

## Oshkosh Public Library Highlights

### April 2022

1. The April Poetry Walk in Downtown Oshkosh continues through April 30, with custom display boards featuring the selected poems in 20 downtown businesses and the library. A stroll through the poetry walk offers an inspiring view of the creativity and talent that thrives in Oshkosh and the library is proud to serve as a catalyst for that type of creative expression. A list of participating businesses and all the submitted poems is at [oshkoshpubliclibrary.org](http://oshkoshpubliclibrary.org).
2. OPL plays a role in bringing free books to fourth graders at two Oshkosh elementary schools thanks to a generous benefactor. The Joyce Jones Fick Book Fund of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation provides one free paperback book to all fourth grade students at Emmeline Cook and Merrill elementary schools. Teachers send booklists to OPL; the library orders the books; and library staff deliver the books to the students with a special bookmark for each child.
3. Response to the Lakefly Writers Contests was impressive this year, in advance of the first in-person Lakefly Writers Conference in two years. The contests received 86 entries from 74 individuals in Personal Essay, Poetry, Short Story and Teen Short Story categories. Entries came from across the state. Winners will be honored during an awards ceremony during the conference and winning entries will be bound in a special booklet presented to each winner.
4. The LEGOMania Design Contest once again gave builders the opportunity to stretch their imaginations and put their S.T.E.A.M.-fueled talents on display. The library received 66 entries (in-person and virtual) and 55 people attended the awards event under the Dome on March 25. The entries at all age levels were inventive, with some of the more elaborate projects demonstrating the boundless creativity this type of activity fosters. Thanks to our sponsors Oshkosh Corporation and House of Heroes for judging the entries and donating prizes.
5. Crafternoon offered patrons of all ages some free-flowing creative fun during two sessions in April. The library set out craft supplies, including leftover kits from some of the library's DIY programs, and participants enjoyed a relaxing time working on the project of their choice. More than 40 people attended.
6. OPL's genealogy resources and expertise were on display at the library and out in the community this month. The Genealogy Lock-In under the Dome drew 20 people looking for personal assistance tracing their family history, investigating the history of their house and learning more about Oshkosh past. Local history librarian Michael McArthur also did a presentation for 25 people at the Oshkosh Seniors Center on OPL's online genealogy resources.
7. Participation in the library's High Hopes Early Literacy Storytime is on the rise, with an increasing number of families attending the program that teaches parents how to prepare their children to become readers. Stories and activities focus on how to talk, sing, read, write and play with a

child in ways that build pre-literacy skills that lead to reading. A third session of High Hopes will be added this summer to meet the increased demand.

8. Librarians are taking the library out into the community with presentations that appeal to lifelong learners.
  - Community engagement librarian Sandy Toland delivered a talk on Prominent Black Wisconsinites at the Oshkosh Seniors Center and at a meeting of the League of Women Voters of Winnebago County. A dozen people attended each presentation.
  - Local history librarian Michael McArthur presented his popular talk on the Athearn Hotel to 40 members of the Downtown Rotary.
  - Director Jeff Gilderson-Duwe spoke to 30 members of the Oshkosh Mid-Morning Kiwanis about the library as source of reliable information, purveyor of popular materials and stories, and a public space that promotes community.