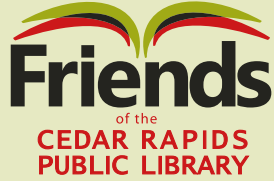


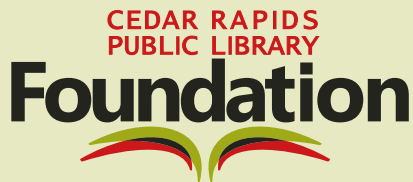
Spring 2024 FOCUS

The newsletter for **Friends** and the **Foundation**
of the Cedar Rapids Public Library



Mission

Friends supports the CRPL mission and vision and promotes literacy through community outreach.



Mission

The Foundation mobilizes community resources and relationships that empower our Library to deliver innovative programs and services.

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Friends' Pop Up Sales

A Library in a Park.



Big Dream

A Park in a Library.



Read pages 4 and 5 to learn more.

CEDAR RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

DOWNTOWN LIBRARY • 450 5TH AVE SE • CEDAR RAPIDS • IOWA 52401
LADD LIBRARY • 3750 WILLIAMS BLVD SW • CEDAR RAPIDS • IOWA 52404

Letter from the Foundation



Charity Tyler

They say the days are long, and the years are short. I feel this both in watching my children grow and in our progress with the new Westside Library. In a sense, the Westside Library is a living thing; it's the permanent library home that we've dreamed of over the years.

In 2019, Ladd Library's expiring lease was a clear need with an uncertain path toward solution. When the estate gift from Nadine E. Sandberg was realized in 2020, that uncertainty faded and a dream for a new Library in the Westdale neighborhood began to grow.

In the beginning, we called this new facility with an adjacent park our "Big Dream." In meetings with City officials, community leaders, donors, and stakeholders, we shared our vision for a campus and gathering space like no other in Cedar Rapids. Our Big Dream was to create a place where families could gather inside and outside, where celebrations and learning could take place, and where community could grow and thrive.

Generous financial investments from the City of Cedar Rapids and Linn County put our Big Dream one step closer to reality. This was the turning point where we began rephrasing our story. The end goal of our vision for a new Westside Library is to Inspire Big Dreams.

Libraries are connectors, safe spaces, information providers, and so much more to everyone in our community. Above all, libraries exist to lift up and support, and help grow and foster community members. We too have dreams, but we endeavor to Inspire Big Dreams in others.

It is in this spirit that we launched our Inspiring Big Dreams capital campaign for a new Westside Library. This is your opportunity, as a community, to inspire others to dream big too. We need your gifts to help make our Big Dream a reality. Many of you have already given, and we are incredibly grateful for your support.

This newsletter has so much good to share, and you are central to it all. Today, I'm asking you to take action. Today, I'm asking you consider a gift to our Inspiring Big Dreams campaign.

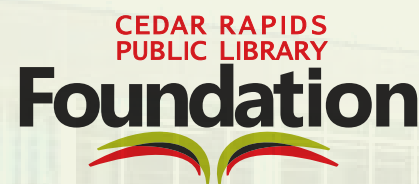
The days are long and the years are short. Before you know it, we'll be reading the Fall 2026 Focus newsletter celebrating the grand opening of our new Westside Library.

With gratitude,

Charity D. Tyler
Executive Director

Foundation Board Members

- Megan Murphy-Salyer, President
 - Julie Rosenbohm, Vice President
 - Ben Clark, Secretary
 - Salma Igram, Treasurer
 - Monica Challenger*
 - Jen Conwell
 - Andrew Gordon
 - Jade Hart*
 - Derek Johansen
 - Rick Kullander
 - Jennifer Peden
 - Patrick Sauter
 - Clint Twedt-Ball*
 - Marc Wallace
 - Sean Williams
- *Library Trustee Representatives



Letter from Friends

Greetings, Friends!

This issue of our FOCUS newsletter is a testament to the importance of connections.

As FRIENDS' board members and volunteers go about our day-to-day work receiving, sorting, and selling books, we are reminded how connected we really are.

From the 88-year old True Friend for whom reading is a joy to the two Kirkwood Community College students who chose book-related community impact projects: books are the connectors!

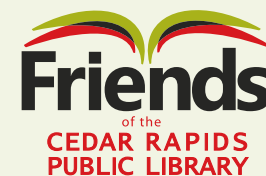
When we take advantage of the great programs provided by our library staff and piggy-back with themed pop-up book sales: books are the connectors!

And when we earn the support of so many community members like the employees of TrueNorth who made a major donation of books to FRIENDS: books are the connectors!

We truly appreciate being connected to our award-winning Cedar Rapids Public Library and its welcoming, do-anything-to-help, resourceful, and competent staff. And I can personally attest to the help they provide: staff members Heather and Tate pushed my car out of a snow bank in the library parking lot this past winter when I was stuck. How lucky I was to be connected to them!

FRIENDS of the Cedar Rapids Public Library could not exist without all our connections. Because of these connections, we're well on our way to mustering support for our \$250,000 pledge to the Westside Library campaign.

Thank you one and all.



Libby Gotschall Slappey

Friends Board Members

- Libby Slappey, President
- Quinn Arnold, Treasurer
- Nancy Sauerman, Assistant Treasurer
- Lesli Nesmith, Recording Secretary
- Alice Blazek, Sorting Center, Outreach
- Matt Burns, Sorting Center, Transport
- Jerry Campbell, Sorting Center, Communications
- Laura Gansemer, Communications
- Jessalyn Holdcraft, Communications
- Lori Lane, Communications
- Jean McMenimen, Book Sales, Outreach
- Cindy Monroe, Volunteers
- Debbie Schroeder, Sorting Center, Online Sales
- Joni Sohl, Volunteers, Book Sales
- Leslie Wright, Communications



Focus on Foundation

Inspiring Big Dreams: Our Westside Library



Launch party guest takes a tour through the new library using OPN's virtual reality headset.

In January, our Library Foundation launched its Inspiring Big Dreams Campaign for the Westside Library. More than 60 community leaders, library donors, and advocates attended the event at Ladd Library. Speakers included Library Director Dara Schmidt, Cedar Rapids Mayor Tiffany O'Donnell, and Linn County Supervisor Ben Rogers. Each spoke of the importance of libraries in a community, the importance of this library branch, and of the City and County's investments in the project.

Inspiring Big Dreams Campaign Co-Chairs Libby Slappey and Lois Buntz shared updates on the campaign's progress, including its \$1.5 million challenge grant from Hall Perrine Foundation, and announcing more than 65% of total project funding secured. Friends Assistant Treasurer Nancy Sauerman also announced that Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library are making a \$250,000 gift in support of our new Westside Library.

"This is the public launch of our campaign," said Libby Slappey. "This is the chance for everyone to be on board... Tell your friends; tell your family, your neighbors, and your coworkers to donate. This is a community effort for the most amazing resource in our community – our public library."

How to learn more.

The Inspiring Big Dreams has a page on the Library's website: CRLibrary.org/BigDreams. On this page you can:

- Make a one-time gift.
- Download and return a pledge form to make a larger gift with payments over a period of time.
- Complete an online form to request a speaker for your church, book club, rotary, etc.
- Donors making gifts of \$1,000 or more will be recognized on a donor wall in the new facility. Gifts of \$15,000 or more have the option to be recognized elsewhere within the building or grounds of the new facility.



Scan me to learn more!



Please join our growing number of donors and help make our Westside Library a reality. Give to our Inspire Big Dreams campaign today.

The location of the new Library is just off the southeast corner of 20th Avenue SW and Edgewood Road SW (behind Aldi). This is within walking distance of the current Ladd Library. The site will include both the new library facility as well as a new city park to be developed by the City of Cedar Rapids. The new Westside Library Park Campus will be a destination for the entire community.

The design process for both the Library and the park is underway. The Library plans to break ground sometime this Fall with a projected opening date in late 2026.

The new Library will include:

- A square footage increase from Ladd Library's 28,405 square feet to nearly 40,000 square feet. This means the new building will be approximately the same size as the first floor of the Downtown Library.
- Increased space for children's learning, including a dedicated children's programming room as well as zones for creative play, technology use, and motor skill development.
- Eleven study rooms, a large conference room, and a conference center with kitchenette, all available for public use.
- Outdoor reading courtyards and library lawn for gathering and programs.
- Additional and better-designed space for the Opportunity Center and Library partners to provide services.
- Increase accessibility for ease of use, as well as connections to walking trails and sidewalks for pedestrian traffic.
- More than 100,000 people visit Ladd Library each year. With increased space and resources, the Library expects that number to triple.

Thank you to those who have already invested in our Inspiring Big Dreams campaign for the Westside Library. Today, we need our community to join us and help make our big dream for the City's west side a reality. Please visit CRLibrary.org/BigDreams, or reach out to the Library Foundation by emailing Foundation@CRLibrary.org or call Executive Director Charity Tyler at 319.739.0411.

Inspiring Big Dreams Co-Chairs Lois Buntz and Libby Slappey speak at the campaign launch party.





Literary Vines

“If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden.”
 – Frances Hodgson Burnett

These beautiful words are from the classic novel, *The Secret Garden*, which follows the tale of a sour young girl, Mary Lennox, as she discovers a secret locked garden on the grounds of her uncle’s manor. This enchanting story was the inspiration behind the theme for this year’s Literary Vines.



The 5th Annual Literary Vines will be held on Friday, April 19, 6 to 8:30 pm at the Downtown Library. It features all the exciting ingredients that has made this event flourish since 2019: literature-inspired hors d’oeuvres paired with beer and wine selections, live music, a mobile auction, and the newest images of the Westside Library.

This year, we are thrilled to open the newly expanded 2nd Floor Maker Space for attendees to get a closer look at the emerging technology supported with donor dollars. Guests can explore the equipment – 3-D printers, a Glowforge, Cricut machines, and more – and learn more about their creative capabilities.

The Foundation is grateful that Literary Vines was selected by students in a course for The University of Iowa’s Event Management program. This team of students helps plan and execute our event. It unlocks real world experience and allows the students to apply skills and academic coursework to all areas of our event.

Proceeds from Literary Vines will support the Library Foundation and Foundation-funded Library programs including Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. It will be an evening of fun, philanthropy, and supporting early childhood literacy.

Our Library is a landscape to learn and grow, just as the secret garden is for Mary and her cousin Colin. Join us for Literary Vines and learn how our Library feeds that growth for our community. Tickets are on sale through April 12: bit.ly/LitVines2024.

Special thanks to our 2024 Literary Vines sponsors

Auction Sponsor



Partner Sponsor



Author Sponsors



Celebrate Summer Reading

Join the Library and the Foundation to celebrate the love of reading all summer long with our Summer Reading Challenge. Enjoy special events for all ages, log reading minutes and earn badges, and visit the library for special rewards.

The Summer Reading Challenge is for everyone! Register in person or online at CRLibrary.org/summer. Pick up your free Summer Reading Kit at the Library, then read and log 600 minutes between June 1 and July 27. Log your reading minutes in the Beanstack app or in person at the library.

Explore a variety of special events and programs for all ages at the Library throughout the summer. Everything kicks off with a Giant Game Party on Saturday, June 1, 10 am-noon, at Ladd Library, complete with an inflatable obstacle course, big blue blocks, Giant Jenga and Twister, and a supersized story time at 10 am with Clifford the Big Red Dog.

The Library will bring a variety of family friendly performers in again this summer, including a magic show, exotic animal encounter, dinosaur encounter, children’s musician Tom Pease, and more. There will also be programs for teens and adults, including Maker Spaces craft and technology activities, a special summer camp for adults series, movie screenings, and more.

The Library’s Mobile Technology Lab will also be rolling out again, bringing story time and fun and educational activities to area parks alongside the City’s Rollin’ RecMobile all summer long.

At the end of the summer, we’re bringing back a fan favorite with a Ren Faire End of Summer Reading Party. See sword fights and artisans, play fun games, and make medieval crafts at the Downtown Library on Saturday, July 27, 10 am-1 pm. Costumes encouraged.

These are just a few of the many programs for all ages the Library has planned! Visit CRLibrary.org/summer for the full calendar.



The Foundation’s Library Champion program recognizes businesses and organizations who support our Library Foundation with a gift of \$500 or more. Thank you to all of our 2023-24 Library Champions! *Denotes a gift to the Inspiring Big Dreams capital campaign.

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Alliant Energy Foundation* | GreatAmerica Financial Services | Paulson Electric* |
| Area Ambulance Service | GreenState Credit Union* | Rayser Holdings |
| Bankers Trust | HDR Engineering* | Riverside Casino |
| BankIowa* | Hills Bank* | Shuttleworth & Ingersoll* |
| Benchmark, Inc.* | ImOn Communications* | Skogman Companies* |
| Bradley & Riley, PC* | International Paper | Sunrise Builders |
| Cargill, Inc. | King’s Material* | Theisen’s Home Farm & Auto |
| Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust* | Knutson Construction | Transamerica Foundation* |
| Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque | Linn Area Credit Union | Tricon Construction |
| Dakota Red Corporation* | Local Union Community Charities* | TrueNorth Legacy Foundation* |
| Daybreak Rotary* | New Leader Manufacturing* | UFG Foundation* |
| Farmers State Bank* | Ohnward Bank* | Van Meter |
| Giacoletto Foundation* | OPN Architects | World Class Industries* |

It pays to have True Friends



When the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library's board of directors made the ambitious pledge of \$250,000 to the Westside Library campaign, we knew it was a bold move. After all, selling used books for \$1, \$2, and \$3 requires a lot of book sorting and even more book selling to reach that goal. Enter, True Friends.

Over the past year our membership drive has resulted in amazing gifts from our True Friends – those community members who are proud, contributing, members of Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

We thank you for partnering with us to support the Big Dreams campaign through your new and renewed membership in Friends.

Become a True Friend today by logging onto: <http://bit.ly/3K26Emx> or by mailing a check to Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 Fifth Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401. All gifts are tax-deductible.



EPIC

Jann & Gordon Baustian
Rebecca Groff
Kay & Steve Jackson
Lori Lane
David Maier & Matthew McGrane
Dave & Lisa Morris
Libby Slappey & Charles Crawley

MASTERPIECE

Anonymous
Heather Brown
Bev Buhr & Carin Bringelson
Carol & Bill Calloway
Fran & Jerry Elsea
Nancy Evans
Arthur & Barbara Fearn
James Fraise
Jan & Don Frischkorn
Maureen Gronstal
Gingie Hunstad
Robert Kazimour
Denise Klemp
Sue Neil
John & Chris North
Greg & Amy Stewart
Gary & Susie Streit
Terri & Guy Wendler

CLASSIC

Quinn & Brie Arnold
Scott & Rhonda Christensen
Lee Clancey
Debbie Craig
Mary & Rich Doyle
Rex & Kathy Eno
Kathy Good
Sue Graham-Cummings
Allison Gray
Katie & Tim Hill
Karen & Alan Kessler
Kathy & Bill Kilbourn
Joan Kocher
Marion Koontz
Joe Lock
Iris Muchmore & Mark Ogden
Rich & Marion Patterson
Don Petersen
David & Mary Jo Rater
Nancy Rawson & Tim King
Nan Riley
Jan Russell
Dwight & Debbie Schroeder
Mary Sharp
Kathy Shelton
Teddy Shuttleworth

Monica & Bill Vernon
Marcia Whiteford
Leslie Wright

BEST SELLER

Britney Appelgate
Renate & Neil Bernstein
Alice Blazek
Lois Buntz
Rachelle Freese
Greer Fry
Cindy Garlock
Katie Giorgio
Don & Marjorie Grimm
Jade & Brad Hart
Jack & Mary Ann Jackson
Ann Koppenhaver
William Krueger
Hilery Livengood & Ben Fashimpaur
Linda Lumsden
Jim & Traci Maxted
Mike & Susie McDermott
Bruce & Jane Nesmith
Sheryl Ochs
Gwen & Jim Randall
Joseph & Martha Rasmussen
Randy & Eleonora Rieck
Dwight & Debbie Schroeder

Jack & Joyce Sedlacek
Jim Spencer
Mary Stull
Chris Taylor
Linda & Calvin Van Niewaal
Susan Van Woert
Roger & Oline Stigers

NOVEL

Lori Alberts
Sondra Bolsinger-Lamb
Chris & Nicole Bruns
Christine Gochenouer
BJ Good
Lynn Hadjis
Gay Holstine
Wayne & Harriet Kalinsky
Beth Kielts
Nancy & Rod Kodros
Mary Kopecky
Pat Martin
Helga Mayhew
Jan Moore-Ecker
Gayle Morgan
Sarah Olmstead
Sue Pearson
Charlotte Pence
Janet Rater
Barb Rhame
George & Shirley Ruedy

Jensen Schneider
Jane & David Siegel
Jeanne Stoakes
Helen Wall
Jan Webster
Teresa & Mark Wery
Nancy York

BOOKWORM

Ruth & David Ard
Frank Daily
Natalie Esparza
John & Patricia Houar
Melissa Randall
Barbara Westercamp
Alice Wilkerson
Carolyn Wilson
Pete Wood

This listing includes our 2023 True Friends through April 1, 2024. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. In the event there is an error, please contact us at: crfriends@gmail.com.

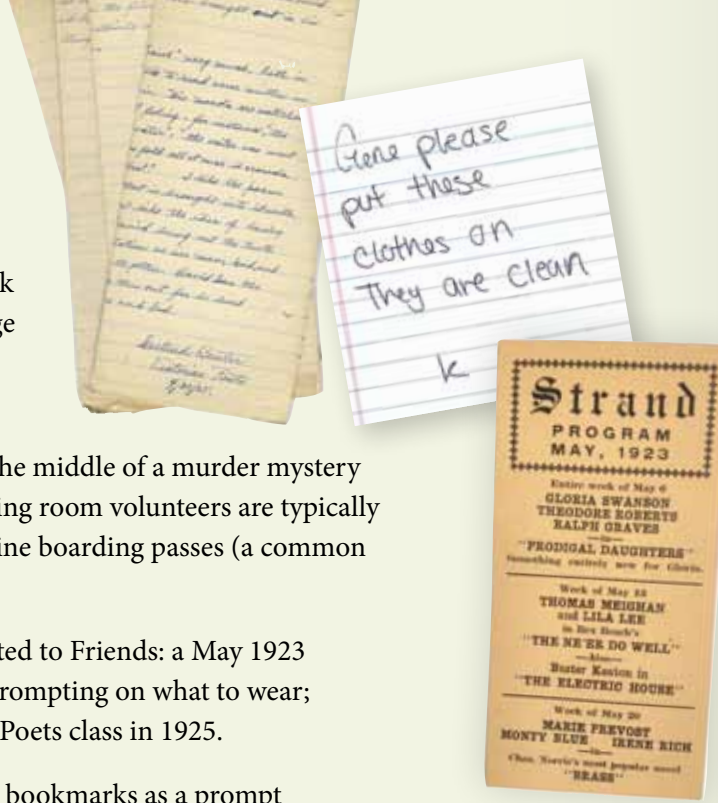
Leaving their mark – literally!

It's not uncommon for book readers to use random items to mark their places in books they are reading. After all, dog-earring a page is absolutely verboten among the literati.

When used books are donated to Friends of the Library, make-shift bookmarks are often left behind, furtively tucked in the middle of a murder mystery or just inside the back cover of a lengthy biography. Friends sorting room volunteers are typically the first to find the abandoned markers and they range from airline boarding passes (a common find) to a crisp \$20 bill (a valuable donation to Friends).

Here are just three examples of recent discoveries in books donated to Friends: a May 1923 program from the Strand Theatre; a note to Gene, who needed prompting on what to wear; and several papers written by Gertrude Beuter for her Victorian Poets class in 1925.

Wouldn't writing groups have a heyday using one of these errant bookmarks as a prompt for their next writing assignment?



Crowdsourcing: It can be more than money

When Library Trustee Elisabeth Hepworth contacted Friends about TrueNorth's Community Outreach program, a used book drive to benefit Friends of the CRPL was proposed as a potential crowdsourcing project for TrueNorth employees. Without hesitation Friends said an immediate YES, with the special request for children's books.

(While the need for community donations of books can wax and wane, one constant need is children's books.)

Within weeks, TrueNorth amassed dozens – no, hundreds – of books to pass on to Friends of the Library. Elisabeth and colleague Ali Palmersheim arrived at the library with an entire vehicle load of great books including plenty for children.

Crowdsourcing truly pays dividends, particularly when they are books!



TrueNorth employees responded in a big way to the call for used book donations.



TrueNorth employees Elisabeth Hepworth and Ali Palmersheim deliver a much-appreciated donation of books to Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

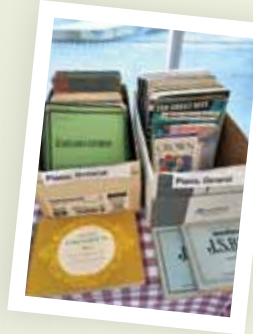


Friends get creative with pop-up sales

Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library got creative in February and March, hosting two pop-up sales to coincide with community events offered at the downtown library. The Romance Sale in February was held the same day as the Romance Lovers program, hosted by the CRPL staff. In addition to meeting a local romance author, patrons could pick up some amazing deals on romance books. The timing was good and Friends raised over \$500 with the sale. Kudos to Hy-Vee for providing decorations.



In March Friends created a second pop-up sale in partnership with the very successful Community Music Day (CMD). The 3rd Annual CMD featured events and programs for all ages, including stories, music classes, an instrument petting zoo and small and large group performances. Friends' volunteers stocked the sale with a great assortment of books and music to catch the attention of the local music lovers and made over \$200 for Friends of the Library.



Book Sale Co-Chairs Cindy Monroe and Joni Sohl made these great events happen. Cindy noted, "We love to partner with the library programming staff. They are pros at bringing in great authors and they're super creative in planning great programs." These collaborative efforts provide another way to introduce Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library to new folks and sell more books. Watch for more themed pop-up sales in the months to come.



Books as the common denominator

For Fasseri Doumbia, it's a long way from the Ivory Coast to Kirkwood College in Cedar Rapids. Likewise for Beyda Ortiz from Colombia. They made the trek as participants in the Community College Initiative (CCI) Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Through this program, participants from around the world have the opportunity to study at community colleges in the U.S. for one academic year.



Fasseri Doumbia and friend Joseph Bwalya

The CCI Program encourages students to undertake a Community Impact Project in their host community. As part of their leadership development and cultural exchange experience they must identify and address a specific need or issue within the community.

Fass chose to focus on his immediate community – Kirkwood students in Washington Hall – and organized a book fair to distribute science and business-related books, along with books of general interest.



Beyda Ortiz

Beyda addressed a need at the Kirkwood Courts Apartments where she saw the need for a designated space for children in the Club House. She chose to set up a reading corner for young children, knowing books would help improve language proficiency through reading.

Because CCI policies do not allow fundraising, the students must execute their projects without money. Both Fass and Beyda sought a partnership with Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, asking for book donations. Friends' outreach program was happy to assist and provided the students with boxes of quality, used books.

A classic win-win!

Volunteer Focus: Katie Adams

When she's not at home making soap for her small business *Cedar Witch Goods* or baking sourdough bread for her family, Katie Adams can be found in the Friends' sorting room organizing and shelving books on religion, the occult, new age, mythology, and health & fitness. These are all genres in which Katie has a "casual interest."

Her career in graphic design took a detour when she sought out additional creative ways to spend her time. As a blogger who bought natural beauty products on Etsy, she pondered, "Hey, maybe making soap is something I should do." And the rest is history. She learned to make soap from a hobby farmer she knew, who fixed her up with some starter items, and she was off and running. She learned where to source granular lye, a critical component in soap production and she learned how to saponify – to hydrolyze a fat with alkali to form a soap and glycerol. (Yes, that's how soap is made!)

Fast forward to March 2024 when Katie was honored as 2024 Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year and the next NewBo City Market Shopkeeper. This honor entitles Katie to one year of free rent as a shopkeeper at NewBo City Market.

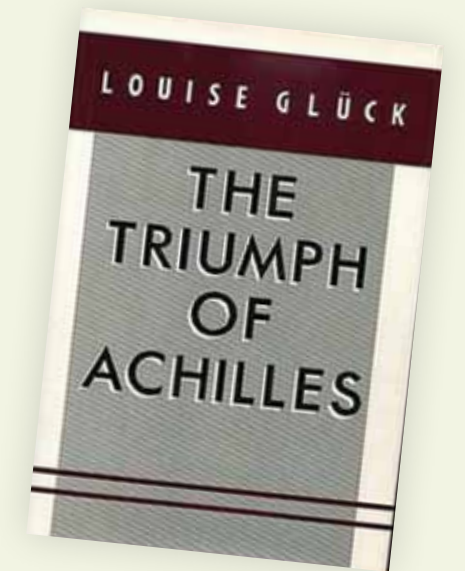
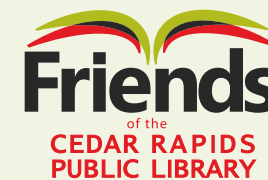
Congratulations to sorting room volunteer, Katie Adams.



NewBo City Market Executive Director, Julie Parisi (left) and Katie Adams, owner and product developer, Cedar Witch Goods

Timing is everything, even in death

When Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Louise Glück died on October 13, 2023, the cracker-jack volunteers in the sorting room sprang into action, recalling there were some Glück poetry books in the Friends' inventory. In fact, there were four different volumes and all were autographed by Ms. Glück. Quick research revealed the dollar value of the books and they were immediately listed on Amazon through the Friends' selling portal. In less than 24 hours the first sold – *The Triumph of Achilles*, for \$200. Paying attention pays.

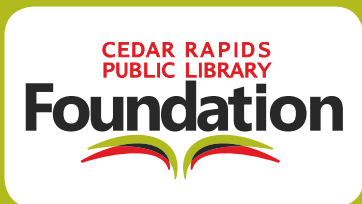


Focus

Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation
Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library
450 5th Ave. SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Return Service Requested

Non-profit
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #381
Cedar Rapids,
Iowa 52401

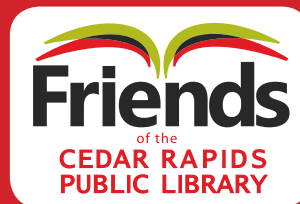


Literary Vines Fundraiser

Friday, April 19
Downtown Library
6 – 8:30 PM
Buy tickets:
bit.ly/LitVines2024

Van Vechten Society Brunch

Sunday, September 22
Downtown Library
10 am to Noon
Invitations to Follow



Farmers Market Sales

Downtown
Library Plaza
Saturday, May 25
Saturday, June 1
Saturday, June 15
Saturday, July 6
Saturday, July 20
Saturday, August 3
Saturday, August 17

Big Fall Book Sale

November 1 – 3
Downtown Library

Very Cherry Book Sale

Saturday, December 7
Cherry Building
329 10th Avenue SE