

# LIBRARY Connections



## Letter from the Library Director: Building Expansion



When the DMC plan was presented and published with no public library pictured, this generated questions, concerns, discussion, and positive feedback about the importance of the library in its current location.

*The DMC planning process left the future of the library up to City Council and the Library Board. Unless otherwise directed, the Library Board and staff will continue planning for expansion at our current location.*

At a recent City Council Committee of the Whole meeting where Library staff gave a 2014 year in review and provided insight to the council on our future challenges, the above phrase was included to indicate the board's position on the library's future expansion.

Some of the rationale:

- The current library was built with the ability to add 1-2 more floors.
- We have an ideal location – walkable downtown location, near public transportation, on the skyway and bike trail, attached parking.

- Libraries are investments in the community, not revenue generators. It is difficult for developers to make money on libraries, so they are seldom projects for developers.
- If a developer wanted the current library location, I would expect the city to want a large enough purchase price to make it worth it for the city to move the library. I doubt there are many developers willing to spend that kind of money.
- The library is out of space and needs to grow now. Our existing downtown location helps the library provide services efficiently and effectively while contributing to the vibrancy of the downtown.

- The Library Board has thoughtfully considered the possibilities of a branch. Taking into consideration cost, community needs, duplication of services, and many other factors, the Library Board is unanimous that expanding the current building is the best option.

We will need support from the city council in order to find a path to funding a library expansion. We will continue to explore options to grow the library in order to continue to be a vital community asset in the heart of downtown.

*Audrey Betcher*

*Rochester Public Library Director*

## One newsletter. Three organizations dedicated to serving you.

You are looking at the results of a discussion a few months ago about the possibility of merging the three newsletters published by the Rochester Public Library, the Friends of the Rochester Public Library and the Rochester Public Library Foundation into one joint newsletter that would

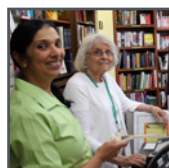
be distributed three times a year. That discussion also dealt with the possibility of separating the calendar from the newsletter, which has also happened. We came to realize that the Friends and the Foundation did two, three or four newsletters each year and

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the Library created twelve. The Library’s newsletter consisted mostly of the calendar of events.

It has been an interesting journey to get to where we are today with this newsletter. It took a fair amount of discussion and collaboration between the three organizations. The great thing about Friends, Foundation and Library is how well they work together and how supportive they are of each other. They each exist to support one another and provide you with outstanding library services.

Next was giving Nicole Henry, the library’s graphic designer, the go-ahead to create. She realized that the library’s front page design had not changed in decades. She came up with the “connections” concept as a way to bring the idea of three newsletters into one. The contents of the front page and design will change issue-by-issue depending on what is happening in the three groups. The logos of the three organizations will be located at the top

to indicate that there will be content from each group. There is an “in this issue” section at the bottom of the front page to help you locate important information. You can find the library website on the bottom of each page, which will allow you to navigate to the other websites and find the Library’s electronic calendar of events.

Whether it is mailed to you or you receive it electronically, we all hope you enjoy the newsletter format. Feel free to send us your feedback. We are here to serve you.



## John’s Last “Libraries Change Lives”: Your Library’s Future

By the time you are reading this I will have retired from the library but I wanted to share some thoughts from my last seven and a half years here.

Stepping back quite a few years, I grew up in Mankato, Minnesota and my library as a kid was a Carnegie Library on Broad Street. Growing up in a small southern Minnesota town in the 1950’s really was a “Leave It To Beaver” time. Some of you will get that statement. I loved that library, it was cool and quiet in the summer and the books!!! The building is a clinic of some sort today. The library was moved and expanded in the 1960’s.



*Carnegie Library in Mankato, MN*

Things change, usually because they have to. In my time here many changes have happened inside the building.

The most notable is probably what was Children’s is now Youth Services. The Teen Area moved which opened up the Reader Services Area and allowed expansion of the music collection and seating.

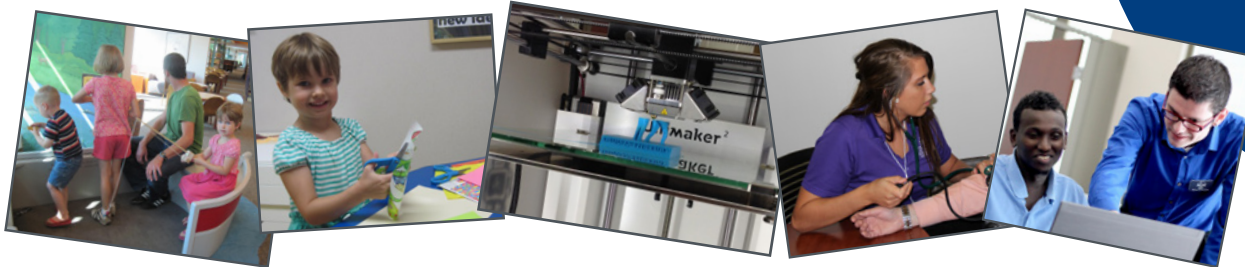
The second floor area has seen much remodeling with the study room going away and the Computer Lab opening in its place along with the Skype Room. The Wellness Corner, the study areas and the Makerspace took out much of the seating to allow the other uses to begin.

Half of the Bookmobile collection shelving, the Friends of the Library work area and a chunk of the maintenance area went away to make Meeting Room C, which was sorely needed both for staff and public use. Now Meeting Room C is

used regularly for Homework Help, Bone Builders, and overflow seating for events that take place in the Auditorium.

Looking back to my library in the 1950’s and my library in 2015, the changes just in the concept of “Library” are mind-bending, but then if you look at the changes that have taken place in the world in the past 60 years, they are mind-blowing. Things change.

Another issue is the fact that some people still think of the libraries that they grew up with and are not necessarily aware of how libraries have changed to meet the changing need of the people they serve. Homework Help areas, Wellness Corners, Makerspace/creativity areas, computer labs, 3D printers, Skype Lounges, Smart Play Spots for kids, art areas for kids, and computers with high speed internet connections were not part of libraries of the past. Most



importantly is the fact that people are using this library as well as libraries throughout the United States as places to come together to meet and talk. Libraries are non-threatening, have no agenda, are very low cost when it comes to rental fees, are open to partnerships and are not faith aligned.

As you can see from the comments on page one about the changes to the library, the next big change “Has to Be” the expansion of the library up two floors. There is no more room inside the library to steal space. We have the ability structurally to add two floors, we have the need.

Now I want to share a concern or three or maybe four. While we have a spectacular location, a skyway connection, connected parking, public transit at our door, a bike path across the street, a location within walking distance to downtown and a very visible, recognizable building, libraries have never been designed to

make money. I believe that libraries are an investment in a community by the community, but they are not a profit center and cannot generate the funds for the needed expansion.

Bonding is, in my mind at least, the only viable funding option available to fund the needed expansion.

Sales tax is not an option as it is tied up for the foreseeable future. The sales tax was the funding source used to build this library, and the library was reduced in size by an entire floor because there was not enough money.

How is that possible you might ask? A number to build the building was agreed upon in 1990 and the citizens of Rochester agreed to a 1% sales tax to pay for it, but the state legislature did not approve the sales tax until 1992 and then at only a ½%. Unfortunately not only did the amount of available money go down but the cost of materials went up.

If you are reading this, you believe in the need for a strong library for you, your family, children, grandchildren and our entire community in general. You need to spread the word. Unfortunately, library staff are considered somewhat biased when it comes to libraries and their expansion. Elected officials need to hear from constituents, and they need to hear it often. Please understand that they hear from many, many, people on many, many, issues. Your City Council and County Board members are good people that want to do good, but they need to feel that they have community support. I read something a long time ago that I have never forgotten. “A lobbyist’s job is to make it politically acceptable for an elected official to be able to vote the way you want them to.”

Make no mistake, if you want to have an expanded library for yourself, your family and your community, you will need to become library lobbyists.

I have enjoyed my time here, thanks for the memories.

*John Hunziker*

*Rochester Public Library  
Communications Director, Retired*



## Good Luck on Your Next Adventure!

John Hunziker retired from the Library on July 31st after 7 and a half years as the Communications Manager. He brought a thorough understanding of the community and a drive to get things

done to everything he worked on. We are very lucky in that he has agreed to help us from time to time on future library initiatives. Thank you, John!



## Letter from Presidents of the Friends

We are very excited about this new initiative where The Library, Foundation and Friends Of The Library are joining together to create ONE newsletter. We are confident that this will allow us to integrate more closely with both the Library and Foundation activities. Moreover this will offer us an opportunity to communicate our activities to many more library users than before.

The Friends have had a productive year so far.



Our annual meeting that was held on January 26 was very well attended. Our speaker was Leann Lepa, Senior Media Consultant at the Rochester Post Bulletin.

### Get Ready for our Autumn Book Sale!

Rochester Public Library Auditorium

Thursday, October 1 • 5-7PM  
*(Friends' Preview Night)*

Friday, October 2 and Saturday, October 3 • 9:30-5PM

Sunday, October 4 • 1:30-4PM

Hardcover books are only \$2, paperback books are only \$1, and children & non-print items (CDs, VHS tapes, audio tapes) are only 50 cents

*The Friends of the Library help support the library by raising money through book sales. The money raised helps the Rochester Public Library expand their collections and to finance special programs.*

Our WinterFest book sale in February netted unprecedented proceeds of \$5850 for the library. During the preview sale for Friends we made nine new friends and also had twelve memberships.



Friends' Bookstore manager Mary Barrett handed over a check for \$48,000 to David Freedman, President of the Library Board, during the board meeting on February 18.

Our volunteers also helped out at the Scan Day on March 14 and we also provided an excellent lunch for all the scanners and volunteers.

On April 11 we hosted the annual Staff Breakfast which was enthusiastically welcomed by the library staff.



We are looking forward to our Rochester Authors celebration on November 21st of this year. We hope to make it as successful as last year with equally interesting authors and speakers.

We are always looking for more volunteer participation and support in all our ventures, especially our auditorium sales during Rochesterfest in the summer, our fall sale in October and our Gift Quality Book Sale and Bake Sale in December.

Both of us want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to not only the Board but also all our members, as well as the Library staff for all their help and support.

*Phyllis Hambright and  
Lathika S. Nair*

*Friends of the Rochester Public Library  
Presidents*

### Bookstore News

We'd like to say "Thank You" to Mary Barrett, our long-time Friends' Bookstore Manager. She has resigned her position as Manager



but will continue to volunteer in the Bookstore. Under Mary's direction, the Friends' Bookstore has had many updates including alphabetizing the books by authors, painting, signage, and having a credit/debit card reader installed, just to name a few. With Mary's diligence, the Friends' Bookstore has been able to donate \$50,000 a year to the library.

We welcome Karen Nath, Bessie Cople, and Pat Stephenson as the new Co-Managers. They are all eager to meet the challenges of this job with the help and support of their fellow volunteers.

# Library Volunteers Make an Impact

Volunteers strengthen the library ties to our community and make a greater impact than many of us may realize. In addition to helping accomplish numerous tasks and assisting with special projects, library volunteers are assisting patrons, raising funds, maintaining the material collection, and touching lives.

The mission of the Rochester Public Library is to strengthen community and enrich lives by sparking imagination, creativity, engagement, and learning. Volunteers who assist with programs provided through the MakerSpace and other special events held at the library are enriching lives and engaging the community.

Homework Assistance volunteers are impacting students' lives as they help them with daily homework assignments. Last year the Wellness Corner touched the lives of 1,433 people through health screenings, tax help, MNSure enrollment help, homeless outreach and many classes in nutrition and exercise. The Rochester Reading Champion volunteers spread the joy of reading by working one on one with at-risk struggling readers (children and/or adults) in the community. Every month homebound and outreach volunteers select and deliver library materials to patrons confined to their home or to residents of long-term care facilities, senior apartments and residences of younger adults with disabilities. These volunteers are making a real difference in the lives of people.

Proceeds from The Friends of the Library Bookstore which is managed and staffed by volunteers go to the Rochester Public Library. Bookstore customers can browse in an inviting retail shop for quality used books at reasonable prices. All of the donated books are sorted by volunteers who first review items for use in the library's collection. Last year \$145,486 worth of donated materials were pulled into the library's collection. Many volunteers assist with the book sales that are held throughout the year. The book sales and bookstore raise funds for the

library and provide a great way for our community to recycle quality used books. The bookstore also shares its donations with many other local libraries and organizations in our community such as Channel One, schools, nursing homes, the jail and the prison.

Library volunteers are also making an impact by assisting patrons and maintaining the material collection. Internet volunteers aid patrons in using the library's internet workstations, reservation software, and the internet print stations. The library's materials are maintained by Adopt-A-Shelf volunteers who assist by keeping a selected area of the collection clean and in correct order.

There are many ways that volunteers strengthen the library ties to our community and make an impact in people's lives. We truly appreciate all of the volunteers who help to make the library a great place for everyone.

*Marilyn Campbell*

*Rochester Public Library  
Volunteer Coordinator*



## Visit the Friends' Bookstore

The Friends' Bookstore is located on the main floor of the Rochester Public Library with the entrance in the Library lobby. Quality used books at reasonable prices are our specialty.

In addition to books, gift items such as t-shirts, gift certificates, music CDs, and signed books are also available.

The Bookstore is operated by the Friends of the Rochester Public Library as a non-profit organization with all proceeds going to the Rochester Public Library.

## How to Become a Volunteer

Volunteers assist, support and enhance the work of the Rochester Public Library. Library volunteer positions are ideal for anyone interested in people, books, libraries and the community. Qualification requirements vary; however all positions require good organization and communication skills. For more information about the Friends of the Rochester Public Library and how you can volunteer, call Marilyn Campbell at 507.328.2341 or visit [www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/my-rpl/friends-of-the-library](http://www.rochesterpubliclibrary.org/my-rpl/friends-of-the-library)



## Letter from the Foundation Executive Director



An engine is made up of many moving parts; such are the workings of the Rochester Public Library. Many people come together to run the Library in the spaces you see and in what happens behind the scenes. Staff and volunteers work hard to ensure that you, the community, have a safe, clean, high quality environment in which to spend your time. We value your time, and therefore we make sure the Library is set up to meet your needs and that staff are available to answer your questions.

The Library Foundation Board members are the drivers of this machine. They navigate the path we will go along with the Library Board. They research the roads and map out the plan. They count on you to help them put the gas in the tank.

Donors are a key part to the Library machine. Your donations keep the wheels greased and the pistons moving. Your donations keep

the finish shiny and the gas in the tank. Tax dollars keep the machine together, but your donations keep us moving at a higher gear.

Whether you love the Bookmobile or the machine that is the Rochester Public Library, we THANK YOU! You the donor, you the patron, you the volunteer, you the board member, you are the reason the Library is here in downtown Rochester. We serve you, but you keep us humming along.

*Vicki Allen*

Rochester Public Library Foundation  
Executive Director  
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[www.rochesterpubliclibraryfoundation.org](http://www.rochesterpubliclibraryfoundation.org)

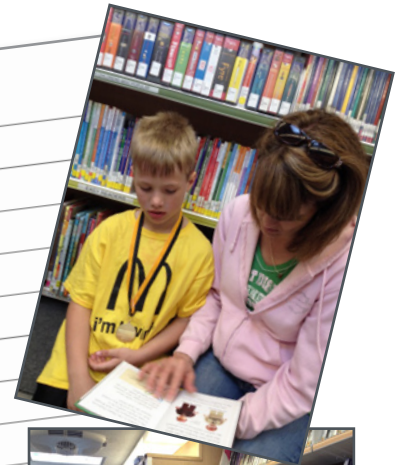
## Enjoying the Bookmobile in Byron, MN

My family and I really enjoy having the Bookmobile stop in Byron. We rarely miss a week to stop in! The kids love browsing through the books and movies. There is a nice selection and we often leave with a bag full of books. We use the reserve option on the library website to get the books that aren't carried. It is so convenient to have it come to your neighborhood and definitely increases the amount of time my family reads. Jackson & Cassie are busy going through the books they checked out at the book mobile and look forward to going back for more!

I personally am an avid reader, but have a particular style of book I like. Once I find an author or book I really like, I will read ALL their books. Then I'm looking for new suggestions. It's nice that the Rochester Public Library has special bookmarks with suggested authors and books similar to what I currently enjoy. This has helped me find many new options!

I could write my own book on how much we love the Bookmobile and the Rochester Public Library!

Sincerely,  
*Kristine Ihrke (and Jackson & Cassie)*





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## Upcoming Events

### 4th Annual Celebration of Rochester-Area Authors

Mark your calendars now! The 4th Annual Celebration of Rochester-Area Authors will be November 21st in the RPL Auditorium. This annual event is an opportunity to spotlight area authors and give library patrons an opportunity to meet local talent. If you know a local author you'd like to see included in this year's event, contact Cathie Armstrong at [c.h.armstrong@me.com](mailto:c.h.armstrong@me.com). Look for more information on this event coming soon!



ROCHESTER  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
FOUNDATION

TO THE MAX  
**give** **DAY**   
NOV 12, 2015

November 12th, 2015 is the one-day charity  
marathon hosted by GiveMN.org

Double your donation on 11/12/15  
[rochesterpubliclibraryfoundation.org/donate](http://rochesterpubliclibraryfoundation.org/donate)

**give**  
**MN**.org

THE PLACE  
WHERE  
GIVING  
**SOARS**



WIT  
*Wisdom*  
& WINE

*Save the Date*  
SATURDAY  
JANUARY 16, 2016