

Sponsor	Location	Date	Description
Hong's Foundation for Education & Culture, TPHP Reading Clubs	Foundation	April 22 & 28, May 6	Lectures on various topics related to reading and self learning.

### ■ Taipei Public Library Launches Online Reference Service

In order to improve the efficiency of reference services, the Taipei Public Library introduced its online "Live ReferService". After downloading the necessary software, users can submit questions to librarians or make text queries via the service and get instant responses. Users with webcams and microphones can also make voice inquiries. Library personnel may reply by text, video, or voice. They can also provide links to needed materials.

The TPL expects the new system to provide more accurate responses to public inquiries than was possible with traditional reference services since reference librarians will be able to directly access and send online precise information from the reference database, rather than relying on verbal or general written replies. From their computer screens, users can instantly determine if the right material has been located, enabling faster and more accurate service.

Live ReferService can be accessed at:

<http://www.tpml.edu.tw/chinese/service/reference/reference.htm>. Service hours are Tuesday to Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Sunday and Monday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### ■ Nantou County Organizes Book Tour to Promote Reading

The Nantou County Cultural Bureau doubled the number of books provided on loan under a book tour program launched last year with support from National Taichung Library. A total of 200 cases of books, or about 8,000 volumes, are now made available to students and the general

public throughout the county on a rotational basis under the program. The ongoing tour is one of the major projects of the bureau and is supported by donations to the county's special earthquake relief account.

On March 8, the bureau invited county teachers, primary school principles, and veteran public-reading volunteers to assist with book selection work, as well as to exchange knowledge and experience on grassroots promotion of reading and the importance of specializing the roles of the education system and county libraries in future grassroots reading promotion work.

After completing book classifications and summaries, the volumes were distributed in batches to township libraries throughout the county. Long-time volunteer story-teller Tsai Chin-man has also been visiting remote townships in Nantou to give public readings and share the joy of books, further contributing to the program's goal of enhancing the quality of life through reading.

## ■ Taiwan Encyclopedia Launches Online Edition

The Cabinet-level Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) launched the online version of its Taiwan Encyclopedia, or "Taipedia," (<http://taipedia.cca.gov.tw>) on January 18, 2005, providing a new channel for information about Taiwan. The Taipedia project was embarked on after President Chen Shui-bian called in May 2004 for the creation of an encyclopedia exclusively for Taiwan. The online edition is open for public submissions.

Taipedia aims to achieve five major objectives: capturing the history and development of Taiwan society, collecting Taiwan-related knowledge in order to construct a meta database for "Taiwan Studies," returning the right to knowledge to the people in order to establish cultural discourse; constructing a communication platform and expanding the space for public discussion in order to reform citizen awareness and Taiwan subjectivity; and finally, showing the world Taiwan's cultural and intellectual strength.