

## **Oshkosh Public Library Highlights**

### **May 2021**

1. The City of Oshkosh has launched its first Poet Laureate program. The goal of the new initiative is to enrich the lives of the Oshkosh community by highlighting literacy, sharing the values of poetry, sparking creativity and fostering artistic expression. The effort is a partnership of the City of Oshkosh, Oshkosh Public Library and the Oshkosh Convention & Visitors Bureau.

During the two-year term, the Poet Laureate will promote the art form through publication, performance, education, workshops and social media. Applications are now being accepted, with the announcement of the Poet Laureate set for Sept. 14. Visit [oshkoshpubliclibrary.org](http://oshkoshpubliclibrary.org) for information and the application form.

2. OPL is gearing up for our 2021 Summer Reading Challenge. Starting June 1, participants of all ages can log their reading on the Beanstack app, write reviews and complete badges to earn prizes. Our librarians have plenty of reading recommendations on tap for all ages. After the challenges of the past year, reading is even more important for children to maintain their skills; and research shows that reading helps to reduce stress for adults. For information and links to register, visit [oshkoshpubliclibrary.org](http://oshkoshpubliclibrary.org).
3. The library participated in the recent Star Wars Celebration held in Downtown Oshkosh, promoting the library and helping to build community around this enduring pop culture phenomenon. OPL co-sponsored showings of *The Empire Strikes Back* at the Time Community Theater and staff was there with books from the library's Star Wars collection that moviegoers could check out on the spot. Building relationships with our downtown neighbors is important and made an impression on American Black Belt Academy, which donated the proceeds of its *Learn to be Jedi* light saber training to the library. We thank ABA for their \$300 donation!
4. Since launching our Storytime in a Bag collection four months ago, the bags have circulated 128 times; about 32 times per month. Each bag contains four books and activities, including literacy tips, all based on a theme.
5. The Lakefly Writers Conference was canceled for 2021 but the writing contests were held, culminating with an-online awards event on May 8. Thirty five people attended, including a student winner's extended family in Mexico. In addition to the teen winner born in Mexico, a St. Norbert College student from Nigeria also placed in the contests. There were 86 total entries in the Lakefly contests, submitted by 73 people. Forty Wisconsin communities were represented. The writing contests were supported in part by the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, the Wisconsin Arts Board, the Oshkosh Area Writers Club and the Wisconsin Writers Association.
6. The Mark Gruenwald Comic Book Creation Challenge is underway, with art kits being distributed at the library and around the community to anyone interested in creating an original comic for the contest. There are multiple categories, with extra points awarded to entries centered on the

theme of adversity. The contest is sponsored by Zaroni's Pizza, House of Heroes Comics + Games and the Winnebago Area Literacy Council, with support from the library and US Venture.

7. Community members can now convert VHS tapes to DVD or flash drive at the library. Use of the VHS conversion station is free, with blank DVDs and flash drives available for purchase. Appointments can be made for one-, two- or three-hour sessions.
8. A low-vision desktop video magnifier was recently added on the Second Floor and is available for the public to use during regular library hours. The magnifier can make reading printed materials easier for those who have a visual impairment or difficulty reading small print. It was funded in part by a generous donation from a member of the community.