The Cedar Rapids Public Library welcomed more than 10,000 people through the doors of the new library in downtown Cedar Rapids on opening weekend, August 24 and 25, 2013. The Friends and Foundation have seen the heart and passion of this city through your generosity and excitement for the project as the vision for our new library has taken shape. It was wonderful to say, “Thank you. You did it.” as we crossed the threshold together.

Orchestra
Iowa School Harp Ensemble performed for a packed house in Whipple Auditorium.

Library Director Bob Pasicznyuk and the entire library staff wore red t-shirts on opening day with fun sayings on the back. While Bob “puts the ‘zing’ in amazing,” other staff members “have mad skills” or “make it happen.”

One thousand members of the excited crowd were given a keepsake pair of scissors and invited to take part in the historic ribbon cutting event.

Library Director Bob Pasicznyuk assists some teens at the self-check machine.

Volunteers led tours to eager visitors throughout opening weekend.

A little girl enjoying a pink elephant chair, a big stack of books and all the wonders of her new library.
Community Perspectives

“My Library” was the theme of the opening remarks before the ribbon cutting ceremony. A few members of the community reflected on the personal significance of opening day and the return of our library. Below are the touching remarks from Sergeant Robert Collins.

“Hello, I’m Sergeant Robert Collins of the Cedar Rapids Police Department. This is my library. I greatly enjoy books. My mother literally owns thousands of books, many of which are children’s books. Some of my earliest memories are of my mom reading stories to me. I remember my first school library book that I brought home when I was in kindergarten: The Giant Jam Sandwich. It’s a great story.

Fast forward to this week - our youngest child went off to kindergarten, and yesterday she brought home her first library book: Five Little Sharks Swimming in the Sea. When she is older, I hope she remembers me reading this story to her, and it instills that love of books that I have.

When the flood hit, our main library here in Cedar Rapids shut down. In the weeks and months after the water subsided, I spent many, many nights patrolling flooded-out neighborhoods. Sometimes I would walk the skywalk system starting at the U.S. Cellular Center and working my way to the south. The skywalk came to an end at a dark, locked and chained door that led to...the library. In the middle of the night, it was an awfully lonely and eerie sight to see.

But I knew that someday, someone’s dream would become a reality, and we would re-open these doors. As this beautiful structure was being built, I spent many days on patrol, slowly driving by, watching the workers break ground, build walls and put the final touches on everything.

That day has finally come. Today, I am very excited about my library.”

To watch the opening remarks in their entirety, please visit www.crlibrary.org/grand-opening1/.

THE GRAND OPENING GALA

On August 23, 2013, the Foundation hosted a formal fundraising gala in the soon-to-be-opened Cedar Rapids Public Library downtown. Below are just a few of the folks who made the Grand Opening Gala a big success.
Thank you to our grand opening sponsors

The Classics of the Cedar Rapids Public Library

There are heroes all around us; some of them have been handing you and your family books for the past 30 years.

So many dedicated employees have contributed to the rich, 117 year tradition of excellent library service in Cedar Rapids. At the core of the Carnegie Library, the 1985 Library and now the newest downtown library is a caring staff, opening doors to knowledge, entertainment and discovery for an entire community. Eleven of the 87 current employees of the Cedar Rapids Public Library have been greeting guests, presenting exceptional programs, cataloging and shelving books and answering research questions in all three libraries downtown.

We think of these tireless staff members as our “Classics.” Classic literature will always be on our shelves because a good story stands the test of time. Our “Classics” also never go out of style; there is always a need for knowledgeable people who are dedicated to spreading literacy and lifelong learning throughout our community. Not only have the “Classics” weathered the storms of new locations, uncertain funding, tragic loss and building back better, these 11 individuals have steered the ship through it all. They have been there for the people of Cedar Rapids, consistently delivering a quality library experience to an entire generation and we are all better for it.

What a team!
Back row (left to right): Jackie Haveman, Karla McMurrin, Mary Lee Kosina, Paula Cafr, Don Troester, Patti Nemec
Front Row: Carol Hoke, Nancy Geiger, Anne Chapman, Amy Ackman, Dixie Icenbice
Dual Purpose Drive-thru:  
Two reasons to motor on down to the new CRPL

Long-time CRPL patrons and friends can recall the various ways library books have been returned and used books have been donated through the years. Most recently, before the completion of the new Main Library, Westdale Mall had two drop boxes at the curb: one for library books to be returned to the shelves and the other for used books to go to the annual book sale. Now, thanks to technology and a new building, patrons and friends can accomplish either task with one dual purpose drive-up slot at the new downtown library. The drop slot will take library books and book sale donations which will be magically sorted via scanner, once inside the building. Please note, the new Main Library’s Press Café has a drive up window, so don’t try to give your books to the barista in exchange for a cappuccino!

Storing Books for the Book Sale: It’s all a matter of space – or is it?

Among the many perks the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library enjoy in the new downtown building is a place to call their own for sorting and storing books for Friends book sales. During the building’s planning, it made sense to allocate space exclusively for Friends and their books. And just like the library’s staff, the Friends were giddy thinking about all that could be accomplished in the new digs.

Over the years, book sale books have been stored in the lower level of the Cherry Building where dedicated, box-toting, book moving and sorting Friends have worked their magic. After all, it does take brain and brawn to make sense of dozens of boxes of books that are part of the weekly “piling on” that takes place there.

With an influx of used books donated daily at both the west side Ladd Library and the downtown Main Library – made even more convenient with drive-thru drop slots at both – the question remains: Will there be enough room in the Friends space at the new library to handle all the books? At this writing, the question remains unanswered. For Sorting Center volunteers, it’s another thing to sort out.
One-of-a-kind Friend of the Library is remembered

Some of her friends called her Sharon. Other friends called her Kate. Regardless of the moniker, all who knew her agreed she was a unique and creative problem solver who was never without ideas.

Sharon Kay (Kate) Wetherell was a longtime Friend of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, having spent the bulk of professional life working in the Cedar Rapids Schools as a media resource specialist. Her career began in 1962 with a teaching degree from UNI, which prepared her for jobs teaching junior high English in Eagle Grove, Iowa and Austin, Minnesota. She returned to UNI for her masters in library science in 1971, prior to her move to Cedar Rapids. In each job, she brought a passion for reading and learning and inspired legions of students, colleagues and friends along the way. She was honored and humbled to receive the 1990 Distinguished Teacher Award from the University of Iowa.

In Cedar Rapids she re-connected with classmates and friends from UNI and immediately immersed herself in her community, serving on several nonprofit boards and enjoying reading, book clubs, crossword puzzles and word games. Always prepared, she’d bring 3 x 5 cards cribbed with notes for discussion at her book club. She just never stopped learning.

Following her death in October 2012, a bequest from Sharon’s estate established the Sharon Wetherell Fund at the Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation with proceeds to be used for the purchase of children’s books for the library. Memorial gifts that were generously directed to Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library will also go toward the Wetherell Fund to benefit the children of Cedar Rapids for years to come.

Sharon is also remembered in the children’s section of the library with a unicorn sculpture, commissioned by her close friends and colleagues and created by local artist, Dave Leeper. The sculpture has already become a favorite of many who visit the new Cedar Rapids Public Library.

It’s certainly fitting that a one-of-a-kind teacher is represented by a one-of-a-kind piece of art. Here, here!
**Mission:**
The Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation secures resources in order to enhance and enrich library programs, services, and facilities not normally met by public funding.

**Vision:**
The Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation advocates for and provides a reliable and growing funding source so that the library may impact our community and transform its quality of life through education, civic engagement, the arts, and entertainment.

**Mailing Address**
450 Fifth Avenue SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Office: 319-739-0411
Website: www.crlibrary.org/foundation

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**A Year in Review: By the Numbers**
*July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013*

**Total gifts received:**
$352,658

**Individuals & Families:**
$210,848

**Foundations:**
$85,767

**Corporations:**
$45,129

**Organizations:**
$10,912

**Gifts were given in support of:**

- **Ladd Library Project:**
  $137,507

- **Books & Materials:**
  $83,243

- **New Library Project Downtown:**
  $57,331

- **Unrestricted:**
  $45,817

- **Program Support:**
  $20,000

- **Children’s & Young Adult Services:**
  $5,585

- **Permanently Restricted:**
  $3,175

Ensure the future of the Cedar Rapids Public Library by remembering the Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation in your will.
Donors to the Library Foundation
July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals, organizations, businesses, and foundations that contributed to the Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation during the past fiscal year.

Many other supporters continue to make payments toward campaign pledges made in prior years. These donors were recognized in the year the Foundation received the pledge. We continue to be grateful for their continued commitment.

The Foundation makes every effort to list donors correctly; please contact the Foundation to notify us of omissions, errors, questions or concerns.

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- Diane Tipping Graber
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- The Estate of Sharon Wetherell

**1896 Club $5,000 - $9,999**
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*All or a portion of this donor’s gifts for the year were given through the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

Elissa Cannon, Jill Mast, Amber Mussman and Katie Geiken celebrating at the Grand Opening Gala

Metal Sculptor Albert Paley speaking at the sculpture dedication ceremony for Regeneration
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**In Memory of Michelle Pinkston**
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Beth Malicki and her children checking out a stack of books on opening day.

*The puppet theatre in the children’s library is an instant hit with our youngest visitors.*
In Memory of James B. Niesz and Ray T. Vaughn
Ralph W. & Ruth A. Adolph

In Memory of Loine Reichardt
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Paul Phelan

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Patricia Oliver

In Honor of Mary Moore
Home Garden Club

In Honor of Barb Perkinson
Home Garden Club

In Honor of Jenna Wischmey
Alliant Energy Foundation, Inc.

Michelle LeCompte and Jade Hart pausing for a picture on the stairs at the Grand Opening Gala

Natalie Ditmars and Dan Doyle donning their “library red” for the big night

In Honor of Greer Fry
Solveig Smith

In Honor of the Ladies’ Literary Club
Paul Phelan

In Honor of Thea Leslie
Stanley & Marilue Watkins

In Honor of Jeana Lewie
Darrell & Diana Howell
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Patricia Oliver

In Honor of Mary Moore
Home Garden Club

In Honor of Barb Perkinson
Home Garden Club

In Honor of Jenna Wischmey
Alliant Energy Foundation, Inc.
White Lights Holiday Music Series
Celebrate the holidays with music at the Cedar Rapids Public Library

Nothing evokes the magic of the holidays like the music that accompanies this special time of year! Celebrate the season with the joyous sounds of holiday music while enjoying sweeping views of Greene Square Park from spacious Whipple Auditorium at the new downtown library.

This year’s programs will be held on Saturdays at 2 pm starting on December 7. The programs are free and open to the public.

White Lights 2013 Holiday Program Series:
December 7 @ 2 pm: “Young at Harp”
December 14 @ 2 pm: Iowa Accordion Club
December 21 @ 2 pm: Marcia Hughes (vocals) and Jennifer Phelan (piano)

www.crlibrary.org