



The Friends of the Brown County Library value books, reading, education and the continued pursuit of knowledge. They recognize the vital role our Library plays in the Northeast Wisconsin community.

WINTER-SPRING 2024

FRIENDS

OF THE BROWN COUNTY LIBRARY

Mark Your Calendar for

The Spring BIG Book Sale

Monday, April 29 - Thursday, May 2

Also in This Issue:
Give-A-Kid-A-Book Closes Another Successful Chapter
What's it Worth? Antique Appraisal
New East Branch Library
and More!

Family Fun at
2023 Pop Con™

Your Library card is your link to free online resources at: browncountylibrary.org

From the Editor's Desk



A common lament of retired people is that they claim to be busier in retirement than when they were working. I don't know if that's necessarily the case for me, but I do try to stay occupied. Volunteering (managing the Friends newsletter and website, plus helping the local historical society), house and cabin projects, and camper repairs all seem to consume my days.

For a bit of a mental challenge, I like to study foreign languages. When we took a trip to Italy, I learned enough Italian to get by, but in high school, college, and more recently in adult learning, I have studied German. While I have some friends in Switzerland and communicate with them on occasion, my desire to learn this language is less "applied" and more an intellectual pursuit. I enjoy the challenge of learning the rules for adjective endings and verb forms (and learning the exceptions to the rules, or when there are no rules at all!)

To me, foreign languages are like a secret code, a communication gateway into understanding a people, their culture, and their history. Every little vocabulary and grammar discovery adds a little more insight into that new world.

On the surface, literacy in German is no different than literacy in English. However, there's a big difference in having only a partial understanding of a faraway language used on an occasional basis, versus having a partial ability to read and write the language in the land where you need to live, function, learn, and advance.

The Friends are committed to the Brown County Library's mission of early learning and literacy programs for the county's children and their families. In addition to our support for Library programs, our own Born to Read and Give-A-Kid-A-Book programs put us on the forefront of childhood literacy. It's one thing for me to struggle with German, but I don't want others to have language be an impediment in their daily life. The Friends thank you, our members, donors, and supporters, for helping us with this mission.

Don Kraft, *Managing Editor*

A handwritten signature of Don Kraft in black ink.

Please check out the following sources of literary assistance:

- Adult and Family Literacy - www.literacygreenbay.org
- Early Literacy - www.browncountylibrary.org/early-literacy
- Literacy Advocacy - www.greenbayaltrusahouse.org
- Learning Aids for English as a Second Language - www.browncountylibrary.org/topics/#language

From the Library Director



2023 Is One for the Record Books

By anyone's account, Brown County Library's 2023 has been one for the record books.

Reading for the Future

The year began with momentum around work supporting grade-level reading proficiency, following the Reading Success Summit (*pictured below*) held in October 2022. Without the support of the Friends of the Brown County Library, the Summit would not have happened. However, because the Summit happened and raised the community alarm about declining youth reading proficiency in Brown County, positive community action has been taken *and continues to be taken*.

And this isn't solely happening at the Library, where we have been working with a consultant on the development of a multi-year strategic framework to guide our services for youth and families. Amazing, positive sparks around youth literacy have happened throughout Brown County, as caring community members and strategic leaders have found ways to contribute to this critical cause. 2024 promises increased collaborative community action to help more youth be successful readers.

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Get Growing!

A wonderful new collaborative initiative that sprouted in 2023 is the Brown County Seed Library (pictured below). The Seed Library is a partnership among the Library, Brown County Community Gardens Program, Green Bay Botanical Garden, New Leaf Foods, Inc., Northeastern Wisconsin Master Gardeners, UW-Green Bay and UW-Madison Extension Brown County. The Seed Library offers a curated collection of seeds – primarily edible plants – suited for success in our Northeast Wisconsin growing region. Seeds are available free to anyone interested in planting vegetables, fruits, and pollinator-friendly plants. The Seed Library launch event at Central Library in March 2023 attracted more than 700 attendees of all ages and gardening skills. Sessions on gardening presented by experts were offered not just at the launch event but at the Central Library throughout the year. The Seed Library's second season kicks off on March 2, 2024.



Pop Con™ Featured Bestselling Author, R.L. Stine

Special support from the Friends of the Brown County Library enabled the Library to host one of the best-selling authors of all time – R.L. Stine (seated in photo below). As the keynote speaker of BCL's 2023 Pop Con, Stine drew fans from around the nation. In fact, one youth and his mother drove more than 10 hours to attend! The family shared with Library staff that the trip was a special birthday present for the child whose favorite author is Stine. According to the excited youth, meeting Stine and attending Pop Con was "even a better birthday than the Disney World trip!"



East Branch Grand Opening



2023 happily saw the autumn opening of our long-awaited new East Branch (pictured left and below). Thanks to funding support from the Friends of the Brown County Library, a September grand opening of the new branch featured special performances, activities, refreshments, and a ribbon cutting. Almost 1,000 attendees were the first community members to enjoy the new branch Library, which offers almost triple the space

of the previous East Branch. The new branch includes meeting and study rooms, a spacious Children's Area with a Calming Room, a drive-up window, and an enclosed seasonal garden and patio. Since opening, usage of the East Branch has more than doubled, with visitors reporting the new Library has been worth the wait.



New Ashwaubenon Branch Library is on the Horizon

Wrapping up this extraordinary year and promising a continuation of 2023's bustling activity and action into 2024, we held a kick-off meeting in December 2023 for the design planning team for Brown County Library's new Ashwaubenon Branch.

Brown County Library Receives State Recognition

For the third time, the Library received 2023's *Library of the Year Award* from the Wisconsin Library Association, which was truly an extraordinary highlight of the year. This recognition is awarded each year to a Wisconsin library for distinguished service to its community. The Library team applies every ounce of effort and heart to serving Brown County; being recognized by peers was deeply humbling and a tremendous honor. This was truly an extraordinary highlight of an extraordinary 2023 for our Library!

Sarah Sugden, Brown County
Library Director

Handwritten signature of Sarah Sugden.



The Magic Continues at the
4th Annual Brown County Library

Renaissance Faire

Hear ye, hear ye! By royal order, your presence is requested at the 4th Annual Brown County Library Renaissance Faire set for **Saturday, May 11 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** at the Weyers-Hilliard Branch Library.

Experience magic and merriment as we travel back to the days of knights and dragons, pirates and princesses. Step back in time for a mix of history, fantasy, and arts with all the following period activities:

- View demonstrations of blacksmithing, weaving, or pottery making.
- Watch sword fighting and try your hand at battle with foam weapons.
- Learn how birds of prey were used for hunting and meet the birds after the presentation.
- Enjoy music performed by local harp and recorder musicians.
- Mingle with re-enactors from medieval and Renaissance eras.
- Visit the vendor booths to find the perfect memento of your day.
- Bring the kids for a scavenger hunt and crafts.
- Have your face painted or your fortune read.
- Partake of lunch from one of the food trucks.
- Be amazed at the magic show.
- Revel in all this and more!



Period attire is encouraged for all, but please surrender your weapons before entering upon library grounds. Until May, fare thee well!

The Friends Fall **BIG** Book Sale raises \$24,000

The 2023 Fall **BIG** Book Sale this past November was another huge success, raising more than \$24,000. There was much positive feedback, particularly regarding the increased hours of the opening day for Friends members only.

Book Sale proceeds will help us continue to fund Friends campaigns and other literacy-related programs, sponsor Library programs and activities, and purchase requested special needs for the Library. Thank you to everyone who donated or purchased Book Sale items.



Please mark your calendars for the upcoming **2024 Spring BIG Book Sale** to be held Monday, April 29 through Thursday, May 2. As always, the first day of the sale on Monday is open for Friends members only, with even longer hours added for your shopping enjoyment.

Help us by taking this opportunity to sift through your collection of used books and donating to the Sale at any branch Library. Also, we are always looking for more Book Sale volunteers. If interested, contact us at volunteer@browncountylibraryfriends.org.

Friends of the Brown County Library

This newsletter is published on behalf of the Friends of the Brown County Library. The Friends is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable and educational organization whose mission is to promote, sustain, and extend the mission of the Brown County Library to help ensure library excellence into the future.

Our goals are:

- To assist in the funding, development, and implementation of Library programs
- To promote knowledge of the functions, services, resources, and needs of the Library
- To raise funds for Library programs and equipment
- To maintain an endowment fund for Library excellence



Through the generosity of members, volunteers, and donors, the Friends help guarantee the continued success of the Brown County Library. For additional information, please visit www.BrownCountyLibraryFriends.org, call 920-448-5811, or find us on the social media platforms listed on the back of this newsletter.

GENEALOGY 101 *Learn About Trusted Sources*

Kicks Off Saturday, January 20

If you've been meaning to dig into your family history, make that New Year's Resolution a reality by participating in *Genealogy 101* on Saturday mornings from January 20 through April 6.

The nine-week program provides a deep dive into genealogy so you can do your family history project justice. All sessions are hosted at the Central Library Auditorium.



Scan to see the Genealogy Series lineup.

Don't miss out! Scan the QR Code for details on each session. To register, call 920.448.5815.



What's it Worth?

Expert Mark Moran Returns to Green Bay for Antique & Collectible Appraisal Event



The East Branch Library, together with the Friends, present an antiques and collectibles appraisal event featuring author and antiques expert Mark F. Moran of Iola, Wis. on **Saturday, January 20, 2024 beginning at 11 a.m.** The public is invited to observe for free.

Moran bought and sold antiques for more than 30 years, specializing in vintage folk art, Americana, and fine art. He has been active as an appraiser of antiques and fine art for more than 20 years.

Formerly senior editor of antiques and collectibles books for Krause Publications, Moran also was a contributing editor for *Antique Trader magazine*; editor of *Antique Review East* magazine; producer of *Atlantique City*, an antiques show held in Atlantic City; and editorial director of F+W Media's Antiques Group. Moran also was a guest expert on the PBS series, "Antiques Roadshow," for nine seasons.

He is the author or co-author of more than 25 books on antiques and collectibles, including three editions of the 800-page annual "Warman's Antiques & Collectibles."

Registration for the event is required to have antiques or collectibles appraised. There is a \$15-per-item appraisal fee and a limit of three items per registrant. A portion of fees collected will benefit the Friends. Call 920-391-4600 to reserve a time slot. And if you can't



make the January event, a second What's it Worth will be held on April 20 at the Weyers-Hilliard Branch in Howard.

Note: Opinions of value are informal and may not be used for insurance or charitable donations, which require a certified appraisal.

Categories of objects for appraisal may include:

- Fine art: including paintings, drawings, prints and statuary.
- Furniture: usually smaller pieces are best.
- Ceramics: including figural pottery, vases, dishes, kitchenware, and stoneware.
- Glassware: including lighting, marbles, and souvenir items.
- Vintage photographs: including tintypes, ambrotypes, and daguerreotypes.
- Advertising: including posters, lithographed tin, paper, and figural objects.
- Folk art: including carvings, quilts, weathervanes, windmill weights, and "outsider" art.
- Assorted toys: including dolls (bisque, composition, and plastic), wind ups, and mechanical banks.
- Metal ware: including iron, bronze, brass, pot metal, silver, silver plate.
- Clocks: including mantel, hanging, and figural.
- Costume jewelry: including brooches, bracelets, earrings.
- Antique and vintage lighting of all kinds.
- Musical instruments.
- Sporting collectibles.
- Books.

Excluded items: All weapons, including swords and knives (folding knives with advertising are accepted); traps (like leg-hold); Nazi memorabilia; coins and paper money; fine jewelry, including precious gems; and Beanie Babies.

2024 Annual FBCL Meeting is set for April 8

The Friends Annual Meeting for the 2023 fiscal year is tentatively set for April 8, 2024 at the East Branch Library.

The event will start with a 5 p.m. reception that includes light refreshments, and the business meeting will follow from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Friends members are invited to attend to see a presentation of 2023 Library activities by Library Director Sarah Sugden as well as a summary of the Friends 2023 activities and financial statements. Members in attendance also will be able to vote in an election of new officers for the Friends Board.

As the event draws near, Friends members will receive an email invitation asking for an RSVP. Also, please check the "Upcoming Events" section on our website homepage to confirm the latest meeting details.



The Greatest Gift is a Passion for Reading



The 2023 Give-A-Kid-A-Book (GAKAB) campaign had a special reason to celebrate as it was the 35th anniversary! Each year, the program benefits from the support of sponsors, donors, and volunteers who make the dream of owning their own books a reality for so many children.

This past year's campaign was fortunate to be joined by Bre LaFleur as official spokesperson for the 2023 GAKAB campaign. This year's public service announcement with Bre was filmed at the new East Branch in October. Then on November 1, 2023, the GAKAB campaign launched with an in-person kick-off event at the Central Library where Bre shared a story about a wonderful family book tradition that the LaFleurs implemented due to all their moving around. The morning was made extra special as Kelsy Rusch, Library Media Specialist at Fort Howard Elementary School, brought some of her students to share their passion about books and heroes, adventures, and travels. We then recognized our sponsors for their amazing support of this critical program coordinated by the Friends of the Brown County Library.

The program's wonderful partnership with The Salvation Army ensured that the 2023 GAKAB campaign was better than ever. GAKAB successfully supported a record 2,422 families by sharing more than 13,500 books with more than 6,780 kids in the community. Our wonderful volunteers came sporting all kinds of holiday attire to make this year's three-day shopping event a delightful experience. The Friends can't think of a more festive way for both the parents and our volunteers to start their holiday celebrations than coming together and choosing books for kids in our community.

Throughout November and December, community members supported GAKAB by choosing books in a variety of ways. They shopped at Barnes & Noble or at Lion's Mouth Bookstore and went online to order their favorite titles from Amazon and shipped them



Left to right: Meg Deem (GAKAB Chairperson) and Bre LaFleur (Official Spokesperson)

directly to GAKAB at the Library. Several families even donated a book or two each month over the course of the year. Hundreds of books were collected throughout the community from donation boxes placed at Library branches, Green Bay area Nicolet National Bank branches, the local YMCAs, and other organizations and businesses in the community. In addition, hundreds of people donated funds so that the GAKAB team could handle the extra need this year, and even placed a last-minute order of books to ensure that every child in the program was gifted two books this year.

The Friends and the GAKAB team believe that we are more successful when we work together, and we would extend our grateful thanks to all the people who had a hand in making 2023 a gigantic success. Our appreciation goes to The Salvation Army organization and key sponsors including Nicolet National Bank, the Green Bay Area Retired Men's Club, Green Bay Packers Give Back, the Allouez Optimist Club, the Brown County Community Women's Club, Festival Foods, and WBAY-TV2. A big welcome to our newest sponsors, the Premonstratensian Fathers Augustine Stewardship Fund and Breakthrough. The Friends Board of Directors would like to thank the team that manages this annual event along with almost 100 volunteers who make this gifting project possible. And none of our planning would matter if it were not for the hundreds of people in the community who generously donate books and funds to support our kids in need. THANK YOU!

In case you missed out sharing your love of books in 2023, our Amazon Wishlist is still active. We also accept book donations throughout the year at any Library branch. If you wish to make a financial contribution to GAKAB, please make your check payable to "Friends of the Brown County Library - GAKAB" and mail it to 515 Pine St., Green Bay, WI 54301.



Volunteers unload a trailer full of books for the GAKAB distribution



Brown County Library Pop Con™

Was A Rousing Success!



Thanks to the Friends of the Brown County Library, the 6th annual Pop Con was a wonderful success! More than 1,400 people descended on the Central Library on Saturday, October 7, 2023 to celebrate comics, movies, books, gaming, and of course, special guest R.L. Stine.



UW-Green Bay Professor Dr. Bryan Carr interviewed Stine in front of a maxed-out capacity crowd in the Library auditorium. Afterward he met several hundred more fans through a very popular meet-and-greet session. Stine finished the day being interviewed by Library Director Sarah Sugden at Washington Middle School to another enthusiastic crowd and autographed even more books. The excitement and joy that Stine brought to attendees was unsurpassed by any previous Pop Con guest. His appeal is truly intergenerational, and it showed with attendees ranging from babies to adults with their own families in tow.



Pop Con didn't stop with R.L. Stine; there was plenty more for attendees to enjoy. Dr. Carr offered two more podcast recordings throughout the day, including a discussion of the ongoing appeal of video games and an interview with The Shake Ups. The Shakes Ups returned for a second performance (having previously been at Pop Con in 2019) and celebrated popular cartoons through original and parody songs. Award-winning cosplayer Valerie Meacham presented on making creative costumes on a budget and for the first time, attendees could try two different role playing games, Dungeons & Dragons and Pathfinder, with volunteer dungeon masters leading their adventures.



The completion of the Central Library's new flexible meeting space allowed for a major expansion of the Artists' Alley. The number of vendors doubled and we were able to accommodate multiple local nonprofit organizations, including the Boys & Girls Club of Green Bay, Urban Cultural Arts & Event Center, and the UW-Green Bay Radio GBX and Center for Games and Interactive Media. One grandparent told a Library staff member that they had been traveling with their grandchild to Manitowoc for art classes, and they were absolutely thrilled to hear about the offerings of the Boys & Girls Club and Urban Cultural Arts & Event Center that are much closer to home!



Ongoing partnerships with local businesses Gnome Games and Powers Comics also contributed to the success of this event. Gnome Games hosted a gaming area, including giant chess and checkers, and Powers Comics sold comics and memorabilia in the Artists' Alley.



The Library staff is incredibly grateful to the Friends for their ongoing support of Pop Con. This event continues to be a favorite of patrons and staff members alike.

Friends Leadership

Officers

Matt Kolpien, President
 Ellie Reich, Vice President
 Sherrill Revolinski, Treasurer
 Don Kraft, Secretary

Directors

Meg Deem
 Sandra Heinzl
 Curt Heuer
 Barbara Kane
 Monica Moreau
 Lynne Simpson

Advisory Members

Sarah Sugden, Library Director
 Sue Lagerman, Library Liaison



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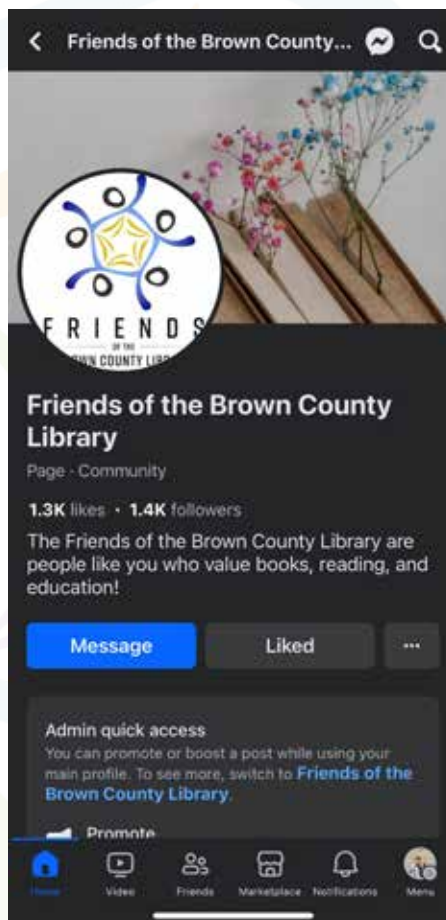
Stay Connected With Us!

Did you know that in addition to the Friends website and tri-annual newsletter, we also have Facebook pages and Instagram accounts? We share all of our upcoming events, updates and information about the Friends on those pages.

If you are active on either Facebook or Instagram, please check us out and give us a follow (*locations far right*). We also have a couple sub-pages with more specific information about upcoming events and campaigns, such as Give-A-Kid-A-Book.

2024 FBCL and FBCL-sponsored Events

BCL Level Up	January 13
BCL What's It Worth Antique Appraisal	January 20
FBCL UntitledTown Presents: Stuart Stotts	February 3
FBCL Reading Between the Spines ("The Wager")	February 17
FBCL Reading Between the Spines: Used Book Swap	March, date TBD
FBCL Members-Only Event with Janna Knittel	April 6
FBCL Annual Meeting	April 8
FBCL UntitledTown Presents: Poetry Workshop w/Cujo	April 13
BCL What's It Worth Antique Appraisal	April 20
FBCL UntitledTown Presents: Poetry Slam w/Cujo	April 27
FBCL Spring BIG Book Sale	April 29 - May 2
BCL Renaissance Faire	May 11
BCL Summer Reading Program	June - August
FBCL Fall BIG Book Sale	November 4 - 7



BrownCountyLibraryFriends.org

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