



Foundation

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

SUMMER 2020

A newsletter from
Madison Public
Library Foundation

IN THIS ISSUE

**Adapting
to a World
with COVID-19**

**Book Festival
Hosts Virtual
Programs**

**Lunch for
Libraries
Shifts Online**

**Judy Olson
Remembered**

Q&A: COVID-19's Effects on Library and Foundation

Much has changed with Madison Public Library and Madison Public Library Foundation in the wake of COVID-19. Here are some quick answers to questions you may have about operations as of early June. You can get the most current information by visiting mplfoundation.org and madisonpubliclibrary.org.

How do I get in touch with foundation staff? Please email info@mplfoundation.org or call 608.266.6318. Foundation staff are working from home and checking messages regularly.

Was Lunch for Libraries rescheduled? Yes, it was moved to June 18 and will be an online program with Mark Bittman. Read more about it on the Events & Highlights page of this newsletter.

Are the libraries still closed? Yes, the libraries have been closed to the public since March 17 but are beginning to offer services outside their buildings, like curbside pickup and returns. Buildings will remain closed until they can safely reopen, and the library is planning for that opening in consultation with Public Health Madison & Dane County.



The foundation secured donated bags from Kwik Trip to hold curbside pickup items.



A Pinney Library staff member places materials reserved for curbside pickup into a patron's car.

What kinds of services are available to me at home? Library @ Home is a web page that's easy to find on madisonpubliclibrary.org. It includes links to eBooks, audiobooks, online databases, newspapers, magazines, language apps, an ancestry research program and more.

The library offers centralized telephone service daily from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. to answer your questions and to help community members obtain free or low-cost internet access. Library staff can help with questions about your library card, online collection access, eBooks and downloadable audio-books, social services referrals, reference, homework and more. Staff can also place holds on library materials for you. Call 608.315.5151.

The library also offers curbside service. Simply call the reference line or place holds online via LINKcat, and call the library from which you're checking out items to schedule a pickup time.

I've been holding on to a stack of materials since March. Can I return them? Yes! The library is offering 24/7 book return service at Central Library's Fairchild Street entrance and curbside

pickup returns at all other libraries from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Friday and noon-5 p.m. Saturday. Library materials are quarantined for 72 hours so will not be checked in right away. Due dates for all materials have been extended to August 1.

How are you keeping staff safe? Staff who are working in the libraries are provided with masks and are instructed to follow social distancing procedures. Foundation staff are working from their homes.

When will the libraries reopen? Using the new Forward Dane plan as a guide, the library is continuing to plan and prepare our library buildings for when we will be able to reopen our doors. Your safety and that of our staff remains our top priority. To maintain a level of safety, we will first focus on providing computer and Wi-Fi access once we are able to open our buildings in a limited capacity. We will be modifying our spaces to accommodate for social distancing, and each of our libraries will vary as to how many patrons can be scheduled to use our public workstations. When delivery services are restored, we will be able to provide materials from other libraries through that service.

Foundation Grants Library \$154,000+ for Digital Resources

The foundation normally kicks off its annual fund campaign in April, but due to the quickly changing nature of COVID-19 and Madison Public Library locations being forced to close suddenly, the foundation decided to transition this campaign to support digital resources and virtual programs.

The foundation gave the library a \$50,000 grant for the immediate purchase of eBooks. A group of loyal donors — Scooter Software, David Hall & Marjorie Devereaux, Lau & Bea Christensen, Friends

of Sequoya Library, and foundation board members past and present — then committed a \$45,000 combined matching gift, which encouraged more than \$59,000 in gifts throughout March and April. The campaign completed with Library Giving Day on April 23.

The library used the funds to purchase hundreds of eBooks and audiobooks, available on OverDrive. Usage is at an all-time high, and is up nearly 50 percent in the last several months. So many materials were added that wait times actually went down

nearly 10 percent. Other funds were used to buy newspaper, magazine and database subscriptions, including access to *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*. *Consumer Reports* usage is up 75 percent in recent months, and Ancestry Library usage is up 145 percent.

The library has also been offering online storytimes and other programs each week.

Thank you to all who donated for helping the library facilitate learning, engagement and entertainment for our community!

IN REMEMBRANCE

Judy Olson, Longtime Foundation President

Judith "Judy" Plaenert Olson, the longest-serving President of Madison Public Library Foundation and a Madison Common Council member for 10 years, died in November following a long battle with Parkinsonism. Olson helped start the foundation in 1993 and was President for 14 years, including the years when Alicia Ashman and Sequoya libraries were built.

"I have very fond memories of Judy and her steadfast commitment to both the library and, in particular, the library foundation," former foundation board President Tripp Widder said. "I remember many a 'board' meeting at the Concourse Hotel with all four board members present: Judy, myself, Phil Sullivan and Barb Dimick. The Treasurer's 'Report' consisted of going through the checkbook Judy carried in her purse — and there often wasn't much to report. It was a shoestring operation, but Judy was the keeper of the flame."

Widder said Olson recruited many board members and pioneered the model of the foundation partnering with the City of Madison on capital projects, beginning with the Alicia Ashman Library. This model makes projects less challenging for the city budget, knowing that 20 to 30 percent of the cost will be raised privately by the foundation.

"Judy had a clear vision of what Madison Public Library Foundation could become and, as importantly, unwavering commitment and undaunted stamina to see that vision realized," Widder said. "She loved Madison Public Library, and I know was very proud of what Madison

Public Library Foundation has become. It would not have happened without her."

According to Olson's husband, Jim, she was a voracious reader and an advocate for public libraries. Upon her retirement from the foundation, an endowment fund was created in her name — the Judy P. Olson Book Club Kit Fund — to assist in the purchase of books for book clubs. Dozens of family members and friends gave to the fund in memory of Olson in the weeks after her death.

"Judy was an only child of a military family that frequently moved," Jim said. "However, she was never lonely, since early on, she found a special friend in books. Shortly after we were married, we moved to Augusta, Ga., while I was in the military service. Judy brought with her and read all seven volumes of *Remembrances of Things Past* by Marcel Proust. She passed on her love for reading to our three daughters, who loved to have Judy read to them. *The Song of Hiawatha*, *Treasure Island* and *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* were three of their favorites."



Judy Olson attended many foundation fundraisers including Lunch for Libraries, where she is pictured here.

Marilyn Brown, Volunteer

Longtime Madison Public Library and Madison Public Library Foundation volunteer Marilyn Brown died on March 24.

Brown lived a full life despite challenges from De Georges Syndrome. She was an advocate for many organizations with disabilities. She had many jobs in her 71 years of life, including positions with Options and Goodwill Industries. She regularly volunteered at UW Hospital and many other places.

At the foundation, Brown assisted staff with large mailing projects.

"Marilyn was one of our most steadfast volunteers for years and years," said foundation Donor Relations Manager Dayna Long. "Her volunteerism predates all of our current staff. I was always glad to see her, and

I know our other volunteers felt the same. What a generous person she was — what she gave in time and assistance is immeasurable."

Carol Sawyer, who retired from Madison Public Library, said Brown volunteered alongside her at the library for more than 20 years — and continued even after Sawyer retired from her administrative position and returned as a volunteer herself.

"I was saddened to read of Marilyn's passing," Sawyer said. "She was such a faithful volunteer and always so cheerful ... always ready to jump in and help. She will be missed."



Marilyn Brown

Bubbler, City Launch Look Forward Campaign

Madison Public Library's Bubbler and the City of Madison have teamed up to launch #LookForwardMadison. This arts-fueled social media campaign highlights how community members are supporting each other during the pandemic with an eye toward positivity, inclusion and resilience, and how we all can look forward to a time when we can be together.

A Madison Public Library Foundation grant makes this project possible. Collaborators include Madison Arts Commission and Art & Sons. Visit lookforwardmadison.org to share a story or read others.



Book Festival Adopts Online Format

Since early April, the Wisconsin Book Festival has been presenting regular author programs online via Crowdcast. These live-stream events are archived so they can be watched at your convenience.

The festival also partners with other book festivals on occasion to bring even more author talks to our community.

Upcoming events include:

- *Quichotte* by best-selling author **Salman Rushdie**, June 17, 7 p.m. This event is presented in partnership with the Believer Festival, Literary Arts and The Loft’s WordPlay.
- *Our Time Is Now* by national leader and best-selling author **Stacey Abrams**, June 18, 7 p.m. Abrams will appear in conversation with Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Ben Wikler. This event is the 2020 Cheryl Rosen Weston Memorial Lecture. Free copies of *Our Time Is Now* will be mailed to the first 600 attendees.
- *The Lightness* by **Emily Temple**, June 22, 7 p.m. Temple will appear in conversation with Madison author Chloe Benjamin.



Stacey Abrams

- *The Second Home* by Madison novelist **Christina Clancy**, June 29, 7 p.m.
- National Book Award for Nonfiction winner *The Yellow House* by **Sarah M. Broom**, July 14, 7 p.m. Broom will appear live in conversation with Lisa Lucas, Executive Director of the National Book Foundation.
- *In Praise of Walking* by experimental brain research professor Shane O’Mara and *The Nature Fix* by *Outside* magazine Contributing Editor **Florence Williams**, July 23, 7 p.m.
- *Demagogue: The Life and Long Shadow of Senator Joe McCarthy* by nonfiction author and journalist **Larry Tye**, July 29, 6 p.m. This event is presented in partnership with the Madison Institute.



Sarah Broom



Become a Member

Consider purchasing a festival membership for yourself or as a gift for a loved one to help us continue to offer free, year-round events online!

For a gift of \$100 or more, you’ll receive a discount when purchasing featured festival books on the day of the event (available through A Room of One’s Own), plus an invitation to an exclusive live-stream launch event in the fall. To purchase, visit wisconsinbookfestival.org/give.

All programs are free, but registration on Crowdcast is required in advance. Visit the schedule at wisconsinbookfestival.org, where you’ll find a Crowdcast registration link for each event.

First Rosemary Lee Civic Engagement Internship Begins

Madison Public Library’s first Rosemary Lee Civic Engagement Internship participant recently began working under the supervision of Library Planner Kevin Englebert.

Hannah Stewart, a second-year graduate student, is pursuing a joint degree in public affairs and urban and regional planning at UW-Madison. Stewart said that throughout her studies, her primary interest has been finding ways to leverage her policy skills and love for the city in order to be an active, positive influence on her community.

Stewart is tasked with researching and exploring ways to offer remote access to and increase engagement in city government meetings, as well as city services, at the library’s nine locations. She will also help synthesize library data and construct a data visualization platform for the library.

Lee became an active and outspoken citizen in her retirement, attending Madison Common Council and other government meetings. Following a long career in the insurance industry and later at UW-Madison, she served on several city committees and volunteered at numerous nonprofits.

Her loyal attendance of council meetings led former Mayor Dave Cieslewicz to dub her the “21st Alder,” and Madison Mayor Paul Soglin declared Nov. 13, 2015 — her 78th birthday — “Rosemary Lee Day in Madison,” according to a Wisconsin State Journal article published after her death in December 2015.

“She was always very proud of it,” District 4 Ald. Mike Verveer told the State Journal of Lee’s nickname at that time. Verveer became close friends with Lee beginning in the mid-1990s and often shared dinner

with her at downtown restaurants after Common Council meetings.

When Lee’s sister, Ellen W. Lee, spoke with Verveer about making a memorial gift for Rosemary, he steered her toward the library.

“I wanted to do some kind of ongoing thing for the City of Madison as a memorial to Rosemary because she loved the town, and she loved young people,” Ellen said.

The library was very important to Rosemary, Ellen said. She lived downtown and spent a lot of time there doing research for her various meetings. “She would always do her homework,” said Ellen, who lives in Indianapolis, Ind.

Ellen met with foundation Executive Director Jenni Jeffress and Library Director Greg Mickells in 2018 to discuss the internship. When Mickells mentioned the term “civic engagement,” that “hit the nail on the head for me because that’s what Rosemary’s work was about.”

“She was very modest about everything she accomplished,” Ellen said. “I knew she loved city government and to not call her on a Tuesday night.”

Ellen said she hopes future citizens will learn through the Civic Engagement Internship program “what Rosemary discovered for herself: the valuable and satisfying role that caring citizens play in a healthy society.”



Rosemary Lee



Hannah Stewart

#MPLHelpingHands Project Tells Staff Stories Amid Pandemic

When Wisconsin’s Safer at Home order went into effect, all nine Madison Public Library locations were forced to close. During this time, countless library staff at all levels took on a variety of tasks outside their traditional roles in order to serve the Madison community in the most impactful way. Much of this flexibility happened behind the scenes, so in an effort to capture these stories, the Bubbler partnered with a handful of illustrators and posted weekly on the library’s social media with the hashtag #MPLHelpingHands.



Taylor Rushing



Araceli Zuyiga



Brett Vosen



T.L. Luke

Four of these stories are below; you can find many more at madisonbubbler.org/mplhelpinghands. The project is funded with a Madison Public Library Foundation grant that allowed the Bubbler to pay artists, many of whom have lost income due to COVID-19.

Absentee Ballots

While the libraries have been closed, many of the hourly staff have assisted other city departments. Acacia can usually be found working as a Page at the Monroe Street Library, but in March and April, she used her experience in sorting materials to help process several hundred absentee ballots per day at the City of Madison Clerk’s Office. She’s grateful for the kindness and willingness to help that she’s experienced from the elections staff. What does she enjoy most about the work? “It has been nice to feel helpful during these uncertain times.” Thank you to Taylor Rushing for illustrating this story.

Postcard Exchange

The library’s Internal Engagement team has created a number of great ways for staff to stay connected as a library family. Aside from Netflix party movie nights and weekly zoom calls, they also proposed something a little more tangible. Staff are doing a postcard exchange, sending and receiving postcards each week. Every Monday, participants are emailed three names to send postcards to, and the names are rotated so everyone gets mail from someone new each week. It’s been a great way to get to know people who normally would be spread out across the library’s nine locations! When the amazing team at Anthology heard about the postcard exchange while working alongside library employees at the City Of Madison Clerk’s Office, they donated postcards to the effort. Thank you to T.L. Luke for the visual design (above).

Reading Materials for the Homeless

Madison Public Library partnered with local social service agencies to bring reading materials to individuals experiencing homelessness. To date, more than 200 high-risk individuals, including older adults and those with underlying medical conditions, have been moved to area motels. We hope these donations from community members and the Friends of Madison Public Library will bring some joy, comfort, and entertainment to our friends in motels. Thanks to Araceli Zuyiga for her artwork.

Town Hall Virtual Meetings

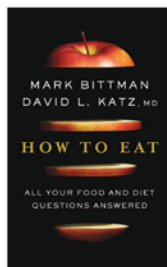
Library Assistant Carrie Gostomski has a unique position within the MPL family. She’s a Multisite, which means she goes to different library locations to help out where needed. This position has given Carrie a unique perspective on how all the library’s moving parts work together. A week or so after the Safer at Home order happened, she was approached by Library Director Greg Mickells to help facilitate a Town Hall.

Carrie & Greg hoped having a time where all staff could be together and get the same information at the same time would be really powerful for staff morale. Traditionally, the whole staff only comes together once a year for Staff Day. This meeting gave everyone the opportunity to see their peers from not only their own location or department, but stretching across all sites and divisions. Now we have the opportunity to do this once a week during an especially isolating and uncertain period of our lives. On average, about 150 employees participate in the Town Hall Meetings. “I could see people physically responding during the meeting (head nodding, smiling, laughing, showing off pets and babies),” Gostomski said. “I’m hoping they felt more in control of their work and personal lives afterward.” Thank you to Brett Vosen for his illustration.

EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Lunch for Libraries Online June 18

Our ninth annual Lunch for Libraries fundraiser has a new live-stream format! Join us on June 18 as respected cooking authority Mark Bittman discusses his latest book, *How to Eat: All Your Food and Diet Questions Answered*, co-written by True Health Initiative founder Dr. David L. Katz, M.D.



Bittman will speak in conversation with NPR's *To the Best of Our Knowledge* Producer Shannon Henry Kleiber. Gain insights on how to make healthier eating choices, improve your nutrition, and discern fact from fiction as it relates to food.

Individual tickets are \$75 each, which includes virtual event access and a mailed hardcover copy of *How to Eat*; or \$125 each for the virtual event, the hardcover book and a Wisconsin Book Festival annual membership. Guests will receive an email containing a link to the live-stream event on Crowdcast one week beforehand. A virtual table of eight is also available for purchase, so you can invite your friends and family to join you! Buy tickets at mplfoundation.org.

Mark Bittman is the author of 20 books. For more than two decades, Bittman's work appeared in *The New York Times*, for whom he wrote a column called "The Minimalist." He later became the lead food writer with the *Times Sunday Magazine* and America's first food-focused op-ed columnist. Currently, Bittman is a faculty member of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health and the editor of *Heated*, a food website that's part of the *Medium* brand.

Lunch for Libraries proceeds will support free, year-round Wisconsin Book Festival programs and Madison Public Library services.

New Summer Reading Program: We Read

Madison Public Library has transformed its summer reading program into a safe, inclusive, community-wide celebration.

We Read invites people of all ages to participate, no matter what kind of reading they're doing. There's no registration required, no right or wrong way to read, and no pressures or expectations. To take part, simply find something you love to read, then share it with a friend and on social media using the hashtag #WeReadMadison. We're excited to hear about all the books, poetry and other materials you find joy in reading, and hope they'll inspire others to discover new items.



Summer Reading Schedule

Every two weeks throughout the summer, we'll feature a new way that We Read:

June 3-14

We Read Together/Leemos juntos

June 15-28

We Read Outside/Leemos afuera

June 29-July 12

We Read at Bedtime/Leemos antes de dormir

July 13-26

We Read With our Ears/Leemos escuchando

July 27-August 9

We Read with an Animal/Leemos con animales

August 10-23

We Read in a Comfy Spot/Leemos en un lugar comodo

Learn more: madisonpubliclibrary.org/weread



Alicia Ashman Library was remodeled in May.

Remodeled Alicia Ashman Library Begins Curbside Service

Alicia Ashman Library began offering curbside pickup service this month following a closure for renovations.

The library's curbside service and returns hours are 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday through Friday and noon-5 p.m. Saturday.

Alicia Ashman Library's remodeling, which was planned before libraries closed due to COVID-19 on March 17, includes:

- new seating and furniture

- a new teen area
- relocation of the print/copy center
- several repainted areas
- a self-service holds area with self-check machines
- newly installed Wi-Fi and other wiring that will allow for future technology upgrades

The renovations were funded in part with private funds from the Friends of Alicia Ashman Library and Madison Public Library Foundation endowment dollars.



201 W. Mifflin Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
608.266.6318
mplfoundation.org
info@mplfoundation.org

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Alicia Ashman 733 N. High Point Rd.
Hawthorne 2707 E. Washington Ave.
Lakeview 2845 N. Sherman Ave.
Meadowridge 5726 Raymond Rd.
Monroe Street 1705 Monroe St.

Pinney 516 Cottage Grove Rd.
Sequoia 4340 Tokay Blvd.
Goodman South 2222 S. Park St.
Central 201 W. Mifflin St.

Executive Director Jennifer Jeffress | **Newsletter Editor** Amy Mertz
Contributing Writer Elizabeth Boyd | **Newsletter Design** Georgia Rucker