



Enter to Grow in Wisdom

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September Newsletter

Libraries Change Lives



Garrett unleashes the Power of the Card

September is Library Card Month.

Do you have yours?

Check This Out!



Friends Blog gets readers from all over the world

Once upon a time there was a little library

Sales Tax Use Request

Libraries Change Lives



It is amazing what receiving a library card, with your very own name on it, can do. Garrett received a library card recently thanks to collaborative work between the school district and the library.

Garrett's mother Michelle had been read to as a child and loves to read. She tried to read to Garrett but he didn't seem to like being read to, she took him to bookstores, tried picture books, and read around him at home. Then the library card showed up and he wanted to come to the library and try out his new card. Who knew that besides books that there were movies, DVDs and Wii games and a fish tank with Nemo? He left with Batman after our visit.

One of the things he likes best about the library is that when he asks the librarians questions, they treat him and respond to him as an adult not a little kid. He has learned to put books on hold from home and after reading the book, *Hatchet* by

Gary Paulson found that we had a movie *A Cry in the Wild* that was made about the book.

Garrett's mom says that it seems that they either run into someone they know every time they visit or learn something new.

She finds the Children's area and the whole library friendly and safe. Garrett wanders to different areas and comes back with books and questions and she doesn't worry. In fact she says, "He has a blast."

Receiving the library card with his name on it has been the catalyst that has gotten him to read and because of it they are both very happy. 📖




The Friends' Blog and Facebook pages are linking with the outside world!

We highlight events of the Friends, including book sales, Artigras; events in the Library (e.g. RACE, Quilt launch, authors and book clubs); Bookstore Happenings, from displays to special sales; volunteer news (coffees, meetings); and last but not least, book reviews and discussions.

The blog and facebook pages were started to provide another link for our Friends, as well as attract new patrons. While a local audience (Rochester or SE Minnesota) was anticipated, participating in the world wide web has been entertaining and informative. We have 45 fans, with 25 active monthly users (up to 50+); 50 people 'like' the site, an average of 83 visits per week (high of 110). Many of the postings are tweeted by the Library to increase our internet presence. There are 6 Discussion pages, 10 notes, 8 photo albums and a calendar that are available for viewing, in addition to the current newsfeed.

The Blog has 12 active followers, with over 1500 'hits' (80 per week, with 3 pgs per view) to read the reviews or find updates on sales and contests (60 entries concerned book sales, special sales or contests). Amazingly, we have 35 states that have read the blog, with an additional 31 countries (from Russia, Hungary, Australia, to India, France, Canada and beyond!), many of whom return weekly to the site. Unexpectedly, several authors have also corresponded to reviews of their books! We had hoped 'merely' to increase readership in Rochester. Over 100 reviews have been posted, by 6 reviewers; The Book Whisperer has shared many of the 120 books she has read so far this year. Several book discussions and notes are also available on Facebook. We designed a series of reading contests to boost reading and readership. The Bluestocking contest had a brilliant picture of a dog 'listening' to his favourite book and inspired another contest, the dog days of summer. A reader requested a Summer Book list for adults (as the library has two for young readers). We are linking several of the contests to special booksales that are being held in the Book store (beach reads, cook books, crafts and gardening) to attract more Friends/visitors to the store or sales.

We hope that you will join us in the Bookstore, in the Library, at an Event or Online! 

The library continues to grow

Once upon a time there was a little library

by Audrey Betcher

The citizens of Rochester have a long history of library service dating back to the mid-19th century. The Rochester Public Library was formally established in 1895, and three years later the first library was built. The library moved three more times, in 1937, 1972, and 1995. Each new building was in direct response to the need for greater access to library resources from our ever-growing, ever-changing community.

The existing library building was completed in 1995. Some still call it the “new” library despite the fact that it’s already 15 years old! When you think about 1995, it seems like a long time ago: Windows 95 was released, the DVD format was announced, the OJ Simpson trial took place, the Murrah Federal Building was bombed in Oklahoma City, and “Braveheart” won the Oscar for Best Picture.

A lot has changed in the library since 1995, too. Here is a sampling of what is new since that time:

- DVDs (23,000 in the library’s collection)
- Public internet access (27 computer stations on-site)
- Wireless capability throughout the building
- Homework assistance (in the library three nights per week and online)
- Early literacy story time kits
- Little Tykes computers
- Reference by email, instant messaging, and texting
- Downloadable audio, video and music
- Adult and young adult programming
- Book discussion kits

And library use continues to grow. In 1996 (the first full year in this building), 1,133,993 items were circulated. In 2009, that number was 1,647,333, a 45% increase. In the past ten-plus years, our circulation grew faster than the area’s population!

As we look to the future, we know the city and county will continue to expand. Rochester Public Library must do so as well in order to meet the new and continued needs of our residents.

More than 550,000 people walked into the Rochester Public Library last year. Compare that to Mayo Clinic with approximately 350,000 patients in 2009 or the Rochester airport with 63,143 passengers in 2009.

The public library holds an important place in our city. It is an essential component of the highly-regarded quality of life in our community. It provides free access to information while also providing a physical space downtown to learn, meet, and imagine. Rochester Public Library provides great value for its taxpayer support. Let us continue to grow together. 

Sales Tax Use Request

by Audrey Betcher

The library made a presentation to the Rochester sales tax advisory committee on September 1, 2010 and made the case for a two-floor expansion and renovation of the first two floors.

In 1993, it was estimated that our service population in 2015 would be 118,227. In 2010 the library's service population is already at 140,105. In current projections, the library's service population in 2015 is estimated to be 150,271 which is 32,044 more than expected during the building planning process.

It was estimated that the library's collection in 2015 would be 408,000. At the end of 2009, the library's physical collection (not counting electronic books, audios, etc.) stood at 433,360.

The addition of two floors will add an anticipated 30,000 additional square feet and remodeling the existing two floors will allow for more material for all ages (especially children and young adults), increased space for computers and a training lab, and more meeting rooms to allow for more programming for all ages as well as to provide more community gathering space. Based on the anticipated growth of the city and county, this will meet the needs of our community until 2030-2035.

Libraries generally expand in one of two ways: expand an existing structure or build a branch. The Rochester Public Library Board carefully considered both options before recommending the option to expand the current building.

The key factors:

- The ongoing operating costs for a branch, particularly in staffing, are significantly higher compared to expanding the downtown library.
- The Rochester Public Library is easily accessible by car or bus. Accessibility will only improve based on recommendations from the Downtown Rochester Master Plan.

The estimated cost of the project is \$18,200,000. The basis of the estimate is three-fold: a structural study from BKBM to verify the ability to go to four floors, working with a library architect from Meyer, Scherer and Rockcastle, Ltd, and cost estimating from CPMI.

The Rochester Public Library serves the city of Rochester and Olmsted County residents. Because Rochester is an employment hub and the Rochester Public Library has the largest collection and the most services in the region, the library serves regional residents too. Because of the library's proximity to the Mayo Clinic, the library serves visitors from all over the nation and all over the world. 