



CURRENTS

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New Play2Learn Toy Collection in Paynesville



conversation between caregivers and children. These suggestions are intended to encourage children’s exploration, reflection, and discovery while using the toys.

While a few other Great River Regional Library locations offer unique items for checkout, like ukuleles or snowshoes, this is the first Play2Learn toy collection available for checkout. Play2Learn kits have also expanded to the libraries in Buffalo, Eagle Bend, and Staples with the help of their Locally Growin’ fundraiser. The kits are first-come, first-serve, and available for a one-week checkout.

The Paynesville Library has a new collection named Play2Learn, which is ready for caregivers to check out! This collection was made possible with a generous \$500 donation from the Paynesville Lions Club.

In 2019, Bill Spooner, a Paynesville Lion’s Club member, shared an idea with Gretchen Vork, the previous Library Services Coordinator, about creating a toy library where people could check out toys and take them home. Though the initial response was positive, the project was put on hold after Gretchen passed away in early 2020 and the pandemic hit. It wasn’t until late 2021 that the Paynesville library staff revisited the concept. Kateri Gruber, the current Library Services Coordinator, collaborated with Bill and Connie Laing, a children’s librarian at Great River Regional Library, to further develop the idea. They decided to offer toys that promote learning through play and provide help to caregivers in supporting children’s academic, social, and emotional development. Each of the 19 toys comes with an activity sheet highlighting the skills the toy is designed to develop, tips for everyday learning, and suggestions for interaction and



Thank you so much, Lions! We are grateful for an engaging and caring community that supports the library and collaborates to see meaningful projects come to life. We are excited to see early literacy grow and watch families checkout the Play2Learn kits.

Pictured from left to right: Bill Spooner, Lions member; Kateri Gruber, Library Services Coordinator; Eric Glenz, Lions president.

Donor Highlight: Gwen Kranz

Great River Regional Library has very generous supporters and advocates, and we want to express our gratitude. Gwen Kranz, a Scholar-level donor who uses the Sauk Centre Sinclair Lewis Library, graciously shared with us her library story.

When did you get involved with the Great River Regional Library?

My earliest memory of the library is when I was little. My mom would take us there with friends. We would spend the day watching scary movies and checking out as many books as possible! It was such a treat to lay on the floor, watching movies, surrounded by books and friends! The Book Mobile was also an important date on our summer calendar!

What services (or materials/books) do you use at the library?

As the world changed, I went from joining the summer reading program as a kid checking out books to an adult checking out book club kits, getting recommendations, and using some online rentals. I also appreciate the book discussions, author visits, and art opportunities that the library currently offers. Not only is this of value to me but to our community as well.

Why do you support the library through giving?

When I moved to Sauk Centre, I was able to experience the beautiful Carnegie Library. It gave me a different perspective on what a library could also be...a historic landmark. This realization was when I started to feel it was important to support the library system not only with my interest in their services but also with my

dollars. A library is essential to a community as a whole: the young, the old, the curious, the adventurer, the reader, the artist, the extrovert, and the introvert. Everyone who makes up our community can find something to spark their interest at the library.

What would you say to someone considering donating to the library?

Donating to the library is more than an offering to keep the library open and pay bills. A donation to the library is a commitment to the value of reading, learning, educating, and growing the minds of your neighbors.

Thank you, Gwen, for sharing your library story as an advocate and generous supporter.



Consider a Meaningful Gift

Leave your legacy by giving back to your community through your local library. Your decision will make a lasting impact and continue preserving and enhancing the library. A planned gift is a charitable donation that financially benefits both the donor and the institution receiving the gift. Planned gifts include outright gifts, bequests, life insurance, retirement plans, and charitable trusts. Including Great River Regional Library in your will is an easy way to give back. With the help of an attorney, you may include a bequest for the library within your will. Visit griver.org/planned-giving for more information and our *Statement of Intent form*.



Support GRRL with the Year-End Campaign

For over 50 years, the residents of Benton, Morrison, Sherburne, Stearns, Todd, and Wright have looked to Great River Regional Library (GRRL) for excellent and efficient public library services.

Although the materials and programs have changed over the years to meet the unique needs of central Minnesota, the heart of the library remains the same: we improve the culture of literacy.

At our core, we seek to increase literacy skills and reading among community members.

GRRL proudly offers nearly one million items for the community to browse and a dedicated library staff to get those items of interest into library cardholders' hands. In addition, our material delivery system ensures that checking out is effortless and timely.

We connect people to materials and resources they need or desire, resulting in increased reading!

We thank you if you have already given towards our 2023 Year-End Campaign! If you have not yet donated, we invite you to show your support. Your continued contribution is crucial to our mission. With your help, we can improve our community's culture of literacy.
Join us in serving the community through your local library!

Fill out and return the form below to show your support.



2023 Year End Campaign

Each year, we ask for library supporters to provide a tax-deductible donation to the library's year-end fundraising campaign. Your support will keep information and resources available-free of charge for Central Minnesota.

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Yes, I will support the library and literacy with a gift!

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$25 Other _____ (Checks payable to GRRL.)

Please do NOT mail a thank you letter for this gift.

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Prefer to donate online? Visit us at griver.org/support-the-library or scan the code!

If different from what is shown, please tell us how your contact info should appear, so we may correct our files. _____

Please send me library news and development info via email. If not already provided above tell us your email: _____

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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Thank You Sponsors

Great River Regional Library would like to acknowledge its generous 2023 Summer Reading Program Sponsors. Thank you for making a difference for the children in our community. Program participants received fun reading incentives, attended events at their local library, and had the resources to stay on track for school during the summertime, all thanks to your sponsorship! For our 2023 program, across 32 branch locations, we had a record-breaking 12,973 babies, children, and teens participate! (An increase of exactly 300 from last year!) Thank you for making their summer exciting and educational.

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