



Foundation

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

FALL 2020

A newsletter from
Madison Public
Library Foundation

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Book Festival Unveils Fall Schedule

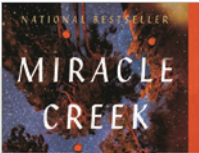

The Wisconsin Book Festival will present a wide variety of virtual author programs this fall, with the season’s signature celebration taking place **Thursday–Saturday, October 15–17**.

The fall celebration will feature 16 events over three days. The lineup includes:

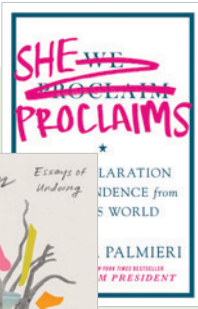
Seven-time NAACP Image Award winner **Nikki Giovanni**, the first recipient of the Rosa Parks Woman of Courage Award, for *Make Me Rain* (October 15, 7 p.m.)




Angie Kim, Edgar Award winner for Best First Novel, and Booker Prize nominee **Kiley Reid** for their respective books *Miracle Creek* and *Such a Fun Age* (October 15, 8:30 p.m.)

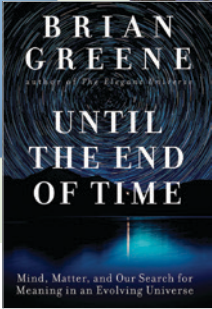
Jennifer Palmieri, former White House Communications Director for President Barack Obama, for *She Proclaims* (October 17, 11:30 a.m.)





Pulitzer Prize finalist and Hurston/Wright Legacy Award winner **Laila Lalami** for *Conditional Citizens* (October 17, 1 p.m.)




Paola Ramos, journalist and former deputy director of Hispanic media for the 2016 Hillary Clinton campaign, for *Finding Latinx* (October 17, 2:30 p.m.)



Brian Greene, Director of Columbia University’s Center for Theoretical Physics, and Guggenheim Fellow **Janna Levin** for their books *Until the End of Time* and *Black Hole Survival Guide* (October 17, 7 p.m.)

Celebrated conservationist **Terry Tempest Williams** for *Erosion* (October 17, 8:30 p.m.)



When the festival was forced to cancel in-person author programs due to COVID-19 last spring, it shifted all programming online. Since then, the festival has hosted more than 20 live-streamed events, all of which are recorded and archived so they can be conveniently watched anytime at crowdcast.io/wisconsinbookfestival.

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- In addition to the fall celebration, the Wisconsin Book Festival offers author events throughout the year. The new festival season begins in mid-September, with events running through December. These include:
- Yaa Gyasi**, author of *Homegoing*, for her new novel, *Transcendent Kingdom* (September 17)
 - Paul Begala**, political consultant and commentator, for *You’re Fired* (September 21)
 - Dick Wagner**, scholar and activist, for *Coming Out, Moving Forward* (September 23)
 - Katie Hill**, former U.S. Representative, for *She Will Rise* (October 1)
 - Claudia Rankine**, acclaimed poet and playwright, for *Just Us* (November 16)
 - Danielle Evans**, former UW-Madison professor, for *The Office of Historical Corrections* (December 2)
 - Jane Smiley**, Pulitzer Prize Winner, for *Perestroika in Paris* (December 3)

The Wisconsin Book Festival is presented by Madison Public Library in partnership with Madison Public Library Foundation. For program details and the full schedule, go to wisconsinbookfestival.org. Also, be sure to follow the festival on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for bonus content.

Libraries Are More Essential Than Ever

A Message from Foundation Board President Susie Younkle



Younkle

In the nearly six months since the pandemic began, my family has sorely missed visiting Madison Public Library. We’re all big readers, especially our kids, and are frequent patrons at Sequoya and Monroe Street. Back in March, when the libraries had to close, we never thought they’d still be shut down as we head into fall and a new school year.

While we look forward to the day that we can return to in-person library services, we’re feeling extremely thankful for the library staff’s truly amazing efforts. These hardworking individuals have swiftly and adeptly risen to the many challenges presented by COVID-19. They’ve collaborated from their homes to adapt programs and services, expand the digital collection, and create a virtual library card option. They’ve demonstrated innovation through things like Bubbler in Your Bubble projects to create at home, live-stream storytimes, and the popular “CSA-style” library requests where a librarian hand-selects materials for you based on your interests. And they’ve developed safe practices so patrons can borrow and return materials. I’m a weekly user of curbside service — if you haven’t tried it yet, please give it a go! We’ve also taken advantage of the digital resources via the Library @ Home page on madisonpubliclibrary.org, and we’re enjoying Chef Lily’s delicious new virtual kids cooking series.

With your gifts, Madison Public Library Foundation has been able to fund many of these recent library efforts. Our digital collections drive in the spring raised \$105,000 for eBooks, online newspapers and magazines, databases, language learning apps and more. Corporate donors, including Kwik Trip and Woodman’s Food Markets, contributed bags for curbside service materials. Numerous donors gave to our annual fund this summer to support everything from local artists’ illustration projects to library employee training.

The library team must now prioritize community needs as its budget is threatened due to a projected city shortfall. We won’t know the fallout until November, when the Common Council and mayor will approve the budget. But the alarm has sounded on possible cuts to vacant positions and operations. Your support will become more important than ever throughout the next year. Our board is having frequent conversations

about how we can be a resource for the library in these difficult times — not only financially, but also through advocacy and other means.

On another note, the library had the opportunity to show leadership, courage and integrity early this summer as protests and rallies in the wake of the death of George Floyd put a spotlight on the needs and challenges of our communities of color. Madison Public Library is unwavering in its commitment to equity. Its most recent actions related to equity include eliminating fines, which disproportionately affect low-income patrons and those of color; and forming a Racial Equity Change Team, among other implemented and planned initiatives. (See stories about the library going fine free and the Racial Equity Change Team in this newsletter.)

At the foundation, we’re proud to be making our own changes to achieve greater equity and inclusion — such as recruiting a diverse board, staff and volunteer pool; increasing racial equity professional development opportunities for the board and staff; and ensuring that we fund more library efforts that reach the Black community and communities of color.

Before, during and after this pandemic, libraries have proven and will prove to be more necessary than ever. Just like so many other workers in our community, library workers are on the front lines, helping patrons stay connected and providing free, equitable access to information. In the coming months, library staff will be working to aid families with kids as they go back to school. We’re honored to be in the position to support these efforts and hope you’ll consider joining us by making a gift, purchasing an Ex Libris box this fall, or finding your own way to be an advocate for your library.



Kids leave a Dream Bus stop with free books distributed through the We Read/Leemos summer reading program.

CARES Act Provisions Enable Smart Giving

The CARES Act passed by Congress this spring provides several tax breaks for charitable giving.

Most taxpayers take a standard deduction each year, without the ability to deduct charitable contributions. But this year, they will receive a \$300 above-the-line deduction. Those who itemize will also qualify for this deduction, but with temporarily suspended limits on charitable contributions, they may now deduct charitable contributions up to 100 percent of their adjusted gross income (AGI). For those who had planned to make a large charitable gift in 2020, bunching several years’ worth of donations to your favorite charities into this year will likely reap a greater tax benefit than in prior years.

The CARES Act eliminated the requirement that those over age 70½ take the required minimum distribution (RMD) in 2020; however, it may still be worthwhile to use the qualified charitable deduction (QCD) for charitable gifts. Although there is no deduction for making a charitable

contribution using the QCD, the IRA distribution used to make the contribution is not subject to taxes.

Planning to make a Roth conversion this year? Making a larger donation could offset all or most of the taxes created by the conversion.

Learn more about the CARES Act’s impact on charitable giving at mplfoundation.org/news. To make a gift to Madison Public Library Foundation, use the envelope provided in your newsletter or go to mplfoundation.org/donate.



Library Services Adapt as Public Health Guidelines Change

As local public health guidelines continue to restrict Madison Public Library operations, library staff are hard at work behind the scenes, preparing to respond once changes occur. While curbside service and returns, personal computer appointments and digital resources are still available, the library is preparing for the potential of new and returning services this fall. It plans to introduce:

- wireless printing services
- expanded computing and printing services
- reopening of the permanent book drops
- exploration of other service models that balance patron safety with an increased demand for library materials

In the meantime, consider making a “CSA-style” Librarian’s Picks request. This service allows you to describe what kinds of books or other materials you’re looking for — for instance, a particular genre of books, music or films, or perhaps a favorite author. A librarian



Curbside service and returns are currently available at all nine libraries.

will then hand-select materials based on your likes and what’s available in a particular library collection. Complete your request at [madisonpubliclibrary.org](https://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org) or by calling the reference line at 608.315.5151.

The library is also working with the Madison Metropolitan School District and other community partners to coordinate assistance with virtual learning for the many students and families who will need support during the school year.

Library’s New Racial Equity Change Team Gets to Work

The City of Madison’s Department of Civil Rights has adopted the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI), which seeks to “establish racial equity and social justice as a core principle in all decisions, policies and functions of the City of Madison.” In response, each city department began creating its own Racial Equity Change Team; this effort dovetails with Madison Public Library’s focus on equity.

The library’s Racial Equity Change Team’s immediate focus is on conducting equity analyses of library services, programs and policies; addressing the ways that the library perpetuates systemic

or structural racism through policy or practice, and contributes to racial disparities; and providing resources, training and leadership to transform the library’s culture. The group also works to support staff of color through activities, training and employee support, and the establishment of an affinity group for staff of color.

The group recently issued a list of recommended actions the library and library board should take. The library board adopted two of those items — elimination of fines and elimination of the use of a collection agency — at its August 6 meeting. Learn more at [madisonpubliclibrary.org](https://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org).

Library Goes Fine Free

Madison Public Library announced in August that it will no longer charge overdue fines on library materials.

“Madison Public Library is proud to support our commitment to equity and literacy. By eliminating nearly all overdue fines and ceasing to use a collections agency, we want to encourage even more Madisonians to use the library by removing those barriers to library services,” said Library Director Greg Mickells. “Especially now, we need to make our libraries more accessible.”

In August 2019, the library board and library staff began to explore the costs and benefits of moving to a fine-free model, and in July, the board passed a proposed 2021 operating budget that included the elimination of fine revenue. At its August 6 meeting, the board formally passed an updated policy eliminating the charging of overdue fines and eliminating the use of a collections agency, which had collected outstanding library charges of over \$50. The library has not assessed fines since closing due to COVID-19 on March 17.

In 2019, library staff reviewed data on borrowing trends, cardholder trends, use patterns of other fine-free libraries, and revenue generated by overdue fines. At that time, it became clear that overdue fines — and the blocked library cards that often result from fines — disproportionately affected libraries serving residents with lower incomes and higher percentages of residents of color.

Two exceptions to the fine-free policy include:

- Items checked out at South Central Library System libraries that still charge overdue fines
- Items borrowed from non-South Central Library System libraries

In addition, library customers will still be charged replacement costs for items that are lost or damaged.



Making Justice Creatively Serves Court-Involved Teens

The Bubbler’s Making Justice program, which engages at-risk and court-involved teens, had to suddenly halt all of its in-person programs in March due to the coronavirus.

Teen Services Librarian Jesse Vieau, who coordinates the program, said he and fellow team members have been running weekly Zoom workshops with teens at the Dane County Juvenile Detention Center since May. Artists are centering the digital time around lyrics, beat production, messaging and lettering. “The students have been very appreciative of the sessions, and the chance to share and create around the things currently going on in society,” he wrote in a recent report. “Each week, we continue to learn more about the best ways to (and not to) go about the workshops within the online format.”

The Making Justice team also conducts weekly workshops with juveniles staying at Dane County’s

Shelter Home, a temporary residential facility for those awaiting court action, and recently engaged artists and Shelter Home occupants to safely create a beautiful mural outside the facility.

Partnerships with Dane County’s Neighborhood Intervention Program and the state Department of Corrections’ GROW

Academy are on hold as Bubbler staff work to understand their resource and program needs as schools start back up and families begin to fall into a new pattern. Programming with the Madison Metropolitan School District is also on hold as library staff explore ways to safely administer it.

Making Justice is supported by lead gifts from Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission, Epic, Madison Arts Commission, Patricia Meloy, Leila & Mickey Straus Family Foundation, and Scooter Software.



Making Justice staff and local artists recently worked with youth staying at Dane County’s Shelter Home to design and complete a mural outside the facility.

Dream Bus Delivers Books to Youth in Five Neighborhoods

Visits to the Dream Bus are different in the time of COVID-19, but the joy the bright purple bus brings to five Madison neighborhoods is still the same.

“The kids in these neighborhoods know (about the Dream Bus) by now, and they are the best at spreading the word,” said Jacqueline Stevens, Dane County Library Clerk and one of the Dream Bus drivers. “People peek in, and when they see the collection, they get really excited and keep coming back.”

In its second year of operation, the Dream Bus is a partnership between Madison Public Library and Dane County Library Service. Funded in part with gifts secured by Madison Public Library Foundation, it brings a library collection to Madison’s peripheral neighborhoods that lack easy access to a physical library.

Over the summer, Dane County Library Service Director Tracy Herold coordinated the Dream Bus schedule to align with Madison Metropolitan School District’s free lunch pickup sites in the five neighborhoods usually on its route. The bus is too small to allow for safe social distancing, so Dream Bus drivers Stevens and Ricardo Marroquin — assisted by a rotating crew of Madison Public Library librarians — distributed library materials to kids from a table outside. Several of the Dream Bus

sites also coincided with Madison School Community Recreation (MSCR) day camps where classes, including teachers, took turns coming out at Lake View, Sandburg, and Lincoln elementary schools to get books.

All of the books are checked out to a special COVID-19 card for barrier-free lending. Kids and families can bring materials back to the Dream Bus anytime, and it’s OK if they forget; they can still get more books the next week.

Madison Public Library supplemented the Dream Bus collection with summer giveaway books from its One Book at a Time community grant. Books were packaged in brightly colored bags provided by Madison Public Library Foundation and Steve Stricker

American Family Insurance Foundation as part of the We Read/Leemos summer reading program. Each bag also contained a craft contributed by Dane County Library Services Outreach Librarian Mary Driscoll.

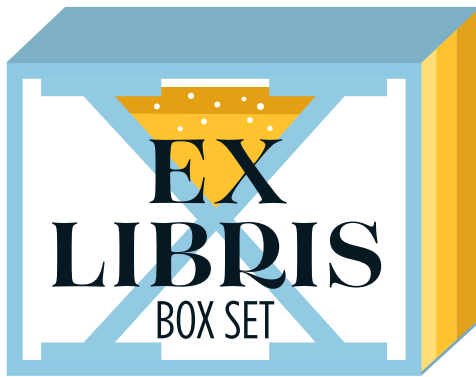
“Whoa! Dad, look at this!” one little boy at Badger Rock Neighborhood Center exclaimed as he reached in his bag and pulled out *Smile*, a graphic novel, by Raina Telgemeier. “I couldn’t even get this at school — the list was too long!”



Madison Public Library and Dane County Library Service staff safely distribute books to Dream Bus visitors.

YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS



Ex Libris 2020: Box Set

We won't let anything get in the way of our 10th annual Ex Libris fall fundraiser, so we're making it available to go!

Safely support Madison Public Library by purchasing a special edition "Box Set." Like your favorite box set of books, DVDs or music, you'll be able to pick up a box packed with goodies from local beverage and food vendors from November 5-8.

We're still working out all the details, but please visit our website or find our event page on Facebook to learn more.



Stories from a Distance Documents History

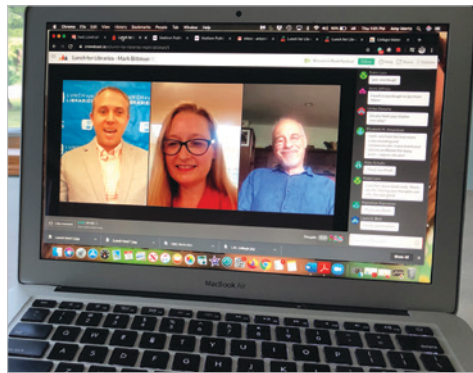
When Wisconsin began its Safer at Home order in March, Madison Public Library Community Engagement Librarian and Madison Living History Project leader Laura Damon-Moore developed an oral history-focused project to document the pandemic's impact on people's lives. Stories from a Distance strives to offer all Madisonians an opportunity to share their experiences. Damon-Moore hopes it will amplify the voices of those disproportionately affected so their experiences become part of Madison's official collective history.

"It's fresh in people's minds right now, and someday we're going to want to look back on this moment and think about

what were the days leading up to the Safer at Home order like, and what was the feeling and the tension — if there was tension — what was that experience of living that moment like?" said Damon-Moore, who recently began a new position with Wisconsin Library Services.

The project is funded with a Madison Public Library Foundation grant.

Read the 42 oral histories collected so far and consider sharing your story at madisonlivinghistory.org/stories.



Virtual Lunch for Libraries with Mark Bittman Successful

Madison Public Library Foundation's annual Lunch for Libraries fundraiser, originally scheduled to take place in person in May, became a live-streamed event on June 18. More than 375 people watched the online conversation featuring acclaimed food writer Mark Bittman and moderator Shannon Henry Kleiber, producer of NPR's "To the Best of Our Knowledge." Bittman discussed his latest book, *How to Eat: All Your Food and Diet Questions Answered*, and food as it relates to health, sustainability and equity.

The foundation thanks Presenting Sponsor BMO Harris Bank, as well as the many other sponsors and all the attendees, for their flexibility and willingness to support the event in its new virtual format.



Sequoia Friends Accepting Book Donations at its Shop

The Friends of Sequoya Library has resumed its acceptance of book donations at its shop in Market Square on Mondays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to noon. The group's volunteers are following COVID-19 protocols and have been rigorously adhering to best practices for their own safety, as well as for those who donate books. Friends President Nadine Pfotenhauer said the group is hoping to open the shop for a fall sale with a variety of precautions in place: pre-registration signup; limited numbers of customers; limited time to shop; PPE for volunteers; a face mask requirement for shoppers; and strict screening and sanitizing.

Volunteers are currently clearing the shop of older donations to make room for newer donations. Follow the Friends of Sequoya Library on Facebook for more information.



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