

Children's author will visit Stark on Monday

Children's author Gibbs Davis will do a book signing for two of her popular books and twice visit students during her visit Monday to Stark County.

Davis, the author of "Wackiest White House Pets, will sign copies of that book, as well as a new edition of "First Kids" that includes the children of President Barack Obama, during an appearance 4 to 7 p.m. Monday at the Education and Research Center of the National First Ladies' Library at 205 Market Ave. S.

Davis' hardcover book "Wackiest White House Pets" has sold more than 100,000 copies. The new edition of "First Kids" will be available only on the day of the book signing — two months ahead of its December release date — due to special arrangement by the National First Ladies' Library with the author and her publisher.

In April, Davis co-hosted the Reading Discovery Program with former first lady Barbara Bush at the George Bush Presidential Library. Mrs. Bush read "Wackiest White House Pets" to Texas schoolchildren via video conferencing.

In addition to the public book signing, Davis will be doing a school program in the theatre of the National First Ladies' Library at 10 a.m. After the school program here, she will rush off to St. Michael's School to do a program for pupils there at 1 p.m. She'll return to the First Ladies' Library for the public event.

Her "Wackiest White House Pets" was a 2004 Parents' Choice Gold Award winner, a 2004 People magazine holiday pick and a Scholastic Book Club selection.

"Throughout history, the U.S. presidents had some unusual pets," said Parents' Choice Foundation in giving Davis its award. "Children will love learning little-known facts about the founding fathers. Washington brushed his horses' teeth probably because he lost all but one of his own by age 57. Jefferson had grizzly bears, and his pet mocking bird would follow him up the stairs. Lincoln, forever the great emancipator, freed a turkey as well as a race, and Coolidge spared a raccoon that was meant for dinner."

Davis' book is illustrated by David A. Johnson, who uses "pale, witty scenes, according to Kirkus Review, to portray the 15 or so that Davis picked to write about from the sizeable — 400 animals so far — menagerie that the White House has been home for during its history.