



CURRENTS

Volume 13 Issue 2, Fall 2017

HOURLY OF CODE

True or false: The process of learning and understanding computer code is extremely complex and beyond what most of us can comprehend.

Answer: False.

And, Great River Regional Library will be showing patrons young and old just how accessible the process of coding actually is during the Hour of Code program.

The Hour of Code is an internationally-recognized movement designed to make the concepts of computer science appealing to everyone including young children – in as little as one hour.

With this in mind, throughout the week of Dec. 4-10, Great River branches will be stocked with 7 passive programs, 4 kits (including LEGOs & snap circuits) 4 circulating games and staff on-hand to assist.

Each branch of Great River will have their own unique assortment of these coding games, books and activities. Patrons are encouraged to stop by their branch of GRRL any time during open hours to learn more and try them out.

Friends of the Library Gather to Share Ideas

It's not every day that library supporters from all six Great River Regional Library counties are in the same place at the same time.

But, on September 21, members of 14 central Minnesota Friends of the Library groups came to the St. Cloud Public Library for Friends Meet Friends – an evening of socializing, networking and learning.

The event included a lively social hour, followed by a presentation by Sue Hall, director/consultant of St. Paul-based organization Library Strategies.

Friends of the Library groups operate independently from the libraries they support. They generously give their time and energy to planning and hosting events like books sales. Funds from events such as these support initiatives like 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten and the Summer Reading Program.

Great River is honored to have 28 different Friends groups throughout the region, working hard to help us provide great programs and events. We're happy that we were able to bring them together to help them share their great ideas and thank them for all they do.

To learn more about the Friends, and how you can get involved, visit your local library.



Stargazing in Buffalo

The Buffalo branch of Great River Regional Library is now the home of an Orion StarBlast Reflector telescope, available for checkout with an adult library card.

The telescope is the brainchild of retiree and Buffalo Rotary Club member Mark Boyd.

The offering is the first of its kind at Great River Regional Library – and in Minnesota in general – but Boyd says telescopes are a proven library success story in states such as New Hampshire.

Once he had the idea, Boyd, an avid astronomy enthusiast with his own home observatory, worked with the Rotary Club of Buffalo to secure the funding for the device.

Once the telescope arrived in Buffalo, Boyd took time to teach library staff the ins and outs of using the complex device.

While Boyd is preparing to spend the winter in warmer climes, he is committed to making himself reachable by phone and email to help staff and patrons with their telescope questions.

It seems likely they'll be taking him up on this.

Buffalo Library manager Amy Wittmann says the telescope has already become a popular item with library users. It's currently out on a three-week checkout, and names are beginning to populate the waiting list.

Boyd says his goal is to see a telescope in every branch of Great River Regional Library, and he'd like to help make that a reality.

"The more we can embed this with kids, the better off we will be as a society."

To learn more, contact the Buffalo Public Library at 763-682-2753.



Mark Boyd shows Buffalo staff how to focus the telescope's lens.

GRRL2GO Locker System Opens in Sartell

Exciting news in our world: **GRRL2GO** is officially up and running at the Sartell Community Center!

The new center is now fully-loaded with a 44-locker system, a payment kiosk for fines and renewals and a book drop.

Library users have been busily making their item requests, which are dropped off every Tuesday. Materials are picked up from the book drop Tuesday-Friday.

Anyone with a Great River library card is free to use **GRRL2GO**.

GRRL2GO is the first Bibliotheca locker system in Minnesota and was made possible through a partnership between Great River Regional Library and the City of Sartell.





St. Cloud Public Library selected for first-of-its-kind internship



This summer, St. Cloud Public Library was one of 35 libraries nation wide to receive a Public Library Association (PLA) grant – paid, mentored internship for 52 high school juniors and seniors from diverse backgrounds.

That’s how Debraha Omot, a 2017 Apollo High School graduate, was able to spend the summer at the library helping plan activities.

Debraha, in partnership with nonprofit organization Hands Across the World, planned and held a 6-week story and craft program for children. She also assisted with the library’s inaugural Summer Meals program in tandem with the YES Network.

In June, Debraha and mentor/ St. Cloud librarian Kate Buechler traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet 52 other interns from 25 states. And, after the internship ended, they went to Chicago to present on and discuss the summer with other PLA interns.

Help Support Library Services for 2018

At Great River Regional Library, we’re always adding to and improving on what we offer – our materials, our programs, our services.

And, with your gracious support, we will continue to change lives throughout central Minnesota.

Donors like you make it possible for us to provide free and equal access to words, digital tools and educational programs that empower people to be the best they can be.

Your generosity will allow thousands of people throughout central Minnesota to receive the kind of service, advice and support that only a public library can provide.

- Free access to over a million printed and digital books, audiobooks, CDs, DVDs, magazines and newspapers
- A wealth of digital tools and the training to make the most of them
- An abundance of programs and events, region-wide, that educate, entertain and inspire
- Welcoming spaces with helpful, dedicated and compassionate staff members

During this season of giving, we want to say thank you ... for supporting public libraries now and in the future.

2017 Annual Appeal Donation

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Email: _____

Yes! I will support Great River Regional Library with a gift of:

Gift Amount: (checks made payable to GRRL) \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

Please include my/our name in donor recognition as above or I/We would like to remain anonymous.

Mail gift to: Accounting Dept., Great River Regional Library, 1300 W. St. Germain St., St. Cloud, MN 56301 - or donate online at griver.org/support-the-library

Information you provide here is protected under Minnesota Data Practices statutes. Providing this information is strictly voluntary and will be used for GRRL financial accounting and to support GRRL fund development activities. It will be available only to authorized library personnel and contracted vendors. There is no consequence for not providing this information.

CurrentsNov-2017 Annual Appeal - Office use only: Pstm _____ Amt. _____ Ck # _____ Init _____



1300 W. St. Germain St.
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-650-2500

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST CLOUD, MN
PERMIT NO. 2382

To update mailing information please call
Public Relations at (320) 650-2549.

Axis 360 - GRRL's Newest Digital Library Addition

Great River Regional Library e-book and e-audiobook fans will soon have a new way to find what they're looking for.

Axis 360, an e-materials platform, will be added to the Great River lineup alongside current platform OverDrive as part of our digital library.

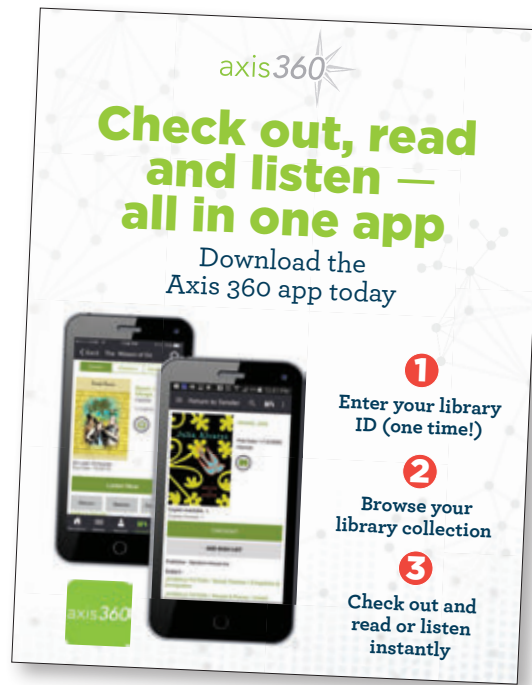
Over the summer, Great River staff reviewed and compared several digital media options, and ultimately chose Axis 360. Here are a few of the reasons why:

- Axis 360 is affordable; it will allow us to devote more money into purchasing new materials instead of paying high annual fees.
- Axis 360 has a strong commitment to patron privacy; Axis 360 doesn't require you to create new credentials to access your materials. It also doesn't share library user information in order to promote its services.
- Axis 360 has a great reputation as an ADA-accessible system. In fact, it was developed with the help of the National Federation for the Blind.

Axis 360 is compatible with most devices, with the exception of Kindle Paperwhites/E Ink readers and first/second generation Kindle Fires. Users of those devices will still have the opportunity to download their materials via OverDrive.

The service will be rolled out to the entire GRRL region at the beginning of 2018. Feedback from users will be crucial and will help us determine which programs and services to use in the future.

Great River Regional Library is the first library system in the state of Minnesota to use Axis 360. Watch for announcements in the next few weeks related to the rollout!



It's Your Lucky Day...

Through your generous donations, GRRL is excited to announce the launch of the "Lucky Day" collection, which features the most popular books from your favorite authors, available immediately for checkout.

Seven libraries are part of the pilot program: Foley, Big Lake, Cokato, Kimball, Swanville, Long Prairie, and Pierz. Each will receive a starter collection of 20 items. Each month through March 2018 the participating libraries will select/receive 4 additional titles/month. Items are no holds, no renewals, one week checkout, limit of two per library card. The titles will not appear in the public catalog - patrons will need to visit our library buildings to access this new collection.

The books are labeled with a shamrock spine label sticker and a sticker on the front with the loan terms.

Save a Tree: Get Your Currents By Email

Contact us at currents@grrl.lib.mn.us if you would like to receive this newsletter by email.

Your information is protected by Minnesota Data Practices statutes. Providing your email is voluntary and will be used to support GRRL fund development activities and is only available to authorized library personnel and contracted vendors.

