Focus

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

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**Mission**

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

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**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

“There is no substitute for books in the life of a child.” – May Ellen Chase

As we began our Library's 120th year, the Take on Literacy challenge was announced as a call for community members and organizations to become champions of literacy, to help us create a Community of Literacy in Cedar Rapids and the surrounding areas. We are thrilled to share that 95 organizations have answered the call, working towards our goal of 120 organizations by December 31.

The Take on Literacy challenge was a very intentional step for our Library and Foundation as we explore how to effectively work with partners to meet community needs and have an impact on literacy. Further research soon clarified that we need to start at the beginning, at birth. Here are a few facts I learned over the summer:

- 90% of eventual adult brain growth is achieved in the first 3 years of life.
- According to the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, by age 2, low-income children are already behind their peers in listening, counting and other essential literacy skills; by age 3, a child's vocabulary can predict 3rd grade reading success.
- Also, by age 3, children in low-income homes hear roughly 30 million fewer words than those in middle to high-income homes. This is known as the “word gap.”

Our Library is already partnering with United Way and other agencies for our community's Reading into Success initiative, but with our community's support, we can (and will) do more.

This issue of FOCUS highlights your accomplishments over the last year. From our community's more than 2.7 million minutes read (another nod to our focus on literacy) to more than 250 certificates earned through courses on Lynda.com, you, our friends and donors, are investing in young minds and transforming lives every day. These are your accomplishments because our Library could not execute these programs or offer these services without you, and for that we are eternally grateful.

The last few pages of our newsletter will help you better understand the various Library programs our Foundation is funding to address the troubling statistics listed above. We know we can impact the lives of our youngest community members, and we're excited to share these plans. Page 8, specifically, is a testament to the fact that there truly is “no substitute for books in the life of a child.”

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our Library and Foundation. Together, we are making a difference in our community.

Sincerely,

Charity D. Tyler
Executive Director

Letter from Friends

Dear Friends,

That opening salutation—Dear Friends—really captures how I feel about the legions of people who support the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

From the faithful volunteers in our sorting centers, to the generous monetary donors, to the loving spouses of board members who get roped into helping, they are just a few very dear to the Friends of the Library.

Among the most dear is the past president of the board, Cindy Monroe. If you know Cindy, you know she is a woman of endless energy. And she always made time for her beloved Public Library.

Don a sandwich board sign to promote the Library Levy? Cindy's done that! Create the photo booth for the book give-away at the annual Hawkeye Area Labor Council Labor Day picnic? Cindy did that too! Be the face of Friends at the Iowa Library Association Annual Conference? Cindy was a front-line volunteer! Partake of the Read-In with other book lovers? Cindy couldn't wait! Assemble a team to get hundreds of boxes of books out of harm's way when the flood threatened the Cherry Building? Cindy lead the charge.

We are indebted to Cindy Monroe for her devotion to the Cedar Rapids Public Library and for her leadership as President of the Friends Board. And we're happy to know she has more time for her family, her butterflies and her books.

Thank you, Cindy Monroe!

Libby Gotschall Slappey
Board President
Summer Dare Everywhere & Kids on Course University

This summer, the Zach Johnson Foundation and Cedar Rapids Community School District combined efforts to offer Kids on Course University (KCU) at six Super Site schools throughout the community. KCU is a free, seven-week summer camp that combines learning and fun to grow reading and math skills. During this camp, certified teachers lead small classes of students entering first through fifth grades.

Our Library was a key partner in this year’s KCU camp through the Summer Dare Everywhere program. Library volunteers and staff worked with kids weekly to provide engaging story times and one-on-one coaching. Friends also played a key role in this partnership by providing free books to KCU kids each Friday during their onsite Library visit.

At the end of camp, success was realized as total minutes read were reported. The 750 Kids on Course University students read a total of 1,457,460 minutes in just seven weeks!

Each year, your support helps our Foundation fund innovative Library programs and services. Last fiscal year’s accomplishments illustrate the impact you are having on children in our community. We celebrated more minutes read than ever as a community and launched a new publication targeting children in Pre-K through 3rd grade. We could not do this without your help. Thank you!
Focus on Friends

Friends: Fall Book Sale

This year’s Fall Sale at the Cherry Building is one that you really shouldn’t miss. On the main floor, we’ll have thousands of paperback books: mysteries, vintage, adventure, romance—perfect for stocking up a winter’s worth of reading. There will be many nonfiction selections from history to knitting, as well as a wide selection of CDs and DVDs. Of great interest to families and teachers is the large selection of children’s and teen books. In addition, there will be a wide range of giftable books, which are newer selections that are individually priced. On the lower level, the Friends’ Basement Books store will also be open for shopping.

On Friday and Saturday, an exciting new feature will showcase Eastern Iowa authors who will have their books available for sale and signing. It’s rumored the authors may share personal readings during this time as well. The guest authors include: Casey Anderson (sci. fiction/fantasy 13+), Shakra Yunn (young adult), Gregg J. John (fantasy), Mary Chalupsy (children’s), Beth Hudson (fantasy), Blair Gauntt (humor), Craig Hart (literary fiction and thriller/ mystery), Tricia Andersen (romance, suspense, sports [MMA] and fantasy), Corrine Fosnaugh (children’s), Jan Netolicky (literary fiction/family saga), and M.L. ‘Myron’ Williams (science fiction and anthology). A portion of their sales will be donated to ‘friends.’ We thank them so much for sharing their time and talent, so please make this a part of your visit. Watch the Friends’ Facebook page and website for more specific details.

Finally, remember that on Sunday, November 5, “shopping by the box” happens from 10:00 am to Noon. Teachers, this is the best opportunity to stock your classrooms. Finally, remember that on Sunday, November 5, “shopping by the box” happens from 10:00 am to Noon. Teachers, this is the best opportunity to stock your classrooms.

We look forward to seeing you all at the Cherry Building, November 3, 4, and 5.

Hungry for Just One More Cookbook?

By Barbara Rhame

If you are like me and you love to cook, eat, and then think about how you should totally be eating differently, have I got a deal for you. I have probably spent small fortunes buying cookbooks over the course of my some 67 years. Frequently, I have undertaken a purge of those heavy and getting heavier shelves. Just as frequently, later, I wish that I still had some of those purged books back on my shelf.

Well, please let me introduce you to the cookbook sections housed in the Friends Sorting Center. I have found this to be a great way to test drive some cookbooks, find vintage books that I once owned and gave away, and indulge in cookbooks that might not fit my budget. In the Sorting Center there are shelves housing a wide variety of cookbooks and soft cover books including those great Junior League spiral bound books—all for just $1.00 each. Hard cover cookbooks are just $2. Other cookbooks have been individually priced as giftable books, but generally are less than $6.00.

All of the great names are there: Julia, Sheila, Ina, Martha, Mollie, Jacque, and many more. Additionally, if you are experimenting with a vegan diet, a paleo diet, Weight Watchers, you name it, we probably have it, for less. I have snapped a few for your viewing pleasure, but please come to the sale in November to peruse and purchase.

All Sorts of Sorting!

Have you ever wondered where all of the books go that are donated to Friends? Or maybe you have been in the library as volunteers tear down after a Farmers Market Book Sale, and have watched carts of books disappear through the door by the indoor book return. We only wish that magically all of our books would be perfectly sorted and shelved for the next sale.

The truth is, the magic that happens is the result of hard work and dedication spearheaded by Jan Frischkorn and Debbie Schroeder working with their crew of equally dedicated volunteers.

Jan and Debbie have been officially in charge of the Friends’ Sorting Center since 2014, although both have been involved with Friends even longer. Changes and upgrades in the process and the location have continued during their tenure. They spend countless hours at their tasks and the Friends of the Library are appreciative beyond belief. Sorting your fabulous donations (remember that you can drop off your donations via the book return at either the Ladd or the Downtown Library) comprises the core of activity. This effort is really the linchpin for all of our book sales, whether it be at Farmers Market, First Saturday Sales, the Book Nook, or the special sales at the Cherry Building, including the annual Fall Book Sale.

Sorting is constant, always operational, and always in flux, so there is a continuous need for volunteers to help evaluate and organize what is coming in. In addition, volunteers can adopt shelves such as history, politics, arts, crafts, etc. The list of shelves is long, and our list of volunteers always has room for your name.

Last week, Alice Blazek, one of our loyal volunteers was working in the sorting room. Alice related that she has worked with books all of her life. For many years, she was a school librarian, working with students K-12. She believes that it is important to have books available for everyone, and as an avid reader, she works to promote literacy through her efforts with Friends. It’s worth mentioning that Alice was working that day in spite of sporting a boot on her left foot as a result of foot surgery.

Many thanks to all of our volunteers, and also a call for more of you to join us. See our link from the Library home page under Support or go to: http://www.crlibrary.org/about-us/support/friends-of-the-library/ to see a list of shelves needing an able sorter.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call Jan (319-210-7539) or Debbie (319-551-2589). The pay isn’t great but the benefits are fantastic!

All Sorts of Sorting!
Focus on Foundation

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

Imagine a community where every child owns books, not just one book, several books… with their name on it. This is the future our Library and Foundation see for Cedar Rapids children, a future that can be realized through Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is one of the largest literacy programs in the United States and mails more than one million books per month to children around the world. Our Foundation is going through the process to become an Imagination Library Affiliate. Becoming an Affiliate means that children in Cedar Rapids will be eligible to receive one free, age-appropriate book per month from birth to their fifth birthday.

This will give each child his/her own, personalized library before entering kindergarten. The first book received is *The Little Engine That Could.* The last is a special ‘graduation’ book preparing the child for kindergarten. Many books come with a conversation guide to help caregivers interact with the children.

Communities across the country have seen the impact that putting books into homes has on vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and school readiness. We are thrilled by the opportunities to Invest in Young Minds, Engage & Strengthen Community, and Transform Lives. These are just a few:

**Invest in Young Minds.** We’re building confident caregivers, creating a culture of literacy, and inspiring innovative experiences.

**The Reader** – This eight-page insert features fun, skill-building activities targeting Pre-K through 3rd grade children. The Reader’s year-round curriculum reinforces early literacy and STEAM concepts. Each one is inserted in approximately 17,300 issues of The Gazette on the third Sunday of each month and distributed to more than 3,700 children in area elementary schools (K through 2nd grade classrooms) September through May. A printer-friendly, digitized version of *The Reader* is available online as well.

**Preschool Outreach** – Library staff use the Every Child Ready to Read curriculum during story times inside and outside our Library. Through monthly story times at preschools serving low-income children, Library staff engage children in the five early literacy practices of Sing, Talk, Read, Write, and Play. These pre and early literacy skills are essential for future success. Since 1990, this preschool outreach program has provided story time books for the children to take home in addition to snacks for special events such as parent-teacher meetings and graduation ceremonies.

**Engage & Strengthen Community.** We’re bridging the opportunity gap, connecting with community, and becoming a community catalyst.

**Summer Dare Program** – Our Library’s Summer Dare is an intergenerational program that combines reading with weekly activities designed to encourage lifelong learning and unexpected experiences at the library and beyond. The 2017 Summer Dare was successful beyond imagination with more than 4,400 participants who read over 2.7 million minutes. We know 2018 will exceed expectations!

“[I believe that if every kid grows up with a song in their heart and a book in their hand, there’s a pretty good chance their dreams will come true!”

– Dolly Parton

FY18 Foundation-Funded Programs & Services

Each year, our friends and donors make Foundation-funded Library programs possible. Our Foundation supports the Library’s strategic priorities as the vehicle through which private funds are used to provide innovative programs and services that meet community needs. FY18 is bringing brand new opportunities to Invest in Young Minds, Engage & Strengthen Community, and Transform Lives. These are just a few:

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Library Everywhere – Typically, a patron must enter our doors to access Library services. This fiscal year, our Library will take its resources into the community: to places we don’t normally go and to people we don’t typically reach. Our Library will do this in two ways:

- More Outreach: Through the Take on Literacy initiative, community partners have requested library card drives, lunch-and-learn presentations, and library presence at events. Our Library will engage people in barbershops and boardrooms to meet community needs.
- Technology Access: Our Library’s technology helps patrons connect with the world. From computers at the Willis Dady Emergency Shelter to eBook check-outs at the Eastern Iowa Airport (coming soon!), we’re providing access to Library resources where they are.

**Transform Lives.** We’re championing lifelong learning, telling our story, and delighting our customers.

**Historic Preservation & Access Project** – In partnership with The Gazette and Advantage Companies, the Library Foundation is funding a new effort to digitize past issues of The Gazette from 1857 through the present. These archives are an important piece of community history, and will be accessible through the Library’s website as well as in area classrooms. Two million images are available now, and approximately one million more will be added by December 2018.

**Enhanced Online Resources** – For the third year in a row, the Library Foundation, in partnership with the Transamerica Foundation, is funding subscriptions for two web-based resources:

- **ReferenceUSA** is the leading provider in business and consumer research providing access to business and residential databases to help users create marketing plans, conduct competitive analysis, raise funds, locate people and even find jobs.
- **Lynda.com**, a LinkedIn Company, provides users with unlimited access to thousands of courses and how-to videos on topics such as photography, 3D animation, developer coding, and business.
Focus on Foundation

Foundation: Engaging Teens

For the fourth year in a row, our Library Foundation is the proud recipient of grant funding from the Giacoletto Foundation. This long-term partnership has been transformational for young adults and our Library staff. This year is no different. The Union, our Library’s young adult space, provides youth with technology and resources not usually found in homes or schools. As a result, teens are able to use music recording equipment, large drawing tablets, and learning tools such as Spheros, which introduce students to computer programming.

During the school year, the Library hosts weekly STEAM-focused programs Downtown and at Ladd. Often there are special experiences or subject matter experts that join students for a session. One highlight during last year’s programs was the inflatable Star Lab Planetarium set up in the Downtown Commons. More than 300 people attended immersive astronomy presentations in the planetarium classroom that week.

Last year, the Library used Foundation funds to purchase a virtual reality system. This fiscal year, the Foundation will help staff take this virtual reality equipment outside of our Downtown Library for both Ladd and offsite programs. Many of our youth have transportation barriers. By taking this tool outside our Downtown Library, we will expose more teens to this emerging technology and inspire them to learn more!

In addition, our Library will launch a series of computer programming classes in which participants will be given his/her own Raspberry Pi upon completion. The Raspberry Pi is a simple, affordable computer the size of a credit card. By teaching students how to build their own computer and then program the computer to do new and fun things, we’re giving them a skill set that will be useful in tomorrow’s workforce. More importantly, for some of these kids, this will be the first computer they have in their home.

Focus on Friends

Ten Easy Ways to Support Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library

Usually, supporting a non-profit organization involves getting out your pen and checkbook. While we at Friends would love to have you do that as well, there are many other ways that you can help support your Friends and programs of the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

Here is the short list.

1. Donate your gently read books to Friends.
2. Buy gently read books, donated by others, at our next book sale.
3. Read to someone while you are attending one of our book sales.
4. Sign up to volunteer for Friends.
5. Shop at our Book Nook at either Library any day the libraries are open.
6. Like us on Facebook.
7. Visit the Friends’ page on our Library’s website: www.crlibrary.org. We are planning some major construction over the next few months. Keep watching.
8. Make sure that you attend our Fall Book Sale at the Cherry Building November 3, 4, and 5. Admission is free, so you could come each day.

Oh, of course, you could get out your pen and checkbook and make a tax-deductible gift to: Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 5th Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401.

Welcome to new Friends’ board members Tom Marshall and Myron Williams.

Tom Marshall is a native of Cedar Rapids, graduating from both Regis and Coe. He returns to Cedar Rapids after 30 years in Chicago, working as an accountant, hotel manager, and part-time professional music theatre producer. He lives and works downtown as the night auditor for the Doubletree by Hilton. He is often at the downtown library as well as Immaculate Conception Church, singing in the church choir, (four notes only below middle C) and working the parish reception and luncheon events.

Myron Williams retired in 2014 after a 39-year career in journalism. The last 30 years were spent as an associate editor with Iowa Farmer Today Publications. Myron has published two science fiction novels and expects to release an anthology of short stories this holiday season. He enjoys being a grandpa and looking for any excuse to be outside.
Events
Friends’ Fall Sale – Cherry Building
November 3: 10 am to 6 pm
November 4: 10 am to 5 pm
November 5: 10 am to Noon*
*Sunday Box Sale - $8 sm. box, $16 lg. box

Very Cherry Holiday – Cherry Building
December 2: 10 am to 5 pm
December 3: 10 am to 3 pm

Library Programs
Let’s Play Scrabble
Wednesdays 1 to 5 pm
Ladd Library

Sunset Salsa
October 19: 5 to 8 pm
Downtown LivingLearning Roof

Trivia Night
November 7: 6 to 7:30 pm
Downtown Library

Internet Sous Chef
November 30: 1 to 2:30 pm
Downtown Technology Classroom