



Monsters in North Arlington at Library, hunting with author

By Celeste Regal

**NORTH ARLINGTON** – Halloween may be notorious for encouraging strange and dreadful creatures to run wild, but that did not keep some monsters from choosing an earlier date for invading our community. Many arrived on Tuesday, Oct. 20, at the North Arlington Library braced for some riotous carrying-on by humans and monsters alike.

Colossal uproars took place there during author Jason Edwards' StoryPlay interactive children's theater program, where growling, screeching, bellowing and laughing took place as the children in the audience created their own characters, made up their lines and became part in the tale. Edwards guided the kids through a madcap yarn about a boy who had a monster in his room and the ensuing ruckus that occurred when he searched for someone brave enough to help him conquer it.



Contributed photo Author Jason Edwards at the North Arlington Library for StoryPlay.

Edwards followed this misadventure with an equally animated Monster Hunt program. Now, it isn't often that raucous children are encouraged to roam freely through the library and pour through the stacks of books, but that's exactly what happened when boisterous young adventurers searched for and captured a lurking monster.

In this Monster Hunt, based upon the concepts and characters from Edwards' book, "Will Allen and the Great Monster Detective," kids built library research skills by tracking down and decoded hidden clues that instructed the children where to find the monster and how to catch it.

Participants used the library catalog and Dewey Decimal System to find the books containing the coded clues, then, upon the successful capture of the monster, everyone was rewarded by becoming deputy detectives in the Monster Detective Agency.

The day's events concluded with a book signing for volumes from Edwards' chapter book series, "The Chronicles of the Monster Detective Agency." The first of these frightfully funny books, "Will Allen and the Great Monster Detective," which he originally wrote to help his own daughter deal with some debilitating anxieties, features Will Allen, a smart but timid 5th grade boy plagued by fears that have literally come to life. With the Great Monster Detective's help, Will learns that he must face his fears and uncover the secret of the dreadful hidden beast in order to conquer his monsters. The series continues in "Will Allen and the Ring of Terror," with Will becoming a monster detective himself, and working to solve his first case.