birthday and World Book Day), Director Wu of the Taipei City Education Bureau gave a series of daily readings that were