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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greenville Drive to Recognize Summer Readers on August 26

Greenville, SC- Over 3,200 participants reached top levels of accomplishment during Summer Reading 2009! These Super Readers and teens reading 20 hours or more earned recognition as **Drive Reading All Stars** and are eligible for free tickets to the **Drive celebration game on August 26th**. During the pregame festivities, these qualified readers (12 and under) will parade around the Fluor Field's warming track and teens (13 and up) will receive commemorative backpacks compliments of Michelin North America.

Summer Reading, a tradition at Greenville County Library System since the 1930s, drew in over **18,000 patrons** this summer to enjoy reading, crafts, performances and other events. With the generous support of our sponsors, thousands of prizes were earned. Youth Services Manager, Karen Allen, commented on the 2009 season's success, saying "While participation in Summer Reading was up system-wide, we saw the greatest increase in our highest level of reading challenge. The number of Super Readers (children) increased **by 29%** over last summer and the number of 20-hours (teens) jumped a **dramatic 45%!**" Allen added, "Librarians throughout the system commented on the additional excitement among participants this year. The quantity and caliber of prizes clearly provided great incentive among participants. "

Among the incentives this year, Chick-fil-A and the Greenville County Recreation District continued their phenomenal support, providing thousands of prizes at the Reader, Great Reader, 5-hour and 15-hour levels. Incentives this year included drawings for a pair of Discovery Island passes (teen), drawings for iPod Shuffles (teen), Greenville Drive Reading All Star game passes (all) and Michelin North America commemorative backpacks (teen). Summer Reading kicked off with a packed performance by Billy Jonas thanks to the support from Friends of the Greenville County Library System.

The Drive Reading All Stars program, which has been embraced by educators across the Upstate over the past two school years, encourages education and academic success through reading. This summer the Drive program was expanded to complement the Greenville County Library System's longstanding Summer Reading Program.

Craig Brown, Drive President and Co-Owner, noted that "The Drive is delighted that the Reading All Stars Program, which has been employed successfully by the Greenville and Spartanburg County Schools over the past 2 past school years, was able to have a positive impact on children's reading this summer." Brown added, "Reading skills are

absolutely critical to a child's ability to succeed in school and in life. It is great to know this program had such a positive impact on helping young readers maintain and improve their skills and interests over the summer months."

Dr. Phinnize Fisher, Superintendent of the Greenville County School District, added, "Programs such as those the Greenville County Library System offers throughout its branches over the summer are just what our students need to develop a solid foundation of skills that will carry them on to future academic success.. It is wonderful when organizations like the Drive and Michelin pull alongside to support what the schools, libraries and families are working so hard to accomplish."

Michelin North America has been the title sponsor of the Drive Reading All Stars Program since its inception. Herb Johnson, Director of Community Relations for Michelin North America, noted, "Michelin is excited about this opportunity to help the young people of our community connect something as important as reading and education with an experience that is as cool as baseball and professional sports." Johnson added, "Having the Drive involved provided an added dimension of encouragement, motivation and fun to this summer reading challenge."

Qualifying readers in the Greenville County Library System's Summer Reading Program who received a voucher for a ticket to the Greenville Drive game on August 26th should exchange that voucher for a reserved seat ticket at the Drive Box Office as soon as possible as tickets are subject to availability. For more information on claiming tickets and participating in the Reading All Stars Celebration game parents and youth can find instructions at www.GreenvilleDrive.com.



About the Greenville County Library System:

Founded in 1921, the Greenville County Library System operates 11 facilities, a bookmobile, and a website that provide information, materials, and engaging programs delivered with world-class technology and a customer-centric approach. The Library System offers free access to resources and experiences and continually strives to be the community's destination of choice for exploring the world. For more information, visit the Library's website at www.greenvillelibrary.org.

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