

Rochester Public Library News and Events

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Libraries Change Lives

The Bird is the Word

by Leisa Luis-Grill

I grew up in the ancient period of time, before the concept of the personal computer was a twinkle in Bill Gates' eye. Unlike the subsequent generations of web-surfers that can hang ten on a wave of technology, I wasn't even in the Kiddie Pool. The acquisition of knowledge was entirely a physical, practical process. I went to the library, sought out a book, and turned the pages with my own two hands. I waited eagerly each week as the teacher opened the door on that room full of new possibilities—scientific wonders, artistic treasures, tales of adventure, square little bundles of wit and wisdom I could take home with me. Books have sparked my imagination in ways I'm still discovering.

This became especially apparent when I started working on the "Goose is Loose" project.

While even I have gotten used to the easy access of our byte-ridden existence, I'm still nostalgic for the time I've spent amidst tall shelves of collected literature, printed and bound with care, lined up like a selection of exotic mind-fruit that's just ripe for the plucking. When I was a kid I loved libraries. I loved the sheen of the long wooden tables, I loved the odd lines of color that the book collections make, and I loved sorting through card-catalogues with a sleuth-like zeal

worthy of Nancy Drew, the weight of the book in my hands, the smell of the pages. I loved turning them slowly, with relish. I loved the touch of the pages themselves, running my fingers down the neat rows of type in a sort of intellectual caress. The act of reading a book, I mean an actual physical book, has a sort of sacred intimacy about it. It's like the difference between the impersonal expediency of pasting clip-art on the computer to the feel of a brush, the texture of paint, the weight in the canvas as it springs back under your stroke. One is efficient, the other produces a gratification both sensual and spiritual that is difficult to equal.

I remember my step-father giving me his copy of *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* when I was a teenager. It was small and leather-bound with pages that seemed thin as tissue paper. Replete with verse, it resembled a Bible more than the Bard. As the years passed and I began to study theatre seriously I noted with some irony that it had, indeed,

become a bible of sorts. Those stories became an inseparable part of me. I love them still. The same way I still love libraries.

This is the gift I wanted to pass on when I did "Bird as Bard." Perhaps a fiberglass, giant goose isn't timeless but the thing it represents is. I hope it inspires you to be curious, to read, to find a copy of Shakespeare or anything else that sparks your interest. The library is full of wonderful stories that are better than anything you'll ever see on TV or Google. Get yourself out of your chair and seek them out.

Go to the library, grab a book and savor it. Use all of your senses.

The experience is not to be missed. 📖



August 2009

All events at Rochester Public Library are free and open to the public

Tuesday, August 4

Bedtime Stories

Auditorium 6:30 pm

Puppets, stories and films to give you sweet dreams. Parents are invited to remain with their children.

Wednesday, August 5

Half-Pint and Oscar

Auditorium 10:00 am & 1:00 pm

There are giggles galore when clowning duo Half-Pint and Oscar visit the library with their crazy antics and silly surprises!

Thursday, August 6

P-B Dialogues: H1N1 Flu

(Swine Flu)

Auditorium 6:30 pm

Join experts from Olmsted County Public Health, Mayo Clinic, and Olmsted Medical Center, plus PB reporter Jeff Hansel, for a discussion on the H1N1 Virus.

“Get Smart” Training for Parents, Part I

Meeting Room B 7:00 pm

Come to Efficacy Institute Parent Training and join other parents to:

- Explore what leads to development and the obstacles to learning
- Explore ways to help your child to not just work hard but “work smart”
- Learn how to motivate your child to get better, strong, and smarter

This training is coordinated by the Diversity Council (www.diversitycouncil.org) Register online or by calling 328-2305.

Tuesday, August 11

Writing Group

Meeting Room A 6:30 pm

Stuck on your first draft? Not sure about your plot? Let's get together and help each other out. Once a month we meet to read and critique our work in order to improve our writing in a friendly, supportive environment.

Tuesday, August 11

YA Game Night

Auditorium 7:00 pm

Want to try your hand at Wii Sports? Need to challenge your Guitar Hero skills against others? Do you like to Dance, Dance Revolution or play other computer games? Then come to our game night and have some fun playing games with other local teens.

Wednesday, August 12

Family Film: *Cannonball*

Auditorium 10:00 am & 1:00 pm

Hugo the Circus Clown is down on his luck—his Big-Top cannon act just isn't getting the laughs it once did. When it looks like Hugo might have to leave the circus, a feisty little dog comes to the rescue—with booming results!

Google and More

Meeting Room B 1:00 pm

Learn tips on searching with Google and other Internet search engines. Practice time is included. Register online, at the second-floor reference desk or by calling 328-2309.

iFilms: International and Independent Films

Auditorium 6:00 pm

The Window (Argentina/Spain | 2008 | Drama | English subtitles) It is a significant day for 80-year-old Antonio. After an absence of many years, his estranged son is coming to visit. Bed-ridden, Antonio looks out his window at the Patagonian landscape and sees light and life, the past and the present, while sensing the future. He decides to secretly leave the house to take what might be a last walk in his fields, breathing the air, treading the earth, inhaling the scent of the land that had been his life. What could otherwise seem like insignificant memories or moments in one's life, take a special, beautiful meaning and weight in this poetic, humanistic film.

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

Thursday, August 13

“Get Smart” Training for Parents, Part II

Meeting Room B 7:00 pm

See description from Part I on Aug 6.

Wednesday, August 19

Family Film: *Winnie the Pooh and a Day for Eeyore!*

Auditorium 10:00 am & 1:00 pm

When Pooh discovers that they've all forgotten Eeyore's birthday, he and his friends try to patch things up in their delightfully innocent way.

Visiting Author: Jon Laging

Auditorium 6:00 pm

Jon Laging is the author of more than 500 newspaper columns dealing with Minnesota's sporting scene over the past sixty-five years. He has been published in 12 weekly newspapers, primarily in southeastern Minnesota. These articles, which have been praised by the Minnesota Newspaper Association, are the basis of his recent book, *A Minnesota Life and Sports*.

Monday, August 24

Introduction to the Internet

Meeting Room B 1:00 pm

Geared to the beginner: Learn the basics: Internet addresses, navigation and terminology. Practice time is included. Register online, at the second-floor reference desk or by calling 328-2309.

Tuesday, August 25

Young Adult Writer's Group

Meeting Room A 7:00 pm

Do you like to write? Would you like to meet other tweens/teens who like to write? Would you like to share your work, and get advice on how to improve? If the answer is yes, then come join our meetings.

Wednesday, August 26

Film: Iron Jawed Angels

Auditorium 6:30 pm

They had no vote, no political clout, no equal rights. But what they lacked under the law, they made up for with brains, determination and courage. This is an inspirational true story of two women who dared to make a stand for women's rights, and ended up shaping the future of America. *Iron Jawed Angels* recounts for a contemporary audience a key chapter in U.S. history: in this case, the struggle of suffragists who fought for the passage of the 19th Amendment. *Co-Sponsored by the Rochester Chapter of the MN League of Women Voters.*

Thursday, August 27

Visiting Author: James A. Levine

Auditorium 12:00 pm

James A. Levine, a professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic, is a world-renowned scientist, doctor, and researcher. His recently published novel *The Blue Notebook* is the haunting story of a young Indian prostitute who uses writing and imagination to transcend her reality. *The Visiting Author Series is sponsored by the Friends of the Rochester Public Library.*

Friday, August 28


Senior Techies: Computer Practice Meeting Room B 9:30 am

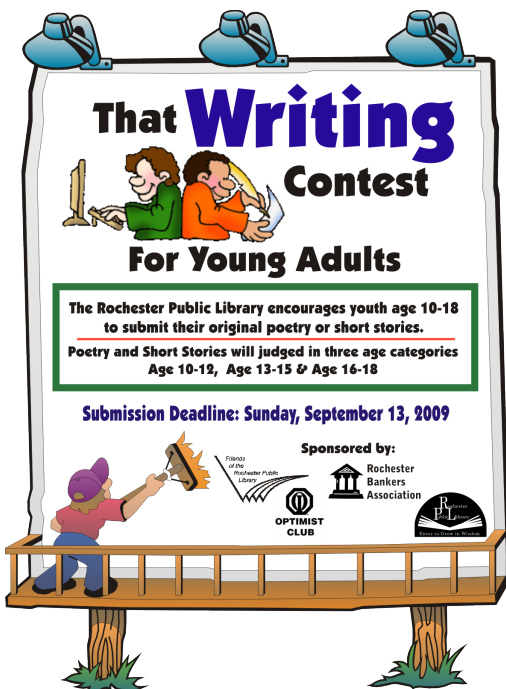
Need a quick refresher on any of our Senior Techies classes? Want some practice using your new e-mail address? Do you need access to a computer, a scanner, a digital camera or the Internet? Join us in Meeting Room B to practice your computer skills like you've always been meaning to do! Computers are provided and a librarian will be there to answer basic computer questions. No registration is necessary, just "drop in." Recommended for patrons 55+

Meet the Database: Britannica

The Rochester Public Library recently added several new databases to its collection. Meet the new Britannica Encyclopedia Databases. There are three different "flavors" of this powerful resource: **Britannica Online Academic** edition, **Britannica Online Kids** edition and **Britannica Online Public Library** edition. All offer the authoritative information you would expect from such a prestigious resource including encyclopedia articles, multimedia images, videos and statistics—all at your digital fingertips any time you need it!


Just visit: www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org, click on 'Reference & Magazines' then 'SUBJECT list of research databases' then 'Encyclopedia/Reference Tools.'

Subscription purchased by Electronic Library for Minnesota (ELM) with a state appropriation to the MINITEX Library Information Network. 



That Writing Contest

Sharpen your pencils, charge up your laptops, it's time once again for That Writing contest for Young Adults. Write a short story or a poem—or both—and submit them for a chance to win prizes. Official rules and submission forms can be found at the Fiction, Movies & Music desk or by visiting: www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/teens/documents/2009writingflyer.pdf.

Come to the YA writers group meeting on August 28 to get some last minute pointers before the submission deadline of September 13, 2009. Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on Saturday, October 24. 

Dine, shop and support your library at the same time.

Can this be true? The answer is YES!

For the month of August, shops at University Square are holding a 'donate and receive' fundraiser on behalf of Rochester Public Library.

& DONATE \$10 & RECEIVE 15% Off
one regularly priced item at participating stores

When you make a donation of \$10 to the Library at any of the participating stores you will receive a special coupon. This coupon entitles you to 15% off one regularly priced item per store. The coupon can be used in all of the participating stores and is valid throughout August. The more you shop and dine the more you receive in savings and you will have helped the library too.

The donate and receive fundraiser is part of the local merchants supporting local charities program. Our thanks to everyone who participates, your support is much appreciated!

Local merchants participating: BRAVO ESPRESSO CHOCOLATERIE *Stam*

COLLECTIONS COUNTERPOINT COUNTERPOINT HOME (C) GAMES by James

Knight's Chamber CLOTHIERS *M Gear*

The Nordic Shop *Sopra Sotto* 

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What's @ the Library?

Book Group in-a-bag kits

You just finished reading the most amazing book you've ever read and you're just dying to talk to someone about it but none of your friends have read it yet. So you loan your book out to your friends, but it's taking forever for them to read it. Being the good friend you are, you don't want to spoil it for them by telling them the ending too soon, so you wait—and wait some more—until you finally have someone to discuss the book with. By that time you may have forgotten all the details you wanted to talk about, leaving the much anticipated discussion unsatisfactory. What's a person to do?

The library has a solution: Book Group in-a-bag kits—just add readers!

These book group in-a-bag kits contain ten books of the same title that someone can check out and share with their friends. Currently we have around 90 titles to choose from: classics, mysteries, thrillers, etc. They can be reserved up to a year in advance for a specific six-week period. They are in high demand so plan accordingly. We recently added some titles for children to enjoy the experience of book groups. The kits for children have between six and eight books per bag and currently there are eleven titles available.

The kits were originally part of an initiative funded by the Minnesota Library Association Foundation in 2004. We had a grant of \$2000 to start our collection of book club kits

that people can check out for their own book groups. The majority of that money was used to purchase the book group bags, since we initially selected titles based on which books we were able to pull from donations. Even now we still create some kits using donated books. But if there is enough local interest in titles that we don't have, we do purchase books as well. Every year we add 10-20 new titles and circulation for these kits have really increased through the years.

The title list is available online: www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/fiction_movies_music/index.html. If you have any suggestions of titles you would like to see in our book group in-a-bag list, just let us know. 📖

As Government Goes Online, Libraries Feel Impact

ALA Office for Research & Statistics, June 2008

Libraries in the U.S. always have had an important role in ensuring free and open access to the world's knowledge, including information documenting the work of our democracy and resources for connecting with government agencies at all levels. In the wake of a number of state, local, and federal government initiatives, policies and laws (including the E-Government Act of 2002), the roles of public libraries as an online access point, a place for assistance learning to navigate computer and Internet resources and a trusted source of information have become more vital in communities nationwide.

U.S. public libraries are on the front lines of connecting people with essential government resources in the wake of both natural and economic disaster. As unemployment has climbed in 2008 and 2009, public library staff members have noted increased use of library computers for filing unemployment applications, as well as for writing resumes and online job searches.

Government services, resources, and information are becoming more digital, and in some cases, digital only. At the same time, millions of Americans lack home computer and Internet access. Increasingly government agencies refer individuals specifically to their local public libraries for assistance and access to the Internet for citizen-government interactions, but often fail to provide support to libraries in meeting this service need.

Our nation's 16,592 public library locations serve more than 97% of Americans in communities large and small. Over the past decade, libraries have reported increased visits—now reaching almost 1.4 billion annually—and use of public computers has climbed to over 330 million each year. Public libraries provide substantial public computer and Internet services. In particular:

- A majority (71.4%) report being the only provider of free public access to the Internet in their communities;
- Nearly all (98.7%) offer public

access to the Internet

- Many (76.4%) offer wireless access
- Public libraries offer a number of training classes and/or as-needed assistance on a range of topics

At the same time, however, public libraries are challenged to meet growing patron needs. Most significantly:

- Nearly 60% report that their Internet connection speeds are inadequate to meet needs some or all of the time
- A vast majority (81.2%) report that they do not have enough computers to meet demand some or all of the time
- Over 90% impose time limits on the use of their public access workstations, and most have time limits of 60 minutes or less.

Taken together, these data suggest that public libraries offer substantial technology services to the communities they serve—but with constraints. 📖