

Oshkosh Public Library Highlights October 2022

1. OPL's new Elementary Book Club is off to a strong start and coordinating Librarian Kallie Schell is extending its reach by taking the concept out into the community so more children can participate. The club, for ages 5-8, features a different theme each month, a book for the kids to keep, snacks and activities. Ten kids attended in September and 16 in October. Following a lively conversation about mindfulness in September, two of the boys, who didn't know each other previously, read their books out loud to each other. "It was really neat to see a bond form over a story," Kallie said.

Kallie is also visiting Carl Traeger Elementary School at the request of a first grade teacher who wanted to offer the book club opportunity to students who can't attend at the library. Kallie visits three first grade classrooms (71 students), where she reads a book, engages students in an activity and shares information about library events for kids.

2. In response to requests from patrons, the library now has a paper shredder available for the public to use on the First Floor. Patrons may schedule 30-minute appointments to use the shredder. There is no charge.
3. The impact of OPL's Freedom to Read initiative in September continues, with additional community outreach and engagement opportunities.
 - Readers Advisory Librarian Nancy Bell was interviewed for the Public News Service article: ["Banned Books Week Observed in Wisconsin Libraries."](#)
 - Oshkosh Media recorded an educational video of Nancy discussing intellectual freedom for the DEI Employee Committee, which will be available for viewing by city staff.
 - One of the panelists from the Sept. 24 Freedom to Read Presentation, Dr. Katrena Leininger, invited Nancy to present to her classes at UWOC (41 soon-to-be educators).
 - The Freedom to Read Scavenger Hunt led to an impressive increase in Facebook engagement, including significant increases in people reached, post reach, engagement with posts, page likes and page views.
4. The library is offering an impressive slate of local history and genealogy programs in October and November. A combination of guest speakers and library staff are presenting nine programs designed to appeal to Oshkosh history buffs, and offer practical assistance to individuals who are tracing their family history.
 - Starting Your Genealogy: Ten people attended genealogist Sue Goodacre's two-part series on beginning your genealogy.
 - Local History Librarian Michael McArthur spoke to the 20 members of the Paine Volunteer Council about the history of the Athearn Hotel.
 - Local author Michael Cooney spoke to an audience of 12 on the topic of seminal photographer Lewis Hine.

- Twenty people attended a Genealogy Lock In under the Dome on Oct. 7, receiving one-on-one assistance with their research from library staff and experienced local genealogists. A successful spring Lock In led to the addition of a fall session.
- A dozen people attended the Winnebago Land Genealogical Society's program *Finding Her Place: A Yorkshire Mill Girl's Journey to a Home in the Gold Coast Colony*. Presenter Catherine Cruickshank shared the remarkable story of her mother, who became the first single Englishwoman to go out to the Gold Coast to marry an African in 1947.
- Brother Steve Herro from the Diocese of Green Bay spoke to an audience of 10 about how to look for Catholic Church records.

Three additional programs will round out the schedule, focusing on using city directories, railways of Oshkosh and stories from Oshkosh history as told in local author Randy Domer's latest book. Find the schedule at oshkoshpubliclibrary.org.

5. New self-check units have arrived with some enhancements that make them more user friendly for our patrons. The checkout process is largely the same but improvements such as a more sensitive touch screen and scanner; clearer instructions for receiving receipts; and the option for users to adjust contrast and text size on the screen should help to improve the patron experience.
6. The Winnebago Area Literacy Council welcomed 45 people under the Dome on Oct. 1 to celebrate this year's Mark Gruenwald Comic Book Creation Challenge. There were 163 entries for the contest, with 42 submitting completed comics for judging. Prizes were awarded in five age categories. The annual contest celebrates the life and work of the late comic book icon and Oshkosh native Mark Gruenwald. OPL is proud to be a supporter of the contest, which is designed to inspire creativity and promote literacy. Winning comics for 2022 can be viewed at gcbchallenge.com.