



**Foundation**

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

**FALL 2023**

A newsletter from  
Madison Public  
Library Foundation

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# Book Festival Sets Fall Celebration Schedule



More than 50 authors are scheduled to speak about their latest published works at the Wisconsin Book Festival’s 22nd annual Fall Celebration October 19-22 at Central Library. The lineup features a diverse group of writers, both new and accomplished, whose work spans a broad range of genres.

“Our intention and hope is that there’s an event for every kind of reader,” said Wisconsin Book Festival Director Jane Rotonda. “Festival-goers can expect a Fall Celebration that feels like the premier literary event in Wisconsin they know and love. The programming is robust and diverse, and will celebrate our shared love of authors and books.”



Fall Celebration highlight events are listed below. All events will take place at Central Library unless otherwise noted. For those with asterisks\*, attendees will receive a free copy of the book, courtesy of the Cheryl Rosen Weston Estate.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19

**5:30 p.m.** Brennan Center for Justice President and former presidential speechwriter **Michael Waldman** for *The Supermajority*

**7 p.m.** **Craig Thompson**, award-winning graphic novelist, for *Ginseng Roots*



## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

**Noon** Dorothy Draheim Professor of English at University of Wisconsin-Madison, essayist, and novelist **Beth Nguyen** for *Owner of a Lonely Heart*

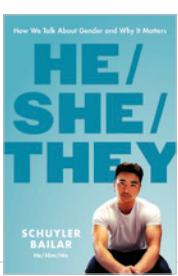
**1:30 p.m.** Chicago-based poet, author, and educator **José Olivarez** for *Promises of Gold\**

**4:30 p.m.** **Cara Fitzpatrick**, Pulitzer Prize Winner, editor, and freelance journalist for *The Death of Public School*

**6 p.m.** Award-winning science journalist **Kenneth Miller** for *Mapping the Darkness: The Visionary Scientists Who Unlocked the Mysteries of Sleep\**

**7:30 p.m.** Groundbreaking short-story writer and educator **Jamel Brinkley** for *Witness*

**7:30 p.m.** **Schuyler Bailar**, NCAA Division I swimmer and trans rights advocate, for *He/She/They*

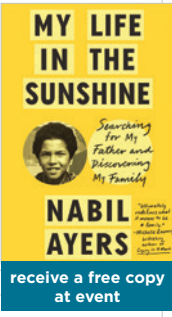
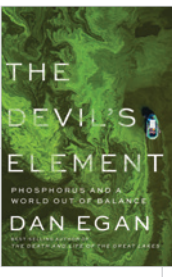


## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20

**5 p.m.** **Dan Egan**, environmental journalist and two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, for *The Devil’s Element* at Wisconsin Institute for Discovery Building

**6 p.m.** Acclaimed Sudanese writer, essayist and playwright **Leila Aboulela** for *River Spirit*

**6 p.m.** Record label executive and music writer **Nabil Ayers** for *My Life in the Sunshine\**



## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22

**Noon** Evolutionary researcher and scholar **Cat Bohannon** for *Eve*

**1:30 p.m.** **John Scalzi**, former president of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, for *Starter Villain*



The Wisconsin Book Festival is proud to offer free literary events that spark conversations. Diversity — in the author lineup, book selection, and audience — continues to be a key component of festival programming.

The 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](http://wisconsinbookfestival.org) or scan the QR code.



# Library Tours Provide Valuable Insights for Foundation

In the past several months, Madison Public Library Foundation staff have dedicated time to visiting each of the nine Madison Public Library locations to get a behind-the-scenes tour, meet librarians and other staff, and learn more about each neighborhood library. This project has been incredibly valuable for foundation staff to improve their work to support the library.

While visiting, foundation staff had the opportunity to speak to library employees face to face, get a better sense of the space and furnishings, and learn about the capacities of

each library. These in-person visits give the foundation a distinct opportunity to better understand the unique needs of each library.

During the visits, the foundation reminded library staff that it’s available as a resource, whether that be for fundraising, advocacy, special projects, or as a promotional partner. The visits also influenced the foundation’s decision to hold its 30th birthday celebration in all nine libraries.



Madison Public Library Foundation staff visited Lakeview Library recently to get better acquainted with library staff and to gain a greater understanding of each library’s needs.

Madison Public Library Foundation is proud to support the libraries, and loved learning more about how to best serve their staff and patrons!

# Epilogue Circle Gift Celebrates ’60s-Era Sequoya Library Assistant



Zenoba White, mother of Keith White, was a Madison Public Library assistant for 20-plus years.

A former Madisonian whose mother was a Sequoya Library staff member in the 1960s and 1970s has joined Madison Public Library Foundation’s Epilogue Circle by leaving a percentage of his estate to the organization.

Keith White, who lives in Port Townsend, Wash., says he wanted to memorialize his mother, Zenoba White, with a gift to the institution she treasured for many years of her life.

Zenoba was the oldest child of nine, her son says. She graduated from high school early, then completed a two-year teaching program and taught school in a rural community for a couple years. During the Great Depression, she moved to Madison; at the time, she was in her mid- to late 20s. After the move, she took some typing courses and eventually became a library assistant, although Keith isn’t sure what drove her to make that career choice.

In 1958, Zenoba accepted a position in the children’s area at Madison Public Library’s downtown location on Carroll Street, spending about two years there before moving to another assistant position at Sequoya Library, where she remained until she retired.

“She loved working there,” White recalls. “She was an avid reader, and it was probably the ideal job for her. She constantly brought books home that would stimulate me and help me make something of my life.”

Just as it remains today, the library was a place for kids to go after school and in the evening to study, White says. “Some of them would not always be as quiet or respectful of the surroundings as they should have been,” he says. “Mom was tasked with getting them to comply. Many of those she shunned from the premises became friends of mine. They all respected her.”

He recalled one day after a big snowfall, when a group of kids made a giant snowball and rolled it into the parking lot, then rolled it into the library through the front door. “She put her foot down and stopped them,” he says. “There are probably still people in the [Madison] area who she kicked out of the library.”

White remembers some specific titles his mom checked out for him that piqued his interest in two important subjects: Paul de Kruif’s *Microbe Hunters: The Classic Book on the Major Discoveries of the Microscopic World*, an international best-seller that tells the story of scientists, bacteriologists, and doctors who discovered microbes and invented vaccines to counter them; and Matthew Josephson’s *The Robber Barons: The Classic Account of the Influential Capitalists Who Transformed America’s Future*, which examined the careers of American finance and industry moguls, such as Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller, at the turn of the 20th century. These books influenced White’s decision to earn degrees in history and zoology from UW-Madison, and he says he’s indebted to her for that. For most of his adult life, he worked at UW-Madison’s

Admissions office, where he led new student admission and recruitment.

His mom also shared books about Scandinavian design and furnishings, which became a personal interest for him. “She encouraged me to look at things with a more artistic eye,” he says.

Zenoba continued to work at the library through the late 1970s. When she died in 1998, White directed her friends and family to send a gift in her memory to Sequoya Library. “Noting the utter enjoyment that the library job brought to her and the effect her work had on me, it just seems it would’ve been remiss not to consider a gift to the library,” White says of his legacy gift to the foundation.

White, who moved away from Madison about 20 years ago, continues to be a regular library user, he says. “We have a wonderful county library system in Jefferson County, Washington. I’m there every other day checking out books, DVDs, or other material. Frankly, that was one of the reasons why we picked this particular spot. We would not have picked it if it were not a well-supported and extremely well-run library.”

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Photo courtesy of Keith White

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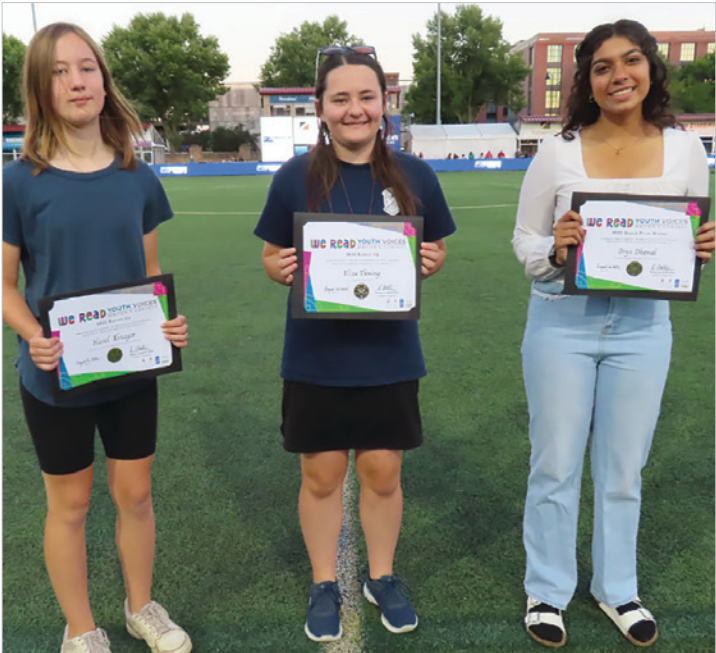
Epilogue Circle gifts come in the form of stocks, life insurance, a portion of an estate, and more. To learn about making a legacy gift, visit [mplfoundation.org](http://mplfoundation.org) or contact Executive Director Conor Moran at 608.266.6318.



# We Read Youth Voices Writing Contest Winners Announced

Madison Public Library and Forward Madison FC announced six young Madison writers as the winners of their second annual *We Read Youth Voices* Writing Contest. All 142 submissions from kids ages 5 to 18 were carefully reviewed by a panel of community judges.

Three overall winners were selected and presented with Forward Madison FC gear at a match on August 12. The Grand Prize Winner, Diyah Dhawal, 15, will receive \$500 from Madison Public Library Foundation for *The War of a Million Years*. Runners-up Hazel Krueger, 11, for *The Strength to Move Forward*, and Eliza Thwing, 13, for *Time*, will each receive \$250.



The three *We Read Youth Voices* Contest winners are (from left) runners-up Hazel Krueger, 11; Eliza Thwing, 13; and Grand Prize Winner Diyah Dhawal, 15. Each received a cash prize from Madison Public Library Foundation.

All three winners will also have the opportunity to attend a Young Writers Camp of their choice from the Greater Madison Writing Project next summer.

Winners for three age groups (13–18, 10–12, and 9 and under) were also recognized. Monona Faasumalie (13) for *She*, Ronav Vasanth (10) for *Together We Move*, and Olivia Lubcke (9) for *Upside Down* will each receive \$100 from the foundation.

Later this fall, 52 submissions to the contest will be published both digitally and in print in the *We Read Youth Voices Anthology*. The print version will be available at all nine library locations. The Wisconsin Book Festival will also recognize these young writers on Saturday, October 21, at its four-day Fall Celebration.

The foundation is proud to support efforts to promote literacy and creativity among young local writers.



# Intern Leads We Read Programs on Dream Bus

This past summer, Madison Public Library employed Making & Learning Intern Holly Wergin, who traveled on the Dream Bus as part of the *We Read* program to spark and celebrate literacy. Throughout the summer, Wergin offered interactive art and creative projects for visitors to the mobile library.



Dream Bus Intern Holly Wergin led hands-on arts projects for Dream Bus visitors as part of the library's *We Read* programming.

“There is really nothing like the feeling of contentment and happiness that comes with working and learning from children,” Wergin said. “They exude positivity and silliness that I think a lot of us older people need sometimes.”

A master’s student in Library and Information Studies, Wergin has aspirations to work with children to help share the love of reading. She was previously a high school English teacher for two years and plans to work as a librarian when she graduates.

The Dream Bus — a collaborative operation of the library, Dane County Library Service, and the foundation — provides visitors with a variety of library services, such as library card signup, book and video browsing, and checkouts. It visits underserved neighborhoods in the community on a weekly rotation. To learn more about the Dream Bus and view its fall schedule, visit [madpl.org/locations/dream-bus](https://madpl.org/locations/dream-bus).



Madison Public Library Foundation funds the library’s Staff Day each fall.

The foundation is proud to support library staff in the vital work they do — both inside and outside our libraries.

# Library Director Mickells to Retire This Winter

Madison Public Library Director Greg Mickells will retire in early February after 11 years of leadership, the library announced recently.

Mickells led the library through the expansion and renovation of Central, Meadowridge, and Pinney libraries, and the challenge of navigating a public health emergency to safely ensure library services during the pandemic, noted Library Board President Alyssa Kenney in a city press release.

During Mickells’ tenure, his work took him to three continents representing the library in China, The Gambia, and Denmark.

In 2016, he represented the library at the White House, where it received a National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Other awards during his leadership included an Urban Libraries Council Top Innovator award for the library



Greg Mickells speaks at the Pinney Library grand opening in March 2020.

and a Wisconsin Innovation Award for The Bubbler.

Closer to home, the library took over the Wisconsin Book Festival in 2013 and launched the Dream Bus in 2019 in partnership with Dane County Library Service, with both efforts financially supported by the foundation. The library’s commitment to racial equity and social

# Library Seeks Ideas for Strategic Plan

Madison Public Library is seeking community input through September 30 to help guide a new three-year strategic plan for library service. Interested community members can either complete a short survey online or at any of the city’s nine libraries, or attend a 90-minute virtual feedback session from 12–1:30 p.m. September 20.

Information from the survey and virtual feedback session will be anonymized and summarized along with staff feedback, library use data, and national trends to create a plan that will guide library service for the next three years. The final strategic plan will be shared publicly this winter.

Madison Public Library Foundation is proud to lend financial support for this strategic planning process, resulting in initiatives that reflect the values of our library users.

For more information about the strategic plan and links to provide feedback, visit [madpl.org/strategicplan](https://madpl.org/strategicplan).



A library staff member assists a patron in checking out materials.

justice has resulted in dozens of community-based partnerships.

“It is very difficult to think about what Madison Public Library would be today without Greg’s influence,” said Madison Public Library Foundation Executive Director Conor Moran. “Throughout his tenure, he consistently sought to connect the library with the community by offering unique programs and by responding directly to community needs with services. He has truly left his mark on our library system, and we are all grateful.”

The Library Board is responsible for hiring a new library director, though it is a City of Madison position, which will require mayor and Common Council approval. The board has formed a working group to begin the hiring process and expects to have a hiring committee in place this month. If necessary, an interim director will be selected to help ensure the transition.



A young patron is excited to receive his first library card from Dream Bus Library Assistant Amy Winkelman.

# Celebrate Library Card Signup Month

September is Library Card Signup Month! Celebrate by getting or renewing your Madison Public Library card. Library users who sign up in September get to take a picture with a BIG library card at any location.

Created in 1987 by then-Secretary of Education William Bennett, Library Card Signup Month now marks a time to learn more about what you can do at your local library. Some of the many things you can borrow with a library card include books, DVDs, magazines, and video games, plus BCycle community passes, portable energy meters, birding backpacks, Maker Kits, and so much more.

Learn more about Library Card Signup Month at [madpl.org](https://madpl.org) or on the library’s social media pages.

# Foundation Supports Library Staff for 30th Year

This summer marked Madison Public Library Foundation’s 30th birthday, and there are a variety of accomplishments to celebrate! Since its founding in 1993, the foundation has made an intentional effort to support library staff.

Coming up in mid-September, Madison Public Library will host Staff Day, a chance to celebrate every one of its library employees. This all-day event, which focuses on staff appreciation and self-care, is funded with a foundation grant.

The foundation also funds professional development, which allows library staff to grow in their careers, and affinity groups to build camaraderie with coworkers and give back to the Madison community. The Pride Affinity Group, formed in late 2021, and the BIPOC Affinity Group, formed in 2020, are both supported by the foundation. These organizations meet for discussions and panels, and participate in community events such as the Pride Prom and the Hmong New Year celebration.



# EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS



## Stock Up on Books and More at Library Friends Sales

Several Madison Public Library Friends groups are holding book sales this fall at various libraries and other locations. Check out one of these sales or the ongoing sale shelf at Central Library to purchase donated books, DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks.

**Monroe Street Library League Book Sale**  
Saturday, September 9, 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**Friends of Alicia Ashman Library Fall Book Sale**  
Saturday, September 16, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

**Lakeview Library Fall Book Sale**  
Saturday, September 30, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**Friends of Sequoia Library Book Sale**  
September 16, October 7, November 4, and December 7, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Friends of Sequoia Library Book Shop, 6672 Odana Road (in Market Square)

All Friends sales proceeds benefit collection items, services, and programming at their respective library. To learn more about your neighborhood library's Friends group or to donate your gently used books, visit [madpl.org/support/friends](https://madpl.org/support/friends).



## Library to Host Spanish-Language Book Fair

Madison Public Library will host a Spanish-Language Book Fair at Pinney Library on Saturday, September 16, from 9:30 a.m.–2 p.m. This event will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month while spotlighting the library's Spanish-language collection for adults and children.

The Book Fair is inspired by the *Feria Internacional del Libro* in Guadalajara, Mexico, which Madison Public library staff have attended to source books for its collections. The mini feria will give attendees the opportunity to browse Spanish-language materials for all ages, sign up for a library card, learn more about library services, attend a Spanish storytime, and participate in The Bubbler's *Our Town* portrait project.

The Mexican Consulate will also be in attendance for a special presentation and to donate a copy of the *Mexican Dictionary of Spanish* to the library. Snacks and light refreshments will be offered throughout the Book Fair.

All are welcome to attend this free, public event. Learn more at [madpl.org/miniferia](https://madpl.org/miniferia).



## Buy Your *Ex Libris: Local Flavor* Tickets

Tickets for our annual fall fundraiser, *Ex Libris: Local Flavor*, are on sale now!

This casual evening of craft beverages and bites to benefit Madison Public Library will be from 7–10 p.m. Friday, November 3, at Central Library.



Madison area restaurants, breweries, vendors, and sponsors will gather to offer a night of delicious food and drink, live music, a DJ, and a silent auction. In addition to celebrating all the wonderful local restaurants, beverage makers, and vendors in our food community, this year's *Ex Libris* theme is also designed to educate guests on what makes each of the library's nine neighborhood locations unique. Tell us about your favorite library, or find a new one to explore!

Event proceeds will help the library deliver vital materials, programs, and services that help build literacy, inspire lifelong learning, and encourage community engagement.

Visit [mplfoundation.org](https://mplfoundation.org) to purchase tickets or become a sponsor.



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Madison, Wisconsin 53703  
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**Monroe Street** 1705 Monroe St.

**Executive Director** Conor Moran **Newsletter Editor** Amy Mertz  
**Contributing Writers** Celia Hiorns, Elizabeth Boyd, and Tana Elias  
**Newsletter Design** Georgia Rucker

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