Focus

Spring 2019

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

Literary Vines

A Wine & Beer Tasting

to Benefit Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation

Saturday, May 4, 2019
5:30-8 pm
Downtown Library
Letter from the Foundation

The future is not in the hands of fate, but in ours.

– Jean Jules Jusserand, French author

This spring we are celebrating you and your incredible impacts on our community. From the women and men who petitioned to establish our Library in 1896 to the volunteer Library Trustees who are redefining our Library’s role in the community, you – our Library’s supporters – have a long history of reshaping Cedar Rapids for the better.

In this issue, we focus on how individuals like you are changing our community. Donor dollars empower our Library to be bold and create innovative programs like its award-winning experience-based summer reading program, Summer Dare. Donor dollars remove barriers and put books in children’s homes through Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. Programs like these make Cedar Rapids a more vibrant community for everyone, and they’re not possible without you.

To continue this celebration, we have planned two special events to round out our fiscal year.

First, I invite you to join us on Saturday, May 4 at the Library Foundation’s first-year fundraiser, Literary Vines. The event will feature literature-themed tables with wine and beer paired with gourmet tasting portions from Greyhound Deli & Café. The details for Literary Vines are found on page 5.

Second, I invite you to celebrate those who have contributed to our Library’s legacy through estate gifts and memorials. On Sunday, June 9, we will honor our Van Vechten Society members at a brunch and wall dedication ceremony in our Downtown Library. This will be a special, heart-felt event, and you can learn more on page 4.

I truly appreciate all you do for our Library and hope to see you at one or both of these events.

All my best,

Charity D. Tyler
Executive Director

Cedar Rapids
Public Library
Foundation
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Matthew Wilding,
Trustee Representative

The future is not in the hands of fate, but in ours.

– Jean Jules Jusserand, French author
Letter from Friends

Dear Friends,

Your Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library board of directors recently embarked on a marketing exercise with the professionals at Fusion Farm, a local advertising & marketing agency. And the first step of that process was a get-to-know-you meeting where the Friends board imparted all we knew of the history, mission, and backstage intrigue of Friends of the Library – in 60 minutes! Needless to say, a lot of information was shared in a short amount of time. The Fusion Farm team asked plenty of questions and took all they learned to help build a marketing plan for Friends. The goals of the marketing plan covered lots of territory:

• Define, position anew, and raise awareness of the Friends of the Library brand as a connected but separate entity from the Library and the Library Foundation.

• Message the Friends’ commitment to funding literacy programs.

• Message volunteer opportunities as more than just time given but as a fulfilling experience.

We are excited to be moving forward with a plan to reach new audiences. Over the next several months, you’ll see that campaign messaging in a number of places – at the Downtown Library, at our Friends book sales, and definitely throughout social media. The campaign will serve as a call-to-action for the community at large to volunteer for Friends and to donate to Friends so our financial support can continue the important work of supporting the Library’s literacy programs.

Be watching!

Thank you, Friends!

Libby Gotschall Slappey, President
Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library
Honoring Library Legacies: The Ada Van Vechten Society

Last Fall, we announced plans for an addition to our Downtown Library Commons that honors those who have contributed to our Library’s success through estate gifts. This installation was completed in November and is a lovely tribute to our Van Vechten Society Members.

The Van Vechten Society recognition wall can be found on the 4th Avenue side of the Library Commons. Its design embraces the clean lines and color pallet of our Downtown Library, while its structure imitates the rectangular light blocks following the stairwell up to the 2nd Floor media and nonfiction sections.

There are several stories of Van Vechten Society members who likely never could have imagined the impact they would have on our Library and our community. Marilyn Ladd’s legacy lives on in our Ladd Library and the newly opened Opportunity Center. Evelyn Zerzanek and Ruth Putnam’s legacy lives on through our Library’s Children’s Fund. Their initial estate gift was designated to Children’s services and programs and helped the Library Foundation to launch Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, which is putting books in the homes of more than 4,800 children in Cedar Rapids.

It is so important to celebrate these legacies, so I hope you will please join us for a special event this spring. Please save the date for our Van Vechten Society wall dedication ceremony on Sunday, June 9 at 11 am (doors open at 10:30 am). The event is free and will provide a light breakfast and beverages in our Downtown Library Commons. Invitations will be mailed in a few weeks, and all Library Foundation supporters are invited to attend as we honor those leaving a lasting gift for our Library.

The Ada Van Vechten Society honors families and individuals who helped shape our Library’s past and present, and will continue to shape our Library’s future. Van Vechten Society members support

*Marilyn Ladd*
our Library’s impact in our community. These members contribute to our Library’s success by making gifts to our Library Foundation through beneficiary designations in an insurance policy, in a will, or even an IRA. Sometimes, these arrangements are more complex so as to afford the donor income or tax advantages.

You are special, and I know you feel our Library is special too. If you are interested in learning more about our Van Vecthen Society, please reach out to Charity via phone at 319.739.0411 or via email at TylerC@CRLibrary.org.

We hope to see you on June 9 at our dedication ceremony!

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**Literary Vines:**

A Wine & Beer Tasting
to Benefit Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation

Experience literature-inspired food and spirits pairings at the Library Foundation’s first-year fundraiser. Selections will include wine from First Avenue Wine House, beer from Benz Beverage Depot, and gourmet food pairings from Greyhound Deli & Café.

While enjoying the sound of light jazz, you can explore our Library Programming Department’s Tech Petting Zoo. The “Zoo” will feature Foundation-funded technology, including Ozobots, 3D printer, and more.

Our photo booth offers a chance for you to snap a picture with Dolly Parton, and your favorite Imagination Library book.

All funds raised benefit the Library Foundation and Foundation-funded programs, including Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library.

Special thank you to our Partner Sponsors:

*True North*

*BankersTrust*

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**Saturday, May 4**

5:30 to 8 pm  
Program at 6:45  
Downtown Library  
450 5th Avenue SE

**Buy Tickets @ $50 each:**  
LiteraryVines2019
**Focus on Foundation**

**Program Update: Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is an early literacy program that delivers one free, age-appropriate book per month to children ages 0 to 5 in Cedar Rapids. The Dollywood Foundation provides the database, book selection, procurement, and shipping processes. The Library Foundation covers the costs of books and postage, an average of $25 per child per year.

**OUR STORY**

In January 2018, our Imagination Library launched quietly with nonprofit partners YPN and HACAP enrolling their clients. In March, the program was introduced to the public. Since then, an increased focus on partnerships with nonprofit organizations and healthcare providers has greatly contributed to our success. With more than 9,100 children ages 0 to 5 living in Cedar Rapids, our goal is to enroll 80% of this population (7,300 children) by the end of 2021.

**OUR WHY**

Children who grow up with books in their homes achieve 3 more years of education than those who do not. *(Family Scholarly Culture and Educational Success: Evans et al., 2010)*

Books help establish a reading or “scholarly” culture in the home – one that persists from generation to generation within families. *(Evans et al., 2010)*

The ratio of books to children in a middle-income neighborhood is 13 books to one child; in a low-income neighborhood, the ratio is one book to 300 children. *(Neuman and Dickinson, ed. Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Volume 3, 2006)*

*Cashmere recently shared a note from her son, Liam.*

“Thanks, Dolly Parton, for creating this organization for us to receive new books! We enjoy them so much and read them every day! Love your little reader, Liam”
OUR ENROLLMENT PARTNERS

Cedar Rapids Community School District, Eastern Iowa Health Center, Four Oaks, HACAP Head Start, HACAP WIC Clinics, HACAP Paces to Quality, HACAP RED Ahead, Mercy Medical Center Birthplace, Mercy Pediatric Clinic, UnityPoint-Witwer Children’s Therapy, UnityPoint-St. Luke’s Dental Clinic, UnityPoint-St. Luke’s Birth Center, Waypoint, and YPN.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

A partnership with UWECI and the Cedar Rapids Community School District will allow us to compare kindergarten readiness data for DPII children v. their non-enrolled peers. We hope to replicate results of other affiliates that saw higher scores on Kindergarten Literacy Assessments and continued higher scores in both 2nd and 3rd grade reading assessments.

YOUR ROLE

You, our community of donors, make this program possible. The Library Foundation relies on charitable gifts from individuals, companies, and organizations to fund our Imagination Library.

The Dollywood Foundation covers overhead by providing the enrollment database and managing the book selection, purchasing, and shipping processes. The Library Foundation, through donor dollars, covers the costs of books and postage. The Dollywood Foundation’s high-volume purchasing reduces Library Foundation’s costs to approximately $25 per child per year, or $125 per child from birth to age 5.

In May, the Library Foundation will launch its Imagination Library monthly giving program. This initiative will provide ongoing support for Imagination Library throughout the year. For as little as $10 per month ($120 per year), you can provide free books for five (5) children in our community (or 57 books per year). Online gifts may also be made by visiting bit.ly/DPILGiveNow.

If you would like to make a larger investment in our children, please contact the Library Foundation via email Foundation@CRLibrary.org or call Executive Director Charity Tyler at 319.739.0411.

Engagement: 5,000+ children
Books Mailed: 50,000+

As of March 14: 4,794 enrolled and 594 graduates (turned 5)

This represents 53% of the total eligible population and 66% of our goal to serve 7,300 children.

TOP ENROLLMENT PARTNERS
(as of 2.28.2019)

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<th>Organization</th>
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<td>HACAP/WIC Clinics</td>
<td>1,447</td>
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<td>Eastern Iowa Health Center</td>
<td>289</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown/Ladd Libraries</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mercy Medical Center</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRCSD Preschool</td>
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A young teen searched through the science fiction/fantasy section during one of the First Saturday sales in the Downtown Library Commons. He pulled out book after book, seemingly searching for a buried treasure. After examining everything in the genre that was set out that day, he asked if there were more titles available. A Friends volunteer took him to the stacks in the Friends sorting room to see more. The young man's eyes widened at the selection there, and he eagerly examined the section, row by row and book by book. But he came up empty-handed.

“Did you see something you liked?” the volunteer asked.

The teen sighed. “Yes, out in the lobby. But I don't have any money today. Can I put it on hold? My grandma will give me my allowance next week, and I promise to come back and pay for it.” The volunteer gestured for the young man to follow. “Well, we usually don’t do that, but let’s go back out so you can show me what you’re interested in.” The boy headed straight for the “giftables” table and held up the “Hunger Games” trilogy, gazing lovingly at the three hardback books.

“I’ve been wanting to read these for years, but they’re nine dollars. I can’t afford that.” He sighed and set the books back down.

“Come with me,” the volunteer said as she picked up the set and handed money to the cashier. “This young man would like to buy these books.”

The boy looked stunned. “Oh, no. You don’t need to do that,” he said softly, but his eyes never left those books. “Wow! Thank you so much!”

“Well, happy birthday,” the volunteer said.

“But, it’s not my birthday,” the youth protested.

“Well, it is my birthday today. It’s my gift to you,” she said as smiled and patted the young man on the back. “I only ask one thing. When you are done reading them, pass them along to someone else.”

“I will,” he said. “I have a friend who will love these, too.”

The volunteer later told another Friends volunteer. “I’m not sure who got the better gift today, him or me.”
CHAPTER TWO

It was about the middle of the afternoon during the February book sale at the Cherry Building. Traffic was slowing down a bit. A young man in his mid-thirties approached one of our volunteers and asked if we had a section of books in Spanish. That was a new inquiry for the volunteer, so she told him she would find out and then laughingly added, “I have a copy of Michelle Obama’s book Becoming in Spanish at home. My son gave it to me for Christmas by accident. I don’t speak Spanish!” The young man’s face lit up. “Really?” “Really,” she replied. “I’d love to share it with someone who could enjoy it.”

When the young man was about to leave, the volunteer reiterated her offer. “Oh no. I couldn’t,” he replied politely and walked on.

A while later, he appeared again. “Would you really be interested in letting me have that book?” He asked and quickly added. “I’ll pay you.” She told him knowing someone was going to read and enjoy it would be more than enough payment. He gave her his address so she could mail it to him and again proffered a five-dollar bill, this time to pay for postage. She refused again. “Then could I donate this to the library?” he asked. “Perfect,” she responded.

He walked away smiling as she dropped his bill into the money box. It was a win/win/win situation—which when you think about it, pretty much applies to every transaction at a library book sale.

CHAPTER THREE

They were an attractive young couple. They arrived at the winter sale with their own box and stopped at the entrance to the stacks in Basement Books to survey the area. Clearly, they were on a mission and knew exactly what they were looking for. They quickly spotted their target and marched resolutely toward the “Vintage Books” section.

Sometime later, they reappeared at the cashier table. He placed the carton on the table, and she began taking out the books, one by one, and placing them in stacks. They were all thin volumes of about the same size, all with gently worn covers of faded green. Were they collecting sets of some sort? Topical or the complete works of some well-known author of the past? Were they decorating and seeking covers to fit their color scheme? As they stepped up to pay, the cashier smiled at them and observed, “You seem to be on a mission.” “Yes,” the young woman smiled. “We’re going to use these as table decorations at our wedding. We’re having a library theme.”

Of course, the cashiers—all book lovers, and all mothers of married children—were enchanted. While the young man nonchalantly counted out the cash, the cashiers gushed with the diffident but smiling bride-to-be. And then the young lovers strolled off with their treasures and their dreams. Love blooms – even at library book sales.
BE A FRIEND...BECAUSE WORDS MATTER!

Can you imagine growing up in a household without books? If no one read you a bedtime story every night? If your parents never took you to the library for story hour or to pick out a pile of books by your favorite author or about your favorite topic?

Can you imagine if you hadn't learned just how to read—but the joy of reading? What would your world have felt like without Winnie the Pooh or Charlotte or Encyclopedia Brown or Nancy Drew to be your friends and teach you important life lessons? Without Beatrix Potter or Chris Van Allsburg or Jacqueline Woodson or Shel Silverstein or Ezra Jack Keats or Maurice Sendak—the list is endless—to tuck you in at night?

What if you hadn't learned the skill to read not just words and sentences but meanings and implications and feelings? If you hadn't thirsted for more and read on to meet Scout and Jo and Ponyboy and Esperanza and Holden and Scarlett? If you hadn't learned to recognize that reading brought the world to your bedroom, awakened your brain to new ideas, inspired your life with possibilities? If you hadn't taken journeys with Jim and Huck Finn or Don Quixote, if you hadn't wrestled with Moby Dick or envied Gatsby with Nick, if you hadn't wept for Ophelia and Othello or cheered for Mr. Darcy?

What if you couldn't read well enough to understand the driver's manual, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, your insurance policy? (Never mind, nobody understands that.) You get the point. As Lavar Burton used to tell us, “Reading is fundamental.”

Promoting reading and literacy is the mission of Friends. Every day we strive to provide inspiration, access, and funding so that area children and adults can improve their reading skills. We support the Cedar Rapids Public Library's literacy outreach programs with funds raised through our book sales and our membership drives and with our time and our energy.

Please join us by becoming a Friend because words matter and the right words can change lives.
**Focus on Friends**

**It’s not Gallup, Pew, or Quinnipiac:**
**It’s the CRPL Friends Easy Eleven Item Poll.** (Yes Eleven Items)

It is nearly the season for polls, “a sampling or collection of opinions on a subject, taken from either a selected or a random group of person, as for the purpose of analysis.” The CRPL Friends Easy Eleven Item Poll has a carefully selected sample size, small margin of error, and eleven easy statements. See where you score!

#1: You love books.  Yes  or  No

#2: You love a great bargain.  Yes  or  No

#3: You enjoy conversing with other book lovers.  Yes  or  No

#4: You support the idea of literacy for everyone.  Yes  or  No

#5: You enjoy making a contribution for the betterment of your community.  Yes  or  No

#6: You have a long list of books, no longer on the best seller list, that you still want to read.  Yes  or  No

#7: You could spend hours browsing shelves for unusual and hard to find, vintage books.  Yes  or  No

#8: You could enjoy getting together with other book lovers for treats and the chance to shop for bargain books.  Yes  or  No

#9: You would like to volunteer for projects but prefer not to commit to tens of hours per month.  Yes  or  No

#10: You love your library.  Yes  or  No

#11: You would love to provide financial support for literacy programs in your community.  Yes  or  No

That’s it, eleven items. Now it’s time to total your score. Give yourself one point for a yes and zero points for a no. If you scored 1 or higher, you have what it takes to be a Friend of the Cedar Rapids Public Library. There is no margin of error in this score, and we hope the sample size continues to grow. Not only do you have what it takes, but you would find volunteering for Friends to be fun and rewarding.

Friends of the CRPL range in age from 10 to 100. Some friends volunteer weekly and others volunteer more infrequently. There are opportunities that fit your scheduling needs with a plethora of ways that you can quench your thirst for volunteering. Friends is currently relaunching our efforts to recruit “new friends” to assist in supporting literacy in our community.

Join us, you’ll be glad if you do. Come to our First Saturday Sale at Basement Books in the Cherry Building on Saturday, May 4, 9 am to 3 pm.

Support us with your time, your ideas and creativity, and with a monetary gift.
We look forward to calling you…A Friend of the Cedar Rapids Public Library.
Library Events

Summer Dare Kick Off Party
Ladd Library
Sunday, June 2 – 2 to 4 pm

Summer Dare Closing Celebration
Downtown Library Plaza & Greene Square
Saturday, July 27 – 10 am to Noon

Foundation Events

Literary Vines: A Beer & Wine Tasting
Saturday, May 4 – 5:30 to 8 pm
Downtown Library Commons

Van Vechten Society Brunch
Sunday, June 9 – 11 am to 12:30 pm
Downtown Library Commons
RSVP requested; invitations pending

Back to School Social (Free family event)
Saturday, August 10 – 10 am to Noon
Downtown Library 4th Avenue Plaza

Friends Books Sales

Basement Books
Cherry Building – 9 am to 3 pm
Saturday, May 4
Saturday, July 6
Saturday, September 7
Saturday, October 5
Saturday, December 7

Downtown Library Plaza
Farmers Markets – 7:30 am to Noon
Saturday, June 1
Saturday, June 15
Saturday, July 6
Saturday, July 20
Saturday, August 3
Saturday, August 17

Big Sale of the Year!
Cherry Building
Friday, November 1
Saturday, November 2
Sunday, November 3

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