



Rochester Public Library News and Events

101 2nd ST, SE, Rochester, MN 55905 • 507-328-2300

www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org

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December 2008

Libraries Change Lives

Libraries I have known

-- Helen McIver, Friend of the library.



Helen McIver along with some of her fellow bookstore volunteers at their annual meeting.

Libraries change lives is a wonderful set of articles that grace this newsletter. I will share some of the libraries and authors/books I have known, that I have encountered in travel, research, exhibitions, life and from around the world over the past 45 years.

I can picture the reading room of my first library in Cornwall, CT, when I was six and allowed to borrow

3 books at a time: a small room in comparison with the rest of the library, with enormous Federal windows, beneath which were shelves the perfect height for children to peruse. I started at the beginning, but was fascinated by an entire shelf with the author Thornton Burgess. I took one book a week for nearly a year, to make them last. After years of yard sales and booking, I now own the complete set and am transported back in time to Mother West Wind, Sammy Jay, Reddy Fox, Old Grandfather Toad, wonderful characters from my backyard.

We moved around a great deal as a family, often in extremely rural settings (10,000 acres of national or state parkland). Trips to the library were often only on a monthly basis. We took the maximum allowed number of books, under everyone in the family, cross reading their selections when you ran out of your own! (I read a lot of westerns and war books (Zane Grey, Max Brand, Alistair Maclean, Geoffrey Household) from my father's selections and became a huge mystery fan from my mother's choices (Dick Francis, Alfred Hitchcock, Dashiell Hammett.) One sister was into historical novels (Jean Plaidy, Dorothy Dunnett, while another read Gothic romance (Mary Stewart, Nora Lofts.) An Edwardian grandmother introduced me to Gene Stratton Porter, etc... I can't say that they read any of my selections which included a lot of nature nonfiction (Thoreau, Emerson), science fiction, Greek history and all of the classics. They never recovered from my enjoy-

ing Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*. At one point I had a summer job that involved long hours in a ticket booth, waiting for anyone to come to this remote state park. For 3 months I read novels based on the maximum number of pages per book! (e.g. all of Michener, Davenport, Wouk, Tolstoy.)

Libraries have a special atmosphere all to themselves. I love the feel and smell of a book in my hands, the expectation of a wonderful read. But I discovered audio books when I commuted over an hour to various universities.

Stowe, Vermont's Public Library, introduced me to poetry and current children's books that won the Newbery Award. Old radio programs (*The Green Hornet*, *Batman*, *The Shadow Knows*) turned out to be great fun and something else to share with my parents.

Here in Rochester, with a commute to lecture at the University of Minnesota in St Paul 90 miles each way, I started at one end of non-fiction audio and nearly finished 7 years later. It had to be nonfiction because of stop / start, concentrating on driving, but mostly because I could learn something so as not to waste time on the road (mindless, endless cornfields.) Fiction is much harder for me to listen to because I read faster than they speak and am too impatient to find out what happens. With non-fiction, you can digest facts, take tidbits of history/information, and continue with your workday, instead of wondering what happens next in a mystery or trying to solve the plot, wondering what is happening with the character development or the character assassination. I will never forget a few midnight drives with the Civil War horrors of *Andersonville*, the sheer wit in *Letters of Abraham Lincoln*, (his own words, not biographers), the wonders of *Life on Earth* (David Attenborough.) I discovered there are readers/voices whom I will listen to whatever they are reading simply for the sheer pleasure of their voice, their intonation, their command and nuance of the English language. Derek Jacobi is a case in point. I had read the book (*The Gates of Fire*, Pressfield), I knew the history but was unprepared for his emotional rendition and accent (what he thought was important/ highlights of the characters and book.)

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December Events @ Rochester Public Library

All library events are free and open to the public

101 2nd Street SE

www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org

507-328-2300

Monday, December 1 **6:30 pm**
Sit-Stay-Read
Auditorium

Read aloud for 20 minutes to a friendly therapy dog. Reading times are 6:30 p.m., 6:50 p.m. and 7:10 p.m. When registering online, please enter your preferred dog and time in the e-mail address box (ex: dog@time.com). Dogs and times will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Only a registered child and accompanying parent/adult should attend. Register online, at the children's desk or by calling 328-2303.

Saturday, December 6 **10:30 am**
Hans Mayer's Holiday Concert for Kids
Auditorium

Recording artist Hans Mayer presents a merry concert of original children's music just right for the holiday season. *Auditorium seating is limited to 250 people.*

Sunday, December 7 **1:30 pm**
Friends of the Library Holiday Bake & Booksale
Auditorium

Open to the public at 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Open to the Friends members at 1:00 p.m. Call 328-2341 to find out how to become a Friends' member.

Monday, December 8 **6:30 pm**
Sit-Stay-Read
Auditorium

Read aloud for 20 minutes to a friendly therapy dog. Reading times are 6:30 p.m., 6:50 p.m. and 7:10 p.m. When registering online, please enter your preferred dog and time in the e-mail address box (ex: dog@time.com). Dogs and times will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Only a registered child and accompanying parent/adult should attend. Register online, at the children's desk or by calling 328-2303.

Tuesday, December 9 **6:30 pm**
Writing Group
Meeting Room A

Stuck on your first draft? Not sure about your plot? Let's get together and help each other out.

Wednesday, December 10 **6:00 pm**
iFilms: International and Independent Films
Auditorium

The Trap (Drama | Serbia, Germany, Hungary) A modern film noir reflecting the true face of Serbian "society in transition," It's a story that could happen to you. An ordinary man is forced to choose between life and death of his own child. The Trap is a film about post-Milosevic's Serbia, in which there is no more war, only a moral and existential desert. This is Serbia in transition, in which human life is worth little, and normal life remains almost unreachable.

The iFilm series is intended for mature adults. Please provide guidance to your children.

Saturday, December 13 **10:30 am**
Holiday Music for Families Presented by the Choral Arts Ensemble
Auditorium

The Choral Arts Ensemble is proud to present a holiday concert for children, families, and friends. *Auditorium seating is limited to 250 people.*

Monday, December 15 **4:00 pm**
GOAT Meeting - Group Of Advising Teens
Meeting Room A

Join other Rochester area youth (age 12-18) and take a leadership role to discuss ideas and make plans for youth library programs, teen Web page, and other ideas.

Monday, December 15 **6:30 pm**
Sit-Stay-Read
Auditorium

Read aloud for 20 minutes to a friendly therapy dog. Reading times are 6:30 p.m., 6:50 p.m. and 7:10 p.m. When registering online, please enter your preferred dog and time in the e-mail address box (ex: dog@time.com). Dogs and times will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Only a registered child and accompanying parent/adult should attend. Register online, at the children's desk or by calling 328-2303.

The Library will be closing at 1:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, December 24** in observance of Christmas Eve and will be **closed all day Thursday, December 25** in observance of Christmas Day.

The Library will be closing at 1:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, December 31** in observance of New Year's Eve and will be **closed all day Thursday, January 1** in observance of New Year's Day.

Saturday, December 20 10:30 am
Hooray for Saturday! Family Film: *Mickey's Christmas Carol*
Auditorium
Mickey Mouse stars as Bob Cratchit in a humorous adaptation of the famous novel by Charles Dickens.

Monday, December 22 10:30 am
Family Film: *The Small One*
Auditorium
In this gentle Christmas tale, a small boy searches for a new owner for his beloved donkey, Small One.

Monday, December 22 6:30 pm
Sit-Stay-Read
Auditorium
Read aloud for 20 minutes to a friendly therapy dog. Reading times are 6:30 p.m., 6:50 p.m. and 7:10 p.m. When registering online, please enter your preferred dog and time in the e-mail address box (ex: dog@time.com). Dogs and times will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. Only a registered child and accompanying parent/adult should attend. Register online, at the children's desk or by calling 328-2303.

Tuesday, December 23 10:30 am
Family Films: *Zlateh the Goat & Polar Express*
Auditorium
Zlateh the Goat: Winter is late, so it is a difficult year for Reuven the furrier. In spite of his young son's objections, he decides to sell the family goat to buy necessities for Hanukkah. But when a wild winter storm arrives, Zlateh has a chance to prove her worth.
Polar Express: A magical train ride on Christmas Eve takes a boy to the North Pole to receive a special gift from Santa Claus. (Please note: This is not the feature-length film)

Friday, December 26 10:30 am
Family Films: *Seven Candles for Kwanzaa & Mole's Christmas*
Auditorium
Seven Candles for Kwanzaa: A family discovers the unique traditions and celebrations of the seven-day African-American holiday called Kwanzaa.
Mole's Christmas: It's Christmas Eve and Mole suddenly longs to visit his cozy underground home, the beloved Mole End. This delightful film is based on the stories of *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame.

Saturday, December 27 10:30 am
Hooray for Saturday! Family Film: *Peter and the Wolf*
Auditorium
Peter ignores his grandfather's warning and sets out to capture a wolf. This film is an animated Disney interpretation of the beloved classical music of Prokofiev.

Monday, December 29 10:30 am
Family Film: *The Snowman*
Auditorium
A young boy dreams that his snowman has come to life. Together they travel on a magical journey which celebrates the joys of winter.

Tuesday, December 30 10:30 am
Family Films: *Three Tales for a Winter Day*
Auditorium
Our winter film program features three seasonal tales based on favorite picture books including: *The Mitten*, *Bear Snores On*, and *Good Morning, Granny Rose*.

Tuesday, December 30 6:00 pm
Movie @ Your Library: *Prince Caspian*
Auditorium
In our featured film, the four Pevensie children return to Narnia to discover that even though it has been only a short time in their world, hundreds of years have passed since they ruled there. Rated PG.

Save the Date !

January 10, 2009

**8th Annual
Wit, Wisdom & Wine**

A fund-raiser for the Rochester
Public Library Foundation

The 2009 Chi-Shu Award Writing Contest

--continued from page 1

The Rochester Public Library and Helen Chen are once again co-sponsoring the Chi-Shu writing contest. The purpose of this contest, named in honor of Helen's mother, Chi-Shu Mao, is to encourage writers to write. "My mom encouraged me to write, so I want to encourage others," says Helen.

We invite everyone 18 years of age or older to write a short story, no more than 1200 words, that follows the theme of The Unexpected. The deadline to turn in entries is February 1, 2009. Winners of the contest will be notified at the beginning of March, with awards presented at the Rochester Library Writing Group meeting at 6:30 p.m., March 10, 2009. Winning stories will be published on Helen Chen's website: www.helenchen.ws.

A contest wouldn't be complete without prizes: a whopping \$100 for first place, \$75 for second place and \$50 for third place. Isn't that incentive enough to sharpen those pencils and fire up those laptops and let the imagination loose!

If you have any questions about the contest, visit the Fiction, Movies & Music desk on first floor or call 328-2305.

If you have a writers' block or are having trouble with the plot, you can get some help by joining the Writers Group that meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in Meeting Room A. This is a fun and friendly group of people that share their stories and encourage each other in a supportive environment. 📖



Literature into Film Bookgroup

Read the book, watch the movie and have friendly discussions about it with fellow book group members. Last October, book group members came ready to enjoy tea, snacks and a lively discussion about *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie. Costumes are optional but fun.

If you would like to join the Literature into Film Bookgroup, held the last Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in Meeting Room B, please call Gail or Marilyn 328-2341.

The library offers other monthly book discussion groups to match almost every interest. Even if you are already in a book group of your own, the library has resources such as Book-group-in-a-bag to help your group get copies of the books you choose. To see a list of available titles, stop at the Fiction, Movies & Music desk or visit: www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/ click on the Fiction Movies & Music tab, then click on Book Group in a bag on the bottom left of the page. 📖

As you read this, I am currently recovering from a broken leg, and developing a new relationship with the Rochester Public Library. I have discovered the website and the Online reserve. Oh! 30 books at a time!! I miss the discoveries that you make with the new arrival shelves or simply perusing the stacks, from looking at the title or reading that first sentence, or being intrigued by the inside cover blurb. But I am catching up on books I have missed over the past few years, books I have wanted to read, but not found the time, authors I knew I would like, but they had a long series (a great time to start at the first and proceed onwards!) Each week has a delivery of books on hold – and it is like Christmas. Yes I am racing back to the website to reserve all the rest of this author (and waiting - sometimes number 59!) More importantly I am discovering new authors, cross referencing book lists, reviews and other recommendations. I am having withdrawal symptoms from not being in Barnes and Noble or online with Amazon. But heavens, all those books are HERE in the library. And are the perfect medicine – like vitamins, one a day is really helping! I have four more months of rehabilitation. I expect I will have increased circulation somewhat! I am constantly telling other people you must read this book – and the library has it! I have even signed my husband up so that he can download audio books, music and the movie dvds, while keeping my card free for all those books. 📖

Library News Bulletin

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