

Elfun Science Programs
We Could (and Should) Do More!
Phyllis Budka

For me, there are few joys comparable to seeing a child's eyes light up with surprise and delight as I show them how to turn their muscle power into electricity that turns a small fan or lights a little bulb. There are squeals of delight as John Viert or John Marshall show children how to connect a bell, buzzer or light to a small electrical grid powered by a battery, and they then build their own circuits. The VandeGraff generator is always a big hit, and smiles light up the faces of children and volunteers alike, as hair stands on end to the wonder of all. George Halbfinger's Science Magic program is a source of excitement for students, parents and teachers.

Elfuns have supported science programs at libraries (See accompanying article), schools and, most recently, the Global Research Center's Science Day for area 4th graders.

We need more volunteers! It's not hard! It's fun! We could and should do more!

To volunteer, contact Phyllis Budka by e-mail (abudka@nycap.rr.com) or phone (518 377-8734).

Science @ The Library 2011
Sue Rokos, Assistant Director/Youth Services Consultant
Mohawk Valley Library System

The Mohawk Valley Library System was awarded a \$3300 grant from the GE Volunteers Foundation to support hands-on science activities at member libraries for its annual Science @ The Library programs for Fulton, Montgomery, Schenectady and Schoharie Counties.

MVLS's science programming objective is to offer accessible science programming for children through member libraries, and to bring science education to students and their families outside the confines of a regular classroom.

Science @ The Library is a free science education program funded and co-sponsored with *GE Volunteers* to get school aged children and their families excited about studying science by using hands-on experiments. Now in its twentieth year, Science @ The Library programs are offered annually in member public libraries throughout Fulton, Montgomery, Schenectady and Schoharie counties.

Science programs consist of an hour and half sessions in science fair format featuring hands-on experiments on the topics of energy, surface tension, buoyancy, sound, light, electricity, magnetism and chemistry under the direction of Elfun scientists and engineers for children and their families. These volunteers bring science education to children and make it fun, sparking interest in science.

The GE Volunteers Foundation grant also provides funding for science books for scientists and families to use during program at each participating library. To date, more than 2500 children have participated in the program.

For all programming held this summer at our member libraries, we've seen 9 programs with 467 total participants and 12 GE Elfun volunteers.

Ned Bigelow
Phyllis Budka
Rudy Dehn
Joe DiPietro
George Halbfinger
John Marshall
Kutty Nair
Angelica Paquette
Sam Kaushik Sampath
Carl VanTine
John Viertel
Hal Webster

We were also able to purchase 112 children's science books to add to member libraries collections to support this grant.