



Librarian Brian Lind assists Ryan Lesar with the RPL Hotspot.

"I was job searching and trying to use my phone. Sometimes you can't upload resumes or fill out online applications with a phone."

- Ryan Lesar

RPL HOTSPOT

Wi-Fi Hotspot Program

By Karen Lemke

A new program is taking Wi-Fi outside the library walls, as internet access continues to play a critical role in information access.

"It's a connection issue," says Library Director, Audrey Betcher, adding, "People need access to complete basic tasks like apply for jobs or do their homework." In January, the library launched their Wi-Fi Hotspot program to support information access needs on all levels. In Olmsted County, only 58% of households have access to broadband, which can create barriers to employment and education.

With a \$30,000 donation from the Rochester Public Library Foundation and support from Olmsted County Community Services, 97 hotspots and 20 Chromebooks were purchased along with Wi-Fi service through T-Mobile. Foundation Executive Director, Vicki Allen, says this is one of several programs supported by the Foundation to help improve the lives of local residents and ensure that the Rochester Public Library is one of the top libraries in Minnesota. "Having internet connectivity is so crucial in today's economy. While the library has offered internet access and wireless access for years, this will be the

first time they've offered it outside the building."

The pilot program meets four identified needs: residents living in poverty who need reliable access to the internet, patrons needing temporary Wi-Fi access at home, those who need access to Wi-Fi and technology to use the internet and for those who want the convenience of a Wi-Fi hotspot on a temporary basis.

"We are using this pilot project to determine where our greatest needs are, and how we can best meet those needs in the future," explains Betcher.

Olmsted County Community Services is partnering with the library to identify families in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) and the Diversionary Work Program (DWP) to pilot the first project for up to 32 local families. Director of Olmsted County Family Support and Assistance, Armin Budimlic, says having this type of access is a necessity. "Residents without regular access to the internet may find themselves excluded from an abundance of education, employment and community resources. Through this pilot project, selected MFIP and DWP participants would improve their job search, employment, training, and educational outcomes with reliable access to the internet."

"Wi-Fi Hotspot Program" (continued on page 2)

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"Wi-Fi Hotspot Program" (continued from page 1)

Betcher says the remaining hotspots and 20 Chromebooks will be available for current library patrons as part of the other pilot programs. Patrons can check the hotspots out in three different ways:

- **Wi-Fi hotspots on a first-come, first-served basis.** Patrons can place holds on these, similar to placing holds on traditional library items. The hotspots can be checked out for 14 days, and patrons can renew the hotspots up to 2 times, with availability.
- **Wi-Fi hotspots and Chromebooks, in a bundle.** Similar to the Wi-Fi hotspot checkout, this program allows patrons to take home a Google Chromebook. The bundled items can be checked out for 14 days, and patrons can renew the bundles up to 2 times, with availability.
- **Rental Wi-Fi hotspots, for a daily fee.** Patrons must book these in advance and can use them up to 90 days for a daily fee of \$5.

The rental service is meant for patrons who are willing to pay for the convenience of scheduling a hotspot, according to Circulation Services Manager Andy Stehr. "We imagine families going on vacation, for example, will enjoy having a mobile hotspot in the car," Stehr speculates, "or individuals who need a hotspot for a temporary time frame, and aren't looking to purchase a data plan of their own."

Stehr says patrons have asked about Wi-Fi hotspots for months. "With other communities offering similar services, we've had many patrons inquire about RPL having a hotspot service. We are grateful to the Library Foundation and Olmsted County for making this program possible in our community."

For more details about the RPL Wi-Fi Hotspot program, visit: <http://bit.ly/RPLwifi>

What You're Reading

These are the most popular titles checked out in 2016.

Adult Fiction

The Girl on the Train
by Paula Hawkins

Adult Non-Fiction

When Breath Becomes Air
by Paul Kalanithi

Children's Fiction

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child,
Parts One and Two
by J.K. Rowling, John Tiffany,
and Jack Thorne

Children's Picture Books

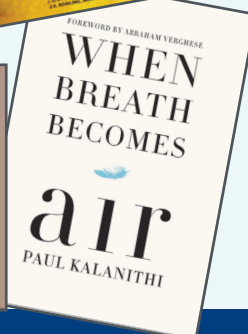
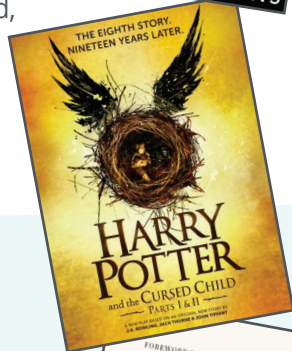
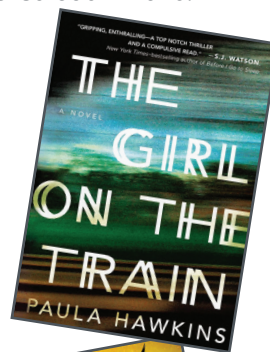
The Pigeon Needs a Bath!
by Mo Willems

Children's Non-Fiction

Guinness World Records

Teen Fiction

Divergent
by Veronica Roth



Warm Up Rochester (THANK YOU)

Rochester residents are staying warm, thanks to the kind gestures of library staff, patrons and members of the Friends of the Library. Dozens of items have already been donated to help those in need find hats, mittens, and

scarves. After they are dropped off and processed, the items are then added to RPL's "Warm Up, Rochester" carts, located on each floor of the library. Patrons visiting the library are welcome to take whatever they need from the carts in order to stay warm.

Coordinators Heather Acerro, Gail Harris, and Sarah Joynt estimate over 200 items were handed out through mid-January. "Our supply has barely been able to keep up with demand," says Acerro, "and we would love to have more donations." Clean, new items are accepted at all library service desks and on the bookmobile.





Our Stories, Our Community

By Karen Lemke

Rochester Public Library was recently awarded a SELCO (Southeast Libraries Cooperating) grant to capture and archive local oral histories.

RPL will partner with the History Center of Olmsted County for the Our Stories, Our Community program, which includes collecting, documenting and archiving up to 12 local histories. The \$12,700 grant will be used to purchase a sound booth, recording equipment and materials needed to produce high-quality audio files.

Head of Reader's Services, Kim Edson, says the program helps preserve local history that might not otherwise be captured.

"Oral histories give us a chance to learn about the perspectives



of individuals who may not otherwise appear in typical written historical records." And while part of the program is geared toward collecting 12 local histories, the sound booth and equipment is meant for much more. "This is meant to really empower all local residents," explains Edson, "This gives everyone a chance to reflect on their own lives and develop their own oral histories."

The sound booth and recording equipment will be available for members of the public



to use in order to capture their own stories. Reservations are accepted starting at the end of February.

The original recordings produced by RPL and the History Center will include interviews with everyday people who have been outsiders or disenfranchised members of the community, or those who wish to pass

on their culture and memories in an oral form.

Aside from recording histories, the grant will also support a number of programs about oral history. One program "Oral Histories with Ryan Barland," focuses on the important of collecting oral histories. Barland is a historian at the Minnesota State History Center. The program is free, open to all ages and will be held on Thursday, February 16, starting at 4:30PM.

Have a story to share? We are currently looking for community members who can share stories from the 1970s-1990s when Rochester experienced significant growth and transition.

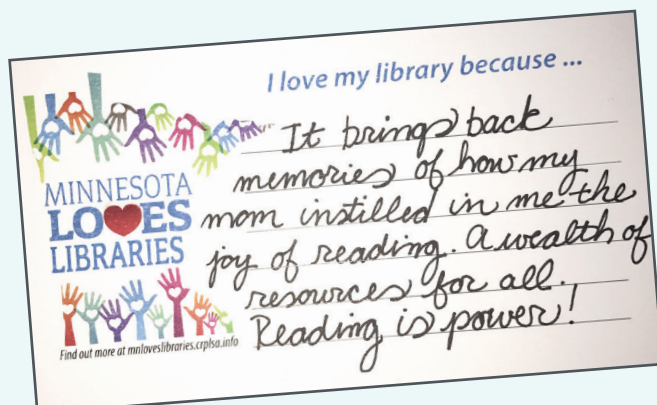
Oral Histories - Our Stories, Our Community

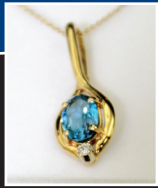
Ryan Barland, historian from the MN State History Center, will share about the importance of collecting and using oral histories.

Thurs., Feb 16
4:30PM | Auditorium

MN Loves Libraries

Library lovers across the state are telling lawmakers why "Minnesota Loves Libraries." Throughout the month of January, hundreds of postcards were collected from cities and towns across Minnesota to share with lawmakers. The postcards will be delivered to house and senate representatives during Library Legislative Day at the end of February.





16 Years of Wit, Wisdom & Wine

Sixteen years has translated into a bit of wit, hours of wisdom, gallons of wine and, more importantly, thousands of dollars raised to support the mission of the Rochester Public Library.

Since 2001, the annual "Wit, Wisdom & Wine" event has provided library supporters of all ages the chance to mingle among friends and sample delicious food and wines. This year the event raised over \$30,000 to support the Library's mission. Also, a new fundraising opportunity was announced to provide additional support for the library's innovative tutoring program, Rochester Reading Champions (more details on page 6).

Foundation Board President, Martha McClees, says the event brings together a diverse group of participants. "Wit, Wisdom and Wine celebrates Rochester's most welcoming place: the public library. The library belongs to everyone -- a safe place to learn and grow. We thank our supporters and donors for their time, talent and treasure."



"Thank you to all who support this Foundation fundraiser. Your dollars equal more programs and innovations that we can help financially support in 2017."

*- Vicki Allen,
Foundation Executive Director*



Donors from September 1, 2016 - December 15, 2016

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Elizabeth J. Atkinson
Jessica Balcom
Lynette Beck
Bob & Phyllis Beery
Janet Behrens
Bernice Krug
Audrey S. Betcher
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US Bank
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Mr. & Mrs. Eric J. Van Norman
Erik & Dee Voldal
Bryan Wakat

Honorarium Gifts

Mrs. JoAnn M. Sheldon
- In honor of the Library Staff

Vicki Allen & Terry Sorenson
- In honor of Dave & Jerri's
wedding anniversary

Rabbi David Freedman
- In honor of Hannah
Rabinstein's Bat Mitzvah

De & Trish Bendtsen
- In honor of Jante & Ardell Olson

Erik & Tara Kaufman
- In honor of Nikhil & Kiran

Vicki Allen & Terry Sorenson
- In honor of Terry

Memorial Gifts

Sandy Tschida
- In memory of Tony Tschida, Sr.

Valley of Rochester Scottish Rite
Children's Foundation
- In memory of Al Koenig

Mr. & Mrs. Al Tuntland
- In memory of Al Koenig

Paulette & Mike Zenner
- In memory of Amanda S. Carlson

Mr. Joseph Lobl
- In memory of Anu's
family members

Rabbi David Freedman
- In memory of Beth Karon & family

Vicki Allen & Terry Sorenson
- In memory of Beverly DeWitz

Jeanne Stewart
- In memory of Bix Stewart

Chuck Bauer
- In memory of Craig Fenske

Robert Fenske
- In memory of Craig Fenske

Brett & Kim Adams
- In memory of Gail Adams

Megan Magnuson
- In memory of Gladys Olson

Rabbi David Freedman
- In memory of Howard
Taswell, MD

Mr. & Mrs. Dana Funk
- In memory of Jerry Balm

Jim M. Dervin
- In memory of Lori Marie Dervin

Jim & Peggy McEvoy
- In memory of
McEvoy/McKenna Families

Harold Dison
- In memory of Norma Dison

Noel & Gwen Fallarme
- In memory of Paterno &
Lucila Aligno

Mr. & Mrs. Dave Anderson
- In memory of Velma Miller



*Thank you!
Your donations
make a world of
difference.*

SPECIAL APPEAL \$5,000 MATCH



Donations given from Jan. 14 - Feb. 28 will be matched by the Valley of Rochester Scottish Rite Children's Foundation. Please use the enclosed envelope or give online and specify Rochester Reading Champions.

Rochester Reading Champions (RRC) is a forward-looking community program that started in summer 2014. RRC matches highly-trained volunteers with youth and adults in our community who are struggling to read.

Keys to Success

By meeting students at locations that they already frequent, Rochester Reading Champions has been successful at eliminating key barriers to achievement including transportation and cost.

Our Volunteer Tutors

- Complete the 120 hour Orton-Gillingham (O-G) training, a phonics based approach, from The Reading Center
- Provide free, 1 on 1 instruction, 2x/week, giving students between 80 -100 lessons (45-60 minutes per lesson)
- Receive ongoing training & support

Our Community Partners

- Rochester Public Library
- The Reading Center
- Boys & Girls Club of Rochester
- Olmsted County Adult Detention Center
- MN Adult and Teen Challenge
- Hawthorne Education Center

Our Current Program Numbers

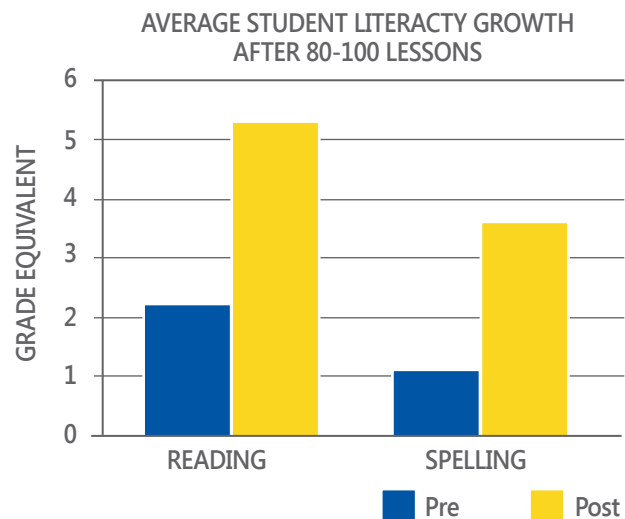
- 23 tutors
- 33 students tutored
- 6 student graduates



Our Stories

"We had a third grade student who, in the fall of 2014, was reading at first grade level. He did not like or want to read. Then, he joined Rochester Reading Champions. By summer 2015, the student completed the Library's Summer Reading (Super Reader) Program, reading for over 20 hours. Now, he is a graduate of the program and is reading at grade level in school. His teacher had noticed he was using phonics to decode words and mentioned that it was a really helpful strategy for him. It has been wonderful to watch his confidence and skills grow." - RRC Volunteer

Our Impact



If you have questions about this special appeal, please contact Vicki Allen, Foundation Executive Director, at vallen@rochester.lib.mn.us or 507.328.2387.

One Library, Three Boards

The Rochester Public Library interacts with three different boards: Board of Trustees, Rochester Public Library Foundation Board, and the Friends of the Library Board. Here are the roles of each board:

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Oversees the library strategic plan, employs the library director, maintains library policies, approves budget spending

FRIENDS OF THE ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Supports library services through volunteerism and advocacy, raises funds through the Friends Book Store and other efforts to support the mission of the library

ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Supports library services and programs through fundraising, builds the library endowment for innovative pilot projects and future library needs

Letter from the Presidents of the Friends

Thanks to the incredible leadership of co-presidents, Phyllis Hambright and Lathika Nair, the Friends of the Library has helped the Library achieve many of its goals. Phyllis and Lathika have served as co-presidents for the last two years. During their term, the Friends helped the Library celebrate its 150th birthday, complete with a birthday party and cake! This last year has seen the Friends advocate for the Library's vision of expansion. Phyllis and Lathika went to St. Paul and the Minnesota State Legislature to advocate for the Rochester Public Library and to gain support for Minnesota libraries. MBA students from St. Mary's University completed a project for their degree, evaluating the Friends' organization; the project prompted the Friends to reevaluate their organization and gave rise to the first ever Board retreat in July of 2016. In the fall of 2016, a raffle was held with five handmade items, making money for the Friends and thrilling the winners. All of this was in addition to the many annual events sponsored by the Friends.

We are most grateful for the leadership of Phyllis and Lathika!

As 2017 begins, we are delighted to take over the leadership duties as co-presidents and look forward to serving in



this role. We are also joined by a few new faces willing to bring their talents to this organization: Unni Gopinathan, Ann Griese, John Hunziker, Kim Keilholtz, Gen Theobald, Lou Wagner and Madison Wurth.

We look forward to serving the Friends' organization and the Rochester Public Library. We are thrilled to see the new talent on the 2017 Board and hope that the long-needed expansion of the Library will happen!

Do you love our Library? Want to make a difference? Please consider volunteering at RPL! If you are interested, we can use your time and talent. You can determine the amount of time you want to volunteer! Please contact Marilyn Campbell at 507-328-2341. Whether you want to volunteer at the Friends' Bookstore or for an individual project, we welcome new volunteers for the Friends of the Rochester Public Library. Happy 2017!

Karen Nath and Kim Keilholtz
Friends of the Rochester
Public Library Presidents



Thank You

"We are most grateful for the incredible support of the library staff and Library Board during our tenure as co-presidents. Thank you for everything you do!"
Phyllis Hambright & Lathika Nair, Past-Presidents

Friends' Bookstore Hours:

- Monday** 10AM-7PM
- Tuesday** 10AM-4PM
- Wednesday** 10AM-7PM
- Thursday** 10AM-7PM
- Friday** 10AM-4PM
- Saturday (school year)** 10AM-4PM
- Saturday (summer*)** 10AM-1PM
- Sunday (school year)** 1:30-4:30PM
- Sunday (summer*)** closed

*Summer hours are from Memorial Day to Labor Day.



FRIENDS OF THE ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY



2017 ROCHESTERFEST BOOK SALE

- Monday, Jun. 19, 5-7PM (Preview Sale)
- Tuesday, Jun. 20, 9:30AM-7PM
- Wednesday, Jun. 21, 9:30AM-7PM
- Thursday, Jun. 22, 9:30AM-6PM

2017 AUTUMN BOOK SALE

- Thursday, Oct. 12, 5-7PM (Preview Sale)
- Friday, Oct. 13, 9:30AM-5PM
- Saturday, Oct. 14, 9:30AM-5PM
- Sunday, Oct. 15, 1:30-4PM

2017 GIFT QUALITY BOOK & BAKE SALE

- Friday, Dec. 1, 11AM-5PM
- Saturday, Dec 2, 9:30AM-4PM

2ND SATURDAY SALES

2nd Saturdays of the month
10AM-1PM, Library Foyer

Rochester Public Library
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LIBRARY HOURS

Monday - Thursday
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Friday & Saturday
9:30AM - 5:30PM

Sunday
1:30 - 5:30PM

507.328.2300
www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org

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Backstory: Lego Club for Adults

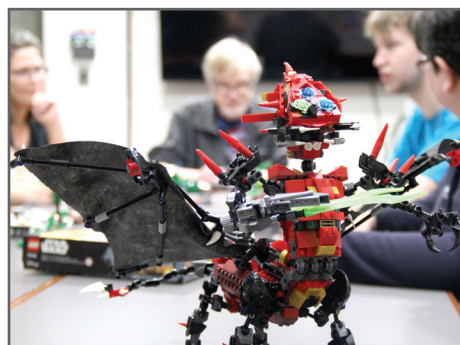
A new Lego Club for adults has started at the library, led by a long-time volunteer with a passion for Legos. Kieran McDonnell has been building with Legos and volunteering at the library for years. Kieran even built two storage units and donated containers of Legos to the library as part of his Eagle Scout project.

Kieran, a student at Rochester Community and Technical College, says he enjoys building with the popular blocks and developing his own designs. The library has hosted a number of Lego activities for children, but this is the first adult-only Lego event.

The club meets the third Saturday of each month at 2 PM. All Legos are provided.



Kieran with one of his unique creations.



Kieran builds unique creatures with his Legos, including this one.



Eric Schlinke shows off one of Kieran's creations at the first Adult Lego Club event in January.

Find us on social media:

