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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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

“Literacy is…the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman, and child can realize his or her full potential.”

– Kofi Annan

Not so long ago, we were asked to imagine a community where all children have books in their home. This dream inspired us to think big, and now, our dream where every child owns books is closer to reality thanks to Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library and you.

Our Library Foundation’s 2018 goal for the Imagination Library was to enroll 4,300 children by December 31. I’m so excited to share that we met this enrollment goal in September, three months ahead of schedule. We are helping our children reach their full potential by putting books in their home and getting them ready to read…so they can read to learn!

Early literacy is just one of several areas on which we’ve focused over the last year. Your contributions have also supported our Library’s efforts to increase access to Library services. This project, known as Library Everywhere, placed Library computers in Cedar Rapids’ Northwest Recreation Center, the Willis Dady Homeless Shelter, and The Paul Engel Center. There are barriers to access the internet, personal emails, and other online resources for many in our community, and Library Everywhere is a small step towards removing barriers and meeting needs beyond our Library’s walls.

Early literacy and access are important (and big!) issues for our community and our Library. And, they will continue to influence Foundation-funded programs and services in the future.

In closing, I want to say ‘thank you’ and ‘well done’ because your support has us off to a great start.

Fondly,

Charity D. Tyler
Executive Director
Letter from Friends

Dear Friends of Friends,

As you well know, Friends of Cedar Rapids Public Library’s raison d’être is to receive gently used books and re-sell them at a reasonable price, with proceeds going to the Cedar Rapids Public Library for its literacy programming. Like the changing of the seasons, this process has had the same ebb and flow for years.

Our devoted book sale volunteers and devoted book sale shoppers know they can count on our annual big sale in the fall to get their book fix for the coming winter months. And we certainly don’t want to fiddle with that fall tradition. The 2018 big sale is right on schedule, the first weekend in November at the Cherry Building. (See the cover of this newsletter for the specifics.)

What has changed is our current supply of books to sell. We’re bursting at the seams! Yes, it’s a good problem to have, but certainly one that needs to be addressed. And, soon!

With a goal of winnowing our supply of used books, your Friends of the Library board of directors is taking a bold step by adding three more “big sales” to the calendar, offering our inventory of books for sale once a quarter instead of just once a year.

Combine four big sales a year (November, February, May, and August) with monthly First Saturday sales and occasional special event sales and you’ve got at least one sale every month for the coming year. Pretty bold, right?

We’re excited about these plans, and we know the success of these sales depends on two key groups: volunteers and shoppers. If you fit into either of those groups—or both—please be sure you are on our email list. Simply send an email to: crfriends@gmail.com with the subject line: add me to your list. And we’ll make sure you are in the know for what’s on the sale calendar.

Thank you, Friends!

Libby Gotschall Slappey
President

Libby Gotschall Slappey
Friends of the
Cedar Rapids
Public Library
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Cedar Rapids’ Imagination Library

It’s been 10 months since our Library Foundation launched Cedar Rapids’ Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. In that time, more than 4,000 children have enrolled in this early literacy program, and 261 children have received the graduation book for their 5th birthday.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is an early literacy program providing free, age-appropriate books once a month to Cedar Rapids children ages 0 to 5. The goal is to help put books into children’s homes to help prepare them for their kindergarten classroom. The Dollywood Foundation orders the books and takes care of the shipping while our Library Foundation pays for the books plus postage.

“It costs about $25 per child per year,” shared Library Foundation Executive Director Charity Tyler. “We’ve mailed over 23,000 books to children in Cedar Rapids since March and want to do more.”

There are more than 9,000 children between the ages of 0 and 5 living in Cedar Rapids. All of these children are eligible for the Imagination Library program, and it will take more effort to increase program enrollment and funding.

“A pivotal key to enrolling children has been our partnerships with area nonprofit organizations and healthcare providers,” said Library Programming Manager Kevin Delecki. “We are extremely grateful for their enthusiasm around the program.”

As our first calendar year comes to an end, there are plans to increase awareness, enrollment, and fundraising efforts. Events and outreach opportunities within the community will help spread the word, and our Library Foundation will continue driving fundraising efforts to support this program.
Foundation: FY18 By the Numbers

Our Library has closed the books on another fiscal year, and donors’ investments in Foundation-funded programs and services continue to amaze. Thank you all for helping our Library meet community needs!

Online Resources: For the past three years, the Library Foundation, in partnership with the Transamerica Foundation, has funded subscriptions for Lynda.com and ReferenceUSA. These robust resources offer free, online courses and condensed databases for community members. In FY18, our Library patrons increased usage and in FY19, these resources have been made available to all Metro Library Network patrons.

The Reader: Beginning its third year, this early literacy publication inspires learning through creative stories and activities for children and their caregivers. A continued partnership between our Library, The Gazette, the Library Foundation, and Cedar Rapids elementary schools put issues of The Reader into the hands of kindergarten through second grade students each month, September through May.

2018 Summer Dare: It was another amazing year for our Library’s Summer Dare program. New this year was the Passports to the Parks program, Teen Camps increased in frequency, and Tuesday’s special performances were brought to Ladd Library. Through Summer Dare Everywhere, our Library continued its partnership with Kids on Course University and YMCA camps, where 943 children read nearly 745,000 minutes. This year also marked a new partnership with Boys & Girls Club at their Olivet and Hoover locations featuring our Summer Dare Everywhere kits for their 150 youth participants.

The Foundation’s Library Champion program recognizes businesses and organizations who are supporting our Library Foundation with an annual gift of $500 or more.

Thank you to our 2018 Library Champions!

Alliant Energy
Bankers Trust
Cargill, Inc.
The Gazette
Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation
Hills Bank & Trust
Ingredion
ITC Midwest
NextEra Duane Arnold Energy
Rockwell Collins
TrueNorth Companies
University of Iowa Community Credit Union
United Fire Group
US Bank
Wells Fargo Bank

For a full list of Library Champions, please visit the Foundation website. CRLibrary.org/Foundation
**Focus on Friends**

It’s in the Bag, the Book Bag!!!

**Question:** What could be better than visiting a Friends of the Library book sale and walking away with a stack of great books to read?

**Answer:** Having a beautiful Friends Book Bag in which to carry your purchases, compliments of our sponsor University of Iowa Community Credit Union.

Our most sincere thanks to the University of Iowa Community Credit Union for sponsoring the purchase of our Friends Book Bags. We are grateful for the support provided by UICCU.

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**Annual Fall Book Sale**

Maybe you’ve guessed by now that the Annual Fall Book Sale is just around the corner. Actually, it is almost around the corner from the Downtown Library; the location of the book sale is the Cherry Building at 329 10th Avenue SE.

We have all kinds of great things planned for the sale, not the least of which will be thousands of great gently used books. There will be a wide variety of fiction genres to include mysteries, romance, westerns, science fiction and fantasy, historical fiction, the list goes on. Non-fiction topics range from gardening to theater, art, travel, history, crafts and hobbies, religion, and more. Children’s books will be plentiful.

The hours of the sale have increased as we try to accommodate a variety of life schedules. Friday will offer not only the best selection, but the opportunity to shop into the evening hours. But remember that Sunday offers the option of purchasing boxes of books at a very economical price.

Two floors of the Cherry Building will be filled with books. Elevator transportation will be available and operated by a panoply of interesting and unusual characters. There might even be music and singing.

The Fall Sale will be lots of fun with many surprises, but most of all, the Fall Sale is a great opportunity to stock up on books for the winter, books for gifts, books for cooking and crafting, books to educate and books to entertain. We look forward to seeing you there.
Don’t Go to Jail……Get “Free Parking” Instead

As is often the case, summer brings street closures and road construction. Sometimes it can be a bit of an inconvenience, however the final product is always a relief and a great improvement, both visually and functionally. Specifically, we thank the city and all of the workers who toiled so diligently through the hot weather to provide updated and beautiful avenues surrounding the Downtown Library. And we thank our patrons who were so patient throughout the summer.

With that being said, some of you may be thinking, “Oh no, fewer parking spaces by the library, more confusing two way parking, I’ll never be able to get to the Downtown Library again.” But take heart. This article will put your fears and trepidations to rest. Not only is there just as much parking near the Library, but as always, there is a plethora of…..wait for it……..FREE PARKING!! All you need is your library card and this handy guide to quick, easy, and in inclement weather, dry and warm parking opportunities.

This lot, on the south side of the Downtown Library is very popular and is sometimes full, despite having 30 spaces available. But there are other options.

A quick look at any of the metered spaces around the Library block or around Greene Square gives you additional opportunities for two hours of free parking, 95 spaces are available. The 4th Avenue Ramp, which is attached to the Library via skywalk is also available for 2 free hours of parking, 162 spaces are possibilities. If you choose to park in the ramp, remember the number of your space and go to Level 3, via elevator or walking. The sign points to the entrance of the skywalk to the Library. As you enter the Library, you’ll be warm and dry!

For these locations, all you need to do is remember the number of your parking space, find the nearest kiosk or use the one inside the north or 4th Avenue entrance to the Library. Have your library card available and follow the directions on the kiosk. When asked for your coupon number, it’s the last eight (great) digits of your library card number. The one exception is the kiosk in the parking ramp, it doesn’t like zero as the first entry, so skip the zero and enter the digits very slowly; for this reason, I suggest using the kiosk in the Library. When all else fails, Library staff will assist you.

There you have it, free parking for two hours with a library card in good standing; you can only use it one time per day. All of these spaces make the Library accessible with either ramps or elevators.

If you still have questions, call the library at 261.READ or Park Cedar Rapids at 319.365.7275. There is also a tutorial on parking on the library website, under FAQ. We look forward to seeing you soon and often, remember it’s free.
Focus on Foundation

FY19 Foundation-Funded Programs & Services

Your gifts are an investment in our community and support Foundation-funded programs that are meeting community needs. The Library Foundation mobilizes resources and relationships that empower our Library to deliver innovative programs and services, and we cannot do this successfully without you, our friends and donors. This year, our focus on literacy and children's programs increases, even as we continue funding favorites like the Summer Dare and enhanced Library collections (books, materials and online resources). Thank you for supporting our efforts!

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library – Research shows that children who grow up with books in their home will achieve on average three more years of education than those who are not raised with books. Our Imagination Library provides Cedar Rapids children one free, age-appropriate book per month from birth to their 5th birthday, regardless of income. These high-quality books are mailed to the child’s home with the child’s name on it. Children enrolled at birth will have 60 personalized books in their home before they reach kindergarten.

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 children to take home in addition to healthy snacks for special events such as parent-teacher meetings and graduation ceremonies.

Summer Dare Program – Our Library's Summer Dare is an intergenerational program that combines reading with activities designed to encourage lifelong learning and unexpected experiences at the library and beyond. Our 2018 Summer Dare boasted more than 4,300 participants who read more than 2.1 million minutes.

Book Club Facilitators – Our Library maintains more than 100 book club kits that are available to the public and used by the Library’s off-site book clubs. The Foundation provides funding for two book club facilitators who, since 2004, have led monthly discussions at Cottage Grove Place and Meth-Wick Community.

Historic Preservation & Access Project – In partnership with The Gazette and Advantage Companies, the Library Foundation is funding digitize past issues of The Gazette from 1857 through the present. These archives are an important piece of community history, and are accessible through the Library’s website and in area classrooms. There are currently 2.5 million images available for viewing via our Library’s website. The collection is current up to 2016 and images are continuously added as they are digitized.
Honoring Van Vechten Society Members

Many years ago, the Library Foundation created the Ada Van Vechten Society to honor the legacy of Cedar Rapids community leader and Library founder Ada Amanda Van Vechten. Members of the Van Vechten Society are committed to caring for and nurturing our Library now and into the future through planned gifts or bequests.

Van Vechten Society members, both families and individuals, are important contributors to Library and Library Foundation success. Their gifts helped shape who we were 20 years ago and who we are today, and living Van Vechten Society members will impact our Library’s future. Theirs is truly a legacy to honor, remember, and recognize.

With this in mind, we’re excited to announce plans for a new Van Vechten Society recognition piece. The design embraces the clean lines and color pallet of our Downtown Library, while its structure reflects the light blocks that line the stairwell from the Library Commons to the 2nd Floor media and nonfiction areas. Installation of this piece should be complete by early November, and a dedication ceremony will follow.

Our Van Vechten Society members are special and cherished. We appreciate their thoughtfulness and generosity in helping to sustain our Library and Library Foundation for years to come.

If you have questions about our Van Vechten Society or would like to learn more, please don’t hesitate to reach out to Charity via phone at 319.739.0411 or via email TylerC@crlibrary.org.
Better World Books

The mission of the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library is to raise money to support the Library and its programs. One of our primary sources of revenue comes indirectly and sometimes directly from you. It might come from your generous donations or it might come from your purchases of books at our sales or from the Book Nook at the Downtown or Ladd Libraries.

Another smaller source of income is collected from a program called Better World Books. This program is a win-win as it also helps us with the issue that Libby addressed in her letter, an overabundance of inventory.

During the time that I have been a Friend of the Library, I have been aware that some of our books are sent to Better World Books. I had this vague notion of what that meant, but with thanks and kudos to one of our super volunteers, Greer Frye, who spearheads this effort, I now have a “better” understanding of BWB. Greer sent me to the BWB website. I found out that it is a for-profit social enterprise that collects and sells books online to fund literacy initiatives worldwide. Better World Books collects materials from sources that have surplus materials, like Friends.
Greer provided me with an explanation of our interactions with Better World Books.

“Three or four regular volunteers – Sue Latham, Donna Koch, Alice Mary Smith and Frances Woods – come to the library weekly to scan books to send to BWB. These are books that sorters have deemed difficult to sell locally. This could be due to the age of the book or possibly a glut of books on the same topic or with the same title. Books that the volunteers receive to scan are received after decisions have been made by the CR Friends to either sell locally, place online to sell or to donate to various nonprofit organizations in the area.

The cost to Friends is really just the time it takes to determine whether to send a book or to keep it locally. BWB provides the boxes and pays for the shipping of the books. Once they receive the books, they put many of them online. Once the books are sold, the CR Friends receives a very small portion of the sales. BWB donates another small percentage of the income from the sale of the books to Friends identified literacy partner – The CR library Foundation. The process does provide another source of income for Friends, albeit not a tremendous amount, but more importantly it extends the life of many books that might otherwise have to be recycled and puts books in the hands of those that need them.

Better World Books is one of those organizations that proves that a for-profit organization can survive while doing good works. Founded in 2003, BWB has raised 10 million dollars for its non-profit partners, established a relationship with Feed the Children, sending books diverted more than 171,000 tons of books from landfills, donated over 6 million college textbooks, primarily to schools in Africa, and there is more. It’s a great thing when we benefit from a program that provides benefits for others as well.

As a final note, I want to refer back to Greer’s mention of the volunteers that drive this program. While this article’s focus was meant to be the program of Better World Books, I was very positively distracted by the volunteers. It is an extraordinary group of women who are diligent and loyal to Friends and to each other. And sometimes they have pie, Rhubarb Custard the day I was there, delicious. They deserve an article of their own and so please tune in to the next issue to find out more about these fabulous volunteers.

It’s a Home Run!!

This summer marked the 20th Annual Kernels Summer Reading Program. This great program combines two favorite activities for children - baseball and reading. Friends of the CR Public Library were at the ball park on recognition night providing free books for the readers.
Events

Friends’ Fall Book Sale – Cherry Building
November 2: Noon to 9 pm
November 3: 10 am to 6 pm
November 4: 10 am to 4 pm*
*Sunday Box Sale - $8 sm. box, $16 lg. box

Look for Friends New big sales in February, May & August 2019!

Very Cherry Holiday – Cherry Building
December 1: 10 am to 5 pm

Library Programs
Linn County Master Gardeners
Wednesdays in November,
6:30 to 7:30 pm
Ladd Library, Community Room

iPhone & iPad for Beginners
Tuesday, November 6, 6 to 7 pm
Downtown Library, Technology Classroom

While We’re All Gathered ’Round:
Sharing Family History
Saturday, November 10, 10 to 11:30 am
Downtown Library, Beems B

Please visit www.crlibrary.org to see details and a complete list of programs.