



Foundation

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

SPRING/SUMMER 2025

A newsletter from
Madison Public
Library Foundation

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Share Your Vision for the Library's Next 150 Years

This year marks Madison Public Library's 150th year of service to the community. With a theme of "Celebrating the Past, Inspiring the Future," the library is hosting events, sharing fun facts, gathering stories, and highlighting what you can do with your library card throughout the whole year.

Since its opening in 1875, the library has expanded to include nine neighborhood branches plus the Dream Bus, with a tenth branch on the way. As the library imagines what its service will look like over the next 150 years, we want to hear your beloved early memories and vision of the future.

"I remember learning to write my name solely to get my library card," said library user, Hana. Other community members recall participating in the summer reading program or receiving assistance from a librarian who helped them discover the *Junie B. Jones* series.

Bubbler Artist-in-Residence National Velvet created two non-edible cakes that are traveling to outreach events throughout 2025. Contribute to the artwork by writing your memories and wishes for the future on paper candles and adding them to the cakes.

Learn more about 150th celebrations happening all year at madisonpubliclibrary.org/anniversary.



Madison Metropolitan School District students participated in 150th outreach activities during their visit to Central Library for the Battle of the Books event in March.



Get Your 150th Anniversary Library Swag

For the library's 150th anniversary, we're celebrating in style! In addition to the classic Madison Public Library swag, a number of special anniversary edition items are now available for purchase.



Show off your library pride by grabbing a 150th-themed t-shirt, hoodie, or crewneck sweatshirt in several color options. But don't wait! These special 150th anniversary items will only be on sale for a limited time.

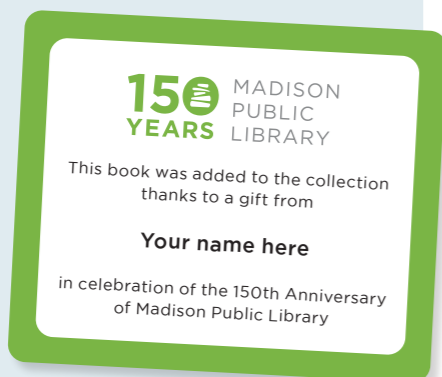
Proceeds from the merchandise sales benefit Madison Public Library. Help fuel literacy, opportunity, and lifelong learning in your community with some fresh new swag that celebrates the library's 150 years of service. Get your items now at bonfire.com/store/madison-public-library.

Give \$150, Get a Bookplate

As part of the library's 150th celebrations, we are asking our generous donors to help support strong, innovative library services into the next 150 years. Want to help? Consider taking part in the Make Your Mark campaign.

As a testament to your support, donors who make a gift of \$150 or more will have their name printed on a bookplate inside a new book added to the collection. This special way of supporting the library will help expand the library's collection for all ages and provide new reading materials for years to come.

Thank you to those who have already made a contribution. If you are interested in participating, make a donation today at mplfoundation.org/donate.



Author of *Original Sins* Eve Ewing and audience members pose with copies of the book, distributed for free at the event, courtesy of the Wisconsin Book Festival.

Wisconsin Book Festival Wraps Up Spring Season

The end of the Wisconsin Book Festival's spring season is quickly approaching, and we are celebrating yet another season of successful author events. Contributions from generous donors like you are what make the festival a world-class set of diverse author programming right here in Madison.

By the end of the spring season, the festival will have presented 26 events, including school visits, larger-scale off-site gatherings, and programs right inside the library. Participating authors ranged from international bestsellers like Colm Tóibín and Curtis Sittenfeld to hometown stars like Christine Wenc and Nickolas Butler.

But, the season isn't over yet! Don't miss out on some interesting literary conversations

in the last couple standalone events of the spring season. Here are some on the schedule:

- Award-winning poet **Jane Hirshfield** for *The Asking: New and Selected Poems*, presented in partnership with the UW-Madison Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies | **May 12, 6 p.m.**
- UW Creative Writing Fellow **Rickey Fayne** for *The Devil Three Times* | **May 13, 7 p.m.**



Both of these events will take place at Central Library in Community Rooms 301 and 302, and are free to attend. View the full schedule at wisconsinbookfestival.org.

Meet the New Bubbler Artists-in-Residence

This month, the library is welcoming two new Bubbler Artists-in-Residence. This program, made possible with support from the foundation, aims to connect artists to the community and offer teaching resources for artists to open a public space to create.

Previous Artist-in-Residence **TetraPAKMAN** wrapped up his term in March, using climate as a focal point for workshops and exhibitions throughout his residency. Now, we welcome National Velvet and Ellie Braun!

Ellie Braun is a midwest-based artist whose work focuses on craft, textile, and home decoration. For her residency at Pinney Library, she'll be creating art with an emphasis on textiles, fiber and stitching, jewelry making, beading, and drawing.



Braun

National Velvet will serve as Artist-in-Residence at Central Library. In their art practice, National Velvet sees cakes as vessels for storytelling. Cakes often hold a memory, a moment in time, a relationship, and they are fascinated by how objects can carry meaning beyond their form. They have already created two non-edible cakes as part of the library's 150th celebration.



National Velvet

We are so excited to welcome these artists to the library. Learn more about the Artist-in-Residence program and check out upcoming events and workshops at madisonbubbler.org/residencies.



at Madison Public Library

Donations Fund Wellness Programming

The library knows that wellness is not just about physical health, but about maintaining a healthy mind and relationships. One of the library's popular wellness programs, *Live Well @ Your Library*, aims to connect the community to resources through a variety of programs on topics such as mental health, gardening, yoga, fall prevention, movement therapy, and more.

Live Well @ Your Library supports several ongoing initiatives that promote wellness. For example, the Seed Library offers visitors access to vegetable, herb, fruit, and flower seeds to start their own garden or plant in a community plot. The LGBTQ+ Wellness Guide provides mental health providers, transition and sexual health resources, support groups, hotlines, and more. The Gratitude Journal Kit gives older adults an easy way to practice guided gratitude daily through journal prompts and exercises.

In addition to these ongoing initiatives, *Live Well @ Your Library* presents a number of events throughout the year. Here are a few upcoming events on the schedule:

- **Cooking Club** at Hawthorne Library's Community Room | **April 24, May 8, May 22, June 12**, 5 to 6 p.m.
- **Chair Yoga & Gentle Movement for Older Adults** at Lakeview Library's Community Room | **April 28, May 12, May 19**, 10:30 to 11:15 a.m.
- **Chair Yoga** at Alicia Ashman Library's Community Room | **April 28**, noon to 12:45 p.m.



Adults participate in chair yoga, one of many of the wellness services made available through *Live Well @ Your Library*.

- **Mindful Moments: a Drop-In Meditation Group** at Sequoia Library's Meeting Rooms A & B | **May 5, May 19, June 9**, noon to 1:30 p.m.
- **Red Cross Blood Drive** at Alicia Ashman Library's Community Room | **May 20**, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Live Well @ Your Library is made possible with support from Madison Public Library Foundation and WPS Health Solutions. Restricted gifts can be made to the foundation to support a particular program or effort at the library. Learn more about different ways you can help make library programming possible at mplfoundation.org/give.

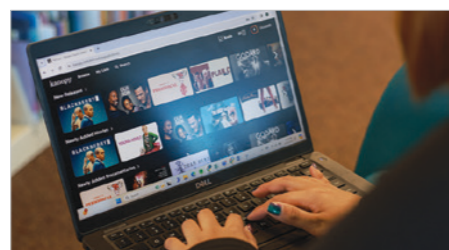
Foundation Grants Support Online and Digital Resources

So far this year, the foundation has made two grants to the library to support its digital resources. This part of the library's offerings includes access to services such as video streaming and research databases.

One of the grants awarded to the library will support **online resources and databases** that provide information and referral services to patrons. These highly used resources include news sources, consumer research, genealogy databases, and more.

Library users will retain access to popular services such as the *New York Times*, AncestryLibrary, and *Consumer Reports*.

Another grant the foundation awarded to the library will fund **Kanopy, a video streaming service**. The platform has movies,



Foundation grants allow the library to offer online and digital resources, like Kanopy video streaming services.

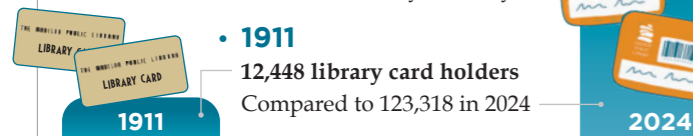
documentaries, foreign films, and more. Performance of this popular service continues to grow. In 2024, Madison Public Library users racked up 2.7 million minutes of watch time — up from 2.2 million minutes in 2023!

Access to digital resources is one way the library seeks to offer not only traditional library services, but also services that respond to the changing needs of the community. Digital collections contribute

to the library's diverse selection of titles and equitable access to research resources. The foundation is proud to help fund these efforts. Learn more about the foundation's annual fund at mplfoundation.org/give/things-we-fund/annual-fund.

Lost in the Stats

Lost in the Stats is our recurring feature that highlights interesting library-related numbers. In this issue, we are showcasing data from some of our earliest available circulation records, in celebration of the library's history.



- **1922:** 1,354 books lent in languages other than English (earliest year on record)
- **1949:** 7,114 phonographs borrowed. Compared to 72 record player checkouts in 2024
- **1957:** 198 telephone directories in circulation
- **1966:** 12 radio programs put on by library staff
- **1973:** 1,507 volunteer hours. Compared to 6,612 in 2024
- **1975:** 278 framed art prints in circulation

Show Up for the Library Amid Federal Funding Uncertainty

Last month, a new Executive Order called for the reduction of the components and functions of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to its minimum presence required by law. IMLS is the primary funder of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Division for Libraries and Technology. The institute also funds the Library Services & Technology Act, which benefits Madison Public Library directly as part of the South Central Library System.

Madison Public Library is working with library and system directors across the state, colleagues at the American Library Association, Wisconsin Library Association, and Urban Libraries Council, Madison Children's Museum, and Olbrich Botanical Gardens to advocate for continued IMLS funding.

Amid this uncertainty, the foundation will persist in its backing of library services and programming. We voice our support of the library's efforts to secure continued IMLS funding and reiterate our mission statement in these uncertain times: We mobilize the Madison community to continuously improve, promote, and support Madison Public Library.



Madison Public Library relies directly on IMLS funding currently under threat.

What's your library story? Share a message or thank you with our staff during National Library Week.

I use the library almost every day! I read ebooks and magazines plus I volunteer in-person weekly. It is the highlight of my life in Madison!

I give permission for Madison Public Library to share my postcard in a library display and/or on social media.



A community member shares their love of the library as part of the Share Your Story campaign for National Library Week 2025.

We encourage you to join in on the American Library Association's Show Up For Our Libraries effort by contacting your elected officials. Please inform them of your ongoing support of libraries and museums at home and across the country. Share a personal story of how the library has touched your life to make the greatest impact.

For tips and more information on getting involved, visit madisonpubliclibrary.org/advocacy. We thank you for your ongoing support.



Support the Library With a Smart Giving Plan

We've made it through tax season and April is well underway. Want to earn benefits that can make next year's taxes a little easier? Consider directing a portion of your refund towards the library. Madison Public Library Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which means your donations are tax deductible.

In addition to making a tax-deductible donation in anticipation of next year's tax season, donors can tap into a variety of options for gift planning, also known as legacy giving. This kind of donation helps strengthen library services, collections, and programming both now and in the future. Knowing your support is making a lasting impact on the community makes gift planning a powerful and rewarding way to give.

We thank you for making an investment in the library and the broader Madison community. Learn more about your gift planning options and get started today at mplfoundation.org/gift-planning.



A community member receives tax assistance at Lakeview Library.

EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS



Donations to the annual fund support innovative programming, such as the recent *A Mirror of Northside Community Library Takeover* event.

Library Giving Day Garner Strong Support for Library

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the foundation had yet another successful Library Giving Day on April 1! Despite this national day of fundraising coinciding with a major state election, donors came out in a strong show of support for their local libraries. Every dollar raised on Library Giving Day went to the annual fund, which supports library services, collections, programming, technology, and more.

This year, we asked donors to make a gift of \$150 or more in celebration of the library's 150th anniversary. In exchange, donors at this level will have their name printed on a bookplate inside a new book added to the collection, as part of our Make Your Mark campaign.

Missed Library Giving Day? Don't worry — you can still make a gift of \$150 or more throughout the year and Make Your Mark on an item in the library's collection. Visit mplfoundation.org/donate to make your donation today.

Thank you again for your contributions. Your gifts are an invaluable part of the public-private partnership that brings literacy and lifelong learning to the Madison community.



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Madison Public Library Director Tana Elias and Grand Prize Winner Grace Huang celebrate the contest anthology at the 2024 author reception.

Youth Writing Contest Opens for Submissions May 1

The WE READ Youth Voices Writing Contest will return for its fourth year, accepting submissions from May 1 to June 30. Kids in the Madison area, ages 18 and under, will have the opportunity to get published and win up to \$500 in cash prizes, with support from the Madison Public Library Foundation.

Hosted by the library in partnership with Forward Madison FC and the Wisconsin Book Festival, this annual contest accepts submissions of short stories, songs, poems, comics, graphic novels, and more in English, Spanish, Hmong, and other languages.

This year's Writing Contest Youth Ambassador is 19-year-old UW-Madison student and Madison Youth Poet Laureate Justin Festge Russell. Throughout the contest, Festge Russell will encourage youth to submit their work, serve as a judge, and write the foreword for the WE READ Youth Voices Anthology in the fall. Festge Russell also selected the contest's theme: **Roots**.

"Whether your story is about going back to your roots to examine your personal history

and revisit moments that were worth holding on to, exploring moments of conflict where you had to get to the root of the issue, or planting new ideas and growing together from the roots up, we want to hear them!" said Festge Russell.

A kickoff event for the contest will take place at the Forward Madison FC home game on Saturday, April 26 at Breese Stevens Field. The Dream Bus will be in attendance to help people sign up for library cards, give away free writer's notebooks, and hand out WE READ Youth Voices bookmarks with the 2025 prompts and contest theme.



The WE READ program is funded by Madison Public Library Foundation, Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation, Friends of the Madison Public Library, Roots & Wings Foundation, and Jane Doughty & David Wood. As a supporter of WE READ, the foundation is proud to support an effort that encourages literary creativity among Madison youth. Learn more about the contest at madisonpubliclibrary.org/youthvoices.

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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Lakeview 2845 N. Sherman Ave.
Meadowridge 5726 Raymond Rd.
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