Focus

Fall 2016

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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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

After the last few weeks, there are many words swirling through my head, but thankful keeps floating to the top. Our community has gone through so much in the past several years and to know that we were again at risk was truly numbing. I am thankful though for our City and its citizens. I’m thankful to raise my family in a community where service to others is valued and strangers worked together to save what we all hold dear. I’m thankful for our City leadership and staff who worked tireless hours to prepare for the Flood of 2016.

I’m also thankful for our Library leadership and staff who answered the call of service throughout our community in its time of need. With the Downtown Library closed, Library staff members were sent to assist Ladd, Marion and Hiawatha Libraries with their increased patron numbers. Library staff also worked at Foundation 2 on the 2-1-1 hotline providing assistance to those needing information or help. Staff were deployed to Red Cross shelters and other temporary housing complexes, bringing with them totes filled with books, puzzles, coloring books, and other items to provide distraction and entertainment.

There are stories we haven’t yet heard from these experiences, but I know they exist and will be told. It speaks to the work our Library does every day of the year. Libraries of today exist to meet the needs of the community, and sometimes those needs change overnight. Our Library responded to the call, and you, as friends and donors, can be proud and thankful as well, because you had a hand in our success. This issue of FOCUS celebrates our successes throughout 2016 and gives a nod to another celebration coming in 2017.

This year, the Foundation adopted a new mission and strategic plan. The Foundation mobilizes resources and relationships that empower our Library to deliver innovative programs and services. It is moving towards increased community engagement and funding focused on Library programs and services that meet the needs of our community. Our Library also saw more than 1 million minutes read during its Summer Dare program, and in September, launched a new publication called The Reader for children pre-k to 3rd grade. This is such an exciting time for us all.

As you read this issue, please know that your gifts contribute to our Library’s success, and know that I am not only thankful for our Library. I am extremely thankful for you and your continued support. I hope you will join us to celebrate our successes in the coming months (and years), as we strive to meet the needs of our community together.

Warm regards,

Charity D. Tyler
Executive Director

Happy volunteers
Moving out
Legions of volunteers
Empty!
Friends host children's author Jill Esbaum

**Eastern Iowa native a hit with local school children**

Jill Esbaum’s life-long love of reading clearly propelled her as a creative, funny and popular author of children’s books. With more than two dozen books to her credit—both fiction and non-fiction—it’s no wonder she’s figured out how to pique the interest and imagination of children of all ages.

Esbaum visited Cedar Rapids in April and made appearances at Erskine Elementary School and Summit Elementary School, as well as the Downtown Library. Children at all three locations were enthralled by the author’s own stories being told in the author’s own voice, a rare treat for kids experiencing their first true book reading.

Esbaum’s visit was sponsored by Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

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HELP WANTED: Internet Book Seller

Internet-savvy volunteer needed to administer online sales of rare and highly valued books, with proceeds going to Friends of the Library. On-line selling experience a must. For more information contact Cindy Monroe at: cmonroe1947@gmail.com
Celebrating Life’s Gifts
Patricia St. Germain was an amazing woman. She passed away on June 18, 2015 and left quite a legacy. As media specialist at Harding Middle School for 35 years, Pat’s passion inspired countless students and teachers. Her daughter Dana St. Germain-Costas recently shared, “My mother took pride in the library and wanted it to be more than just about books. She wanted students and teachers to feel welcome and to use it as a resource.”

The St. Germain family honored Pat’s memory this summer with a gift to the Library Foundation. “Donating to the library in my mother’s memory felt like the right thing to do. She loved to read and inspired others to do so,” said Dana.

A service desk in the Downtown Library’s Union will soon have a plaque that reads “In Memory of Patricia St. Germain.” The placement of this plaque is a fitting tribute to a woman who dedicated her work life to the education of youth in their school library, as the Union is our Library’s space for Cedar Rapids’ young adults. Students gather in the Union throughout the year to read, play games and learn. It seems appropriate that this space—designed to make young adults feel welcome and at home—now features a tribute to Patricia St. Germain.

Dana continued, “I share my mother’s love for reading and am trying to instill that in my daughter. I hope to one day show her this desk and tell stories of how much her grandmother loved books.”

The Library Foundation is grateful to the St. Germain family for their thoughtfulness and generosity in making this gift.

New Library Publication
Introducing: The Reader
As part of our Library’s ongoing effort to support education at home and in the schools, young people in our community can now enjoy the Library’s newest investment in young minds! On September 18, the first issue of The Reader was published by The Gazette. Much like the Weekly Reader or Mini-Pages from our childhood, this eight-page insert features fun, skill-building activities targeting Pre-K through 3rd grade children.

Library staff is actively working to create content that reinforces early literacy and STEAM concepts. As a year-round publication, The Reader will be inserted in approximately 17,300 issues of The Gazette on the third Sunday of each month. Copies of The Reader are also provided to the Cedar Rapids Community School District for distribution to area elementary schools (Kindergarten through 2nd grade classrooms – approximately 3,750 children). Hard copies of The Reader can be found at the Downtown and Ladd Libraries, and a printer-friendly, digitized version is available online as well.
Focus on Friends

Friends’ new bookstore: “Basement Books,” makes its debut
Soft opening over Labor Day weekend draws enthusiastic shoppers

It just took time – and a lot of re-arranging and cleaning – to create a bookstore space in the middle of the Friends’ sorting center in the lower level of the Cherry Building. Thanks to the vision of sorting center chiefs Jan Frischkorn and Debbie Schroeder, the longtime dream of having a permanent space for selling used books, became a reality in time for the New Bo Arts Fest over Labor Day weekend.

Hardworking volunteers shifted books and tables to accommodate a book-selling space that features a great selection of quality used books from fiction and history to reference books and romance, and everything in between. At any one time, there are approximately 12,000 books available to purchase. Costs are affordable with most books selling for $1 or $2 and suitable-for-gift-giving books individually marked at up to $7.

Regular hours for Basement Books have not been established yet, but organizers hope to be open any time there is a major event in the Cherry Building or in the New Bo District.

Watch the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library Facebook page for updates.

We Need Books!
With a record number of book sales behind us, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library is putting out the all-call: We need more books!

Think of us when winnowing your own collection of books, when down-sizing in anticipation of a move, or when you’ve realized you need more space for new books. Small donations of books can be put directly into the RETURNS slot, either through the drive-up or inside the library buildings. Large quantities of books can be donated by appointment. Please contact Friends of the CRPL at CRFriends@gmail.com.

Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library book sales are on a roll!
Be on the lookout for the book wagon or book bike

If you’re like most people, when you hear about books “on wheels” you automatically think of the classic bookmobile. After all, bookmobiles have been around for over 100 years.

For Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, the mobile book offerings come in two forms: the book wagon (pulled by a truck or SUV) and the book bike (powered by a human being). And both had a busy summer, making appearances at off-site locations.

The book wagon enjoyed great audiences at the remote Summer Dare venues and at the Brucemore Garden and Art Show. The book bike was seen in several spots in the New Bo District and on the front plaza of the Downtown Library as part of the Saturday Farmers Market book sales.

A tip of the ball cap to the Kernels for reminding kids, “Reading is fun!”
Kernels Summer Reading Program enjoys its 15th year
CRPL Friends were pleased to partner again this year with the Cedar Rapids Kernels to help support the team’s summer reading program.

In April and May, Mr. Shucks and players made visits to dozens of local elementary schools to invite young readers to participate for prizes by reading throughout the summer and keeping track of their minutes.

Reader Recognition Day was held on August 21 at the Kernels game and more than 2,300 school kids were recognized for successfully completing more than 1,000 minutes of reading over the summer.

Thanks, Kernels!

HELP WANTED: Book Bike Peddler
Friends of CRPL is seeking an experienced biker to drive/ride the three-wheeled Book Bike from the Cherry Building in the New Bo District to various locations and events in the downtown area including the Downtown Library, Greene Square, parades, NewBo Market events and Czech Village events. If you’re a bicycle enthusiast committed to literacy, this is a volunteer job like no other! For more information, contact Cindy Monroe at: cmonroe1947@gmail.com
On a cold January evening in 1897, the first free public library in the City of Cedar Rapids opened its doors. From its humble beginnings in the Granby Building to the new Downtown and Ladd Libraries, our community has much to celebrate.

Our Library’s 120th Birthday Party is scheduled for Saturday, January 14, 2017. The event will be a free, community-wide gathering in our Downtown Library. There will be crafts, games, complimentary birthday treats (while supplies last), entertainment and more.
CRPL Events*

If Walls Could Talk: House History Research
October 20 @ 6 pm, Technology Classroom
Adults

Legacies Series: Immigration
November 10 @ 6 pm, Whipple Auditorium
Adults

Sunset Salsa
November 17 @ 5 pm, Whipple Auditorium
Everyone

Library’s 120th Birthday Party
January 14, 2017 @ 10 am, Downtown Library

*For more information and a complete listing of CRPL events, please visit www.crlibrary.org.

Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library

Book Sales – Big Fall Sale
November 4-6

Very Cherry Holiday
December 3

Location: Cherry Building,
329 Tenth Ave. SE