



Scholar Donor Highlight: St. Cloud Reading Room Society

Great River Regional Library wishes to express appreciation to the St. Cloud Reading Room Society, a dedicated and loyal Scholar-level donor. The Reading Room continues the original goals of its founders to acknowledge the importance of reading and the library in a community.

What is the story behind the St. Cloud Reading Room Society?

Marilyn Obermiller, the society's Historian, shared in an interview how they started. "In 1865, eight women met with one goal in mind, to promote reading and literacy in a growing town on the Mississippi River called St. Cloud. It was their hope to one day have a free Reading Room and Library. It became the driving force of the Reading Room Society."

Today, their mission statement remains the same, "The Reading Room Society promotes reading, literacy, culture, and education in our community."

Marilyn explained that their dues of 10 cents per meeting were used to buy books. When they reached 181 books, they began to lend them to people to take home and read. They continued to work to achieve their real goal of a free public Reading Room. The women of the society heard that Andrew

Carnegie was building libraries. They wrote to him requesting a library for St. Cloud but saw no success. It was rumored that he did not respond to letters from women. Not willing to accept defeat, they had their president, Alice Eastman, ask her husband, Alvah, to resubmit their letter, and

he graciously did. They received a positive response and were able to start the Carnegie Library in St. Cloud.

With this foundation, the St. Cloud Reading Room Society continues to promote the library.

Current President Linda Radin shared that the Reading Room commits a portion of

each member's annual dues to the St. Cloud Public Library. Upon building the new library in 2008, a donation was made for the Reading Room on the second floor. Additionally, this past year the society supported the Makerspace and Lego Table. In regards to giving to GRRL, Linda shared, "We enthusiastically encourage donations to this worthwhile and important community asset."

Thank you, St. Cloud Reading Room Society, for all you have done for the library and all that you continue to do advocating for literacy and learning in our community.



2020 Year-End Campaign Success

Great River Regional Library (GRRL) is grateful for the community's overwhelming support in 2020. The library raised \$104,939 for its 2020 Year-End Campaign!

Executive Director Karen Pundsack shared, "It is humbling to see this record-breaking generosity from our donors, especially during this challenging time. GRRL's goal for the Year-End Campaign was \$47,500 from 900 donors. It is encouraging to receive over \$100,000 from 1,052 donors. I am grateful for the help of so many people. We will use these funds to enhance literacy and extend access to bring more resources to more people in our communities."

Covering six counties in central Minnesota, GRRL serves many communities with varying needs and interests. As communities continue to evolve, the library has a greater demand to offer the best quality services and resources. With the financial support from our Year-End Campaign, the library will continue to enhance new collections and put forth more innovative library services.

To learn more about how your donations impact your local library, visit griver.org/why-give.

Mark Thelen, GRRL Scholar-level donor and Fund Development Committee member, challenged GRRL staff to a matching gift of \$1,000! This matching gift was to encourage staff to participate in the philanthropy of the library system and create a sense of togetherness. Due to an overwhelming staff response, he raised his matching gift to \$2,000 to reflect the amount of staff giving!



Mark Thelen



Story of Hope: Access

Through the experience of the pandemic, our library staff has indeed acknowledged the importance of our libraries. However, we do not realize how meaningful our collections and services are for our library users. Our staff has been sharing their stories of hope about how the library is impacting our communities. To shine a light and spread a little cheer, this story highlights our accessibility:

"Yesterday, I had a man come into the library, and he was so pleased to be able to come in and was very impressed that we

had a library in such a small community. He came in to use the computer and pick out a book. He also wanted to make copies and was very thankful for the help. He said, "Because of you, the rest of my day will be better." – Cindy

Many library users, especially our seniors, enjoy visiting the library for human connection and accessing resources. GRRL prides itself on being open to all – even in our small communities! Our mission is to be the place where Central Minnesota can explore, learn, and connect.

Seeking Sponsors for Summer Reading Program

READING
COLORS Your
WORLD.

The theme for iREAD's 2021 Summer Reading Program (SRP) is Reading Colors Your World. The broad motif of "colors" provides a context for exploring humanity, nature, culture, and science, as well as developing programming that demonstrates how libraries and reading can expand your world through kindness, growth, and community. Library users young and old will be encouraged to be creative, try new things, explore art, and find beauty in diversity.

The Great River Regional Library (GRRL) SRP is one of the best programs around! A fun way to keep kids learning and their minds growing! It is offered free of charge to all children, thanks to our sponsors. What does being a GRRL SRP sponsor mean? Children who participate can receive fun reading incentives and earn prizes at their local library, while having the resources to stay on track for school during the summertime – all thanks to you! In 2019, nearly 12,000 babies, children, and teens signed up to participate! We hope to fundraise enough to have every child go home with a book of their own. Your sponsorship will make a difference for many children in your community.



Your sponsorship of \$500 entitles you to:

- Complimentary subscription to GRRL donor newsletter, Currents
- Thank you in Currents newsletter
- Annual recognition on GRRL website's "Our Supporters" page

Your sponsorship of \$750 or more will also be recognized with:

- All previous entitlements PLUS:
- "Thank you Sponsor" poster for display in all 32 GRRL branch libraries

Your sponsorship of \$1,000 or more will also be recognized with:

- All previous entitlements PLUS:
- Special acknowledgement on website's homepage in June
- Organization logo included on "Our Supporters" page on website
- Donor listing in GRRL Annual Report

2021 Donation To Support Summer Reading Program

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) \$500 \$750 \$1000 Other \$ _____

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

Mail gift to: Circulation 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.

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Lucky Day Expansion

Bookworms, it could just be your lucky day, but you won't know it until you visit the library!

Lucky Day is a Great River Regional Library service meant to give library users immediate access to some of the newest and most popular titles without waiting. With the help of donations this past year, the library has expanded the Lucky Day collection! So now we have even more new selections, with popular authors like Dan Brown, James Patterson, Jan Karon, Robyn Carr, Vince Flynn, and more.

Typically, these famous authors have a long waiting list, but many of the most sought-after titles will be available right away with our Lucky Day collection! To get your hands on these items, you need to visit the library to check them out. Unfortunately, you can't reserve these books online. There is a two-book limit per person, one-week checkout, and titles are not available for renewal. You'll know you found the Lucky Day items by a shamrock label on the spine.

Have a popular author or title you've been waiting to read? Stop by your local library and see if it's your "Lucky Day." Thank you to our donors who have made this fun and exciting collection continue to grow!



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.

