

Oshkosh Public Library Highlights May 2022

1. Hands-on experiences for children sparked little imaginations, encouraged learning through play and offered STEAM-fueled experimentation during recent library programs.
 - 22 kids used leaves, twigs, evergreen and other items found in nature to create nature weavings during April's Wonderlab session.
 - In two drop-in sessions of Smart Starts in April and May, 125 toddlers and preschoolers engaged in sensory activities at a variety of stations that encouraged interactive learning, discovery and early literacy skills. Whether playing with dried beans, painting with cotton balls or crawling through a colorful tunnel, our youngest patrons got a workout that was beneficial and fun.
 - OPL celebrated Earth Week with a program that undoubtedly left participants feeling a bit buggy. More than 50 kids learned about insect chemistry, created bugs with recycled materials, made recycled seed paper and explored the sights and smells of native and exotic insects. The event was a partnership with the Northeast Wisconsin Local Section of the American Chemical Society and UW Oshkosh.
2. The Lakefly Writers Conference is back and better than ever! After a two-year hiatus, the conference was held May 6-7 at the Oshkosh Convention Center. There were 76 registrations, with attendees coming from places including Oregon, Illinois and Minnesota. Thirty-six Lakefly guests stayed at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel, including a contingent of eight from Wausau. In addition to many presentations, writers had the opportunity to pitch ideas to professional editors and agents; and a website/marketing expert gave free one-on-one consultations. The first 50 registrants loved the personalized book covers created for them before the conference. The Friday night open mic event at the library drew 28 people, with 15 sharing their work. One writer shared a poem written earlier that day in a workshop led by Oshkosh Poet Laureate Tom Cannon. The event ran smoothly and feedback was positive. A full report will be presented at a future Library Board meeting.
3. Thirty people attended a recital featuring students of the Oshkosh Area Music Teachers Association on April 26. Piano students performed a selection of music with the theme of love.
4. Take and make kits continue to give library patrons of all ages the opportunity to learn and be creative when it best fits into their lives. From January through May, the library distributed:
 - 112 Adult DIY kits
 - 135 High Flyers early literacy kits
 - 363 STEAM kits for kids
5. Local history librarian Michael McArthur spoke to 35 members of the Oshkosh Public Museum Auxiliary on May 13 about the history of Stein's Shop, the ladies ready to wear shop in a mansion on High Street that brought high fashion and elegance to Oshkosh from 1924 to 1947.

6. OPL sponsored two screenings of Return of the Jedi at the Time Theater on May 7, allowing the public to see the movie for the low cost of \$4 per person. Community Engagement Librarian was at the theater to talk books, issue or update library cards, register people for the Mark Gruenwald Comic Book Creation Challenge and enter moviegoers into a drawing for free Star Wars books.
7. OPL has installed a Comfort Cabinet on the first floor of the library to make basic hygiene items available to patrons in need. The library is partnering with the Day by Day Warming Shelter to offer shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, feminine products, hand warmers, hats and other basic necessities on an ongoing basis. Day by Day will keep the cabinet stocked with items, which typically are not covered by government assistance programs. The cabinet is one result of OPL staff touring the warming shelter and building relationships with staff there to better understand and respond to community needs.
8. OPL has a new series on our YouTube channel – Book Buzz. Readers advisory librarian Nancy Bell highlights a popular title, breaks it down into smaller parts and walks viewers through three read-a-likes and the similar elements that she believes create reader appeal. Watch for new episodes of Book Buzz on the first Monday of each month.