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Photos by Melissa Tilley

(from left) Communities in Schools representatives: Program Coordinator Mark Durden, Campus Site Coordinator Karen Prater, Executive Director Vernon Dunn and Resource Development/Public Relations Officer Patty Williams accept a check for \$3,000 from Store Manager of Target in Beaumont Ed Bouley at the Family Reading Night held at Martin Elementary on Dec. 5.

Grant allows Communities In Schools to 'Target' on reading

By Melissa Tilley
Staff Writer

A local organization and a common shopping destination are working together to get students on target in their reading skills by implementing a Family Reading Night program. On Dec. 5, at Martin Elementary, representatives from Communities In Schools Southeast Texas, Inc. (CIS) received from Ed Bouley, store manager of Target in Beaumont, a check for \$3,000 that will help fund the reading nights at each of four elementary campuses that the organization serves.

"We really wanted to get kids excited about reading," said CIS campus site coordinator Karen Prater. "Reading should be a part of every kid's life. We hope this program will create a desire for kids to read all things and make them more inclined to read things they might not like to such as social studies books and science books. Reading also affects their writing ability.

"This program will also help parents understand that reading with their child is important."

Prater said that the program would include students



Martin Elementary student Shelby Davis chose the chapter book "Cheetah Girlz" to read with her parents Keith and Sabrina at the Family Reading Night program.

in third through fifth grades, who are required to take the TAKS test. "TAKS reading scores were not very good or could be better, so we think this program will help to raise them," added Prater.

Target awarded CIS the grant because it followed all of its giving guidelines in the categories of education, arts and families.

"Target is thrilled to present this grant to Communities in Schools," said Bouley at the presentation. "Reading

opens up a world of activity and learning. It is proven that children that read go on to be successful in their lives."

During the family reading night at Martin Elementary, each student had the opportunity to choose a book to read with their family, and also took the book home to keep. Prater said the books they had to choose from were a great selection of chapter books and included nationally notarized

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