

New Regional Supervisor



Jami Trenam has been promoted to the position of Regional Supervisor - Central Branches, responsible for Clearwater, Foley and Waite Park libraries and St. Cloud Public Library's Patron Services.

Trenam joined the library in 2007. Prior to promotion, she supervised the St. Cloud Public Library's busy circulation department with approximately 30 staff.

She will continue to oversee the supervision of Circulation until a new supervisor is hired. She will begin her supervisory responsibilities of the St. Cloud Patron Services department at that point.

"While I love working in Circulation I've wanted the opportunity to work directly with other branches and administration," she said. "The new position is a perfect blend of working with the public and staff."

A recent read Trenam recommends is "Blood, Bones and Butter," a memoir by chef Gabrielle Hamilton, owner of Prune restaurant in New York.

Added Catalog Tools Help Children Find Books at Their Interest and Reading Level

Finding the right library book for young readers suddenly got easier, thanks to a new information feature added to the Great River Regional Library (GRRL) online catalog.

The catalog now displays Lexile® audience and item measures, Accelerated Reader® item reading levels and interest levels, and Scholastic Reading Counts!® item reading levels and interest levels. Each of these systems measures how difficult or easy a book is to read. Accelerated Reader (AR) and Scholastic Reading Counts (SRC) also measure the interest level for books, using school grade levels as a scale. Many schools use these measures and can tell parents at what level their child is reading.

This means library users can now target their searches of the GRRL catalog (at <http://pac.griver.org>) according to their reading level or, more likely, the reading levels of their children. To find books, readers can search by level from the catalog's "Search by Number" drop-down menus, or link to other books at the same level as a reader favorite. Parents can choose books which stretch the reading ability of their child or choose books that will not be frustratingly difficult. They can also choose books by interest level, which may be different to the reading level. Using the measures now available on the GRRL catalog, a ninth-grade child with sixth-grade reading ability can find readable books likely to meet his or her interests. Children who enjoy reading and through frequent reading become good readers are more likely to find long term academic success.

Note: Items are scored by Lexile, AR and RC, not by the library. Reading level information is not available for all items including many which are recently published and have not yet been scored.



The Lexile measure indicates an individual's reading ability or the difficulty of a text. A student gets his or her Lexile reader measure from a reading test or program. A book gets a Lexile text measure when it is analyzed by an automated system. A children's board book might measure as low as 10 on the scale. "Robert's Rules of Order" scores 1500.

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a computerized progress-monitoring tool used to provide feedback on students' comprehension of books. AR uses a scale to show the difficulty of a text. A level of 4.5 means the text could likely be read by a student whose reading skills are at the level of a typical fourth-grader during the fifth month of school. AR Interest Levels employ a similar scale. For example, Gary Paulson's teen adventure tale "Hatchet" has an AR level of 5:7 and an AR interest level of Middle Grades 4-8.

Scholastic Reading Counts! (RC) is a reading program available for Grades K-12 which combines reading practice and software-based reading assessment. In this system, "Hatchet" has an RC level of 6.3 and an RC interest level of 6-8.

Voila!

It's now easy for foreign film fans to find movies they'll enjoy.

Searching the Great River Regional Library (GRRL) catalog got easier because staff have done the following:

- a) Geographically subdivided the "Foreign films" heading in all records where it appears, making it much easier to identify films from specific places.
- b) Subdivided geographically the "Feature films" heading for films produced outside of the United States.
- c) Adjusted the "Motion pictures" heading in these records so that it always refers to the language of the film rather than the country of origin. For example, "Motion pictures, Spanish" will bring up a list of all films in Spanish, regardless of whether they come from Spain or Latin America.

To see how the improved searches work, try a General Keyword search and enter "Foreign films, France."

A Laughing Matter

We're changing the labels on our comedy DVDs so you're less likely to be confused.

It's been a minor irritant (like a stone in our shoe) that whereas the specialized library computer system Great River Regional Library uses defines funny films under the "Comedy" heading, the only appropriate labels offered commercially read "Humor."

Despairing of those two ever getting together, the library has developed its own new "Comedy" label. The new labels are already appearing on recent purchases, but for a while comedy and humor will co-exist. Volunteers are helping staff replace the old labels, with a December goal for making everything "Comedy."



Kindle Joins Accessible List For GRRL Digital Library

Selections from the Great River Regional Library (GRRL) Digital Library are now available on Kindles as well as on other major digital playback devices including the Nook and Sony Reader.

GRRL's Digital Library provides eBooks and eAudiobooks. They are the same bestselling books and audiobooks you see on the library shelves, but in digital formats. Digital formats and reading/listening devices are increasing in popularity as the devices become lighter, cheaper and more user-friendly.

Technology behind GRRL's Digital Library comes from OverDrive, a nationwide digital distributor of eBooks and eAudiobooks. Until the recent update, OverDrive was not compatible with Kindle, the eBook reader sold by major online retailer Amazon. Today, library patrons can access the Digital Library regardless of what type of device they own.

GRRL's digital library is now compatible with all major brands of e-readers. Browsing, searching and checkout of eBook titles is unchanged. When a user checks out a Kindle book, a "Get for Kindle" link is presented that opens a window at Amazon prompting the user to login to their Amazon account. Fulfillment occurs at Amazon's website so users will need an Amazon account to access the library eBook in the Kindle format. No purchase or credit card is required to create the account, just an email address.

As with items checked out to other digital devices, the eBook expires at the end of the lending period.



Suggest a Title, Digital or Not, to Add to the Library's Catalog

Help us expand the Great River Digital Library by making recommendations for what we add. We've added a button to the Great River Digital Library inviting you to "Help us expand our digital collection! Suggest a Title."

A simple 'click' on the button sends you immediately to the "Suggest a Title" page where you can suggest not only eBook and eAudiobook digital resources, but also titles for other formats including DVDs, CDs, magazines and books. Don't be shy! This is your library, tell us what you want.

Suggest a Title

St. Michael Volunteer Group Win Awards

St. Michael's Building It Together volunteer group was a 2011 winner of the Minnesota Library Association's Above & Beyond Award. The group received the award for its work raising funds for the St. Michael Public Library, which opened in its current location in December, 2010.

The MLA Above & Beyond Award is given in recognition of a recent group or individual contribution significant to the Minnesota library community.

The Building it Together group also received the Evy Nordley Award from the Minnesota Association of Library Friends, given for a Friend of the Library project with impact. Through its volunteer efforts, the St. Michael library has been able to purchase entrance signage, patio furniture, artwork, a bicycle rack, display racks, and special furniture for the children's and teen areas. These items, in addition to tax funded support for construction, have created a new facility in St. Michael that is both popular and attractive.



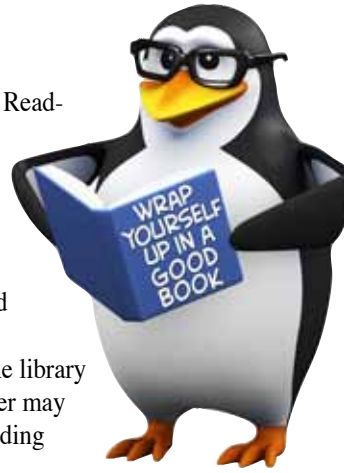
Volunteer fundraising allowed the St. Michael Public Library to add features such as this special furniture purchased for the children's area.

Wrap Yourself Up In a Good Book

“Wrap Yourself Up In A Good Book” is the theme for the 2012 Winter Reading Program at all 32 GRRL locations.

Adults and teens in the sixth grade and older are invited to participate. Register for the program at your local library to receive a reading record/drawing slip. Each slip, completed after reading five books, can be entered into regional and local prize drawings. Nook e-readers, fleece blankets and mugs will be offered as prizes, all provided by the generosity of the St. Cloud Friends of the Library.

Look for a winter themed reading list on the New, Best & Fun pages of the library catalog. When you are warm inside and the smells of baking fill the air, winter may be the best reading time of year. Add some fun with the library’s Winter Reading Program!



SRP to Begin Earlier in 2012



The library’s 2012 Summer Reading Program (SRP) has been brought forward one week.

It will begin June 4 and end Aug. 4. This schedule aligns the beginning of the program with the first weekend many schools close.

Survey feedback prompted the change. Parents said their children didn’t want to wait up to two weeks after the end of school to begin the library program. Some feared their children were already dropping out of the reading habit before the SRP began.

Staff hope the new schedule will increase participation, enjoyment and learning.

Themes for the 2012 program are: “Dream Big, Read!” for children from birth through sixth-grade, and “Own the Night” for sixth-grade through twelfth-grade.

Legacy Programs Begin 2012 With Pizazz

Have fun in the new year by taking part in informative and creative Legacy programming at GRRL.

Legacy programs are made possible with money from Minnesota’s Arts and Cultural Heritage fund. Each GRRL location schedules authors, artists, musicians and other presenters for the enjoyment and enlightenment of library patrons. Here are a few of the Legacy programs already booked for January and February. Contact your library or visit the griver.org events page for more information.

Winnie the Pooh Page-to-Stage workshop from Great Theatre for ages 3-8
Staples, Jan. 7; Foley, Jan. 14; Long Prairie, Jan 17; Howard Lake, Jan 18; Big Lake, Jan. 28.

Author/Artist/Musician Presentations

Doug Wood, (“Old Turtle”), *Swanville*, Jan. 10; David & Marilyn Bengtson, Poems and Songs About Love, *Long Prairie*, Jan. 12; Stan Tekiela (bird identification books), *Elk River*, Jan. 12; Gary Harbo cartooning workshop, *St. Michael*, Jan. 13; Amy Filipczak, Harpist, *Annandale*, Jan. 14; Arlene Nelson, (“Crackers And Milk”), *Upsala*, Jan. 18; Amy Filipczak, Harpist, *Kimball*, Jan. 21; Gary Harbo cartooning workshop, *Monticello*, Jan. 26; Dan Newton, Accordionist, *Belgrade*, Feb. 3; Jonathan Friesen (“Jerk, California”), *Delano*, Feb. 15; Chad Lewis (Road guides to haunted locations series), *Waite Park*, Feb. 23.

Guthrie Bus Trip - “Cat On a Hot Tin Roof” for older teens and adults
Paynesville, Feb. 4; *Big Lake*, Feb. 18.



Celebrate the joy of reading and knowledge with a gift to Great River Regional Library. Your tax-deductible donation will help keep information and resources available and free of charge. Visit griver.org/support-library to make an online donation.

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Great River Store Open for New Shopping Fun

Make the Great River Store a new stop in your winter shopping for 2012.

Show your support for library services by shopping at the new Great River Store where you'll find affordable clothing, hats, gloves, fleece vests, sweatshirts and many more items available for the whole family, even toddlers and children. We even have gift certificates for those 'hard to buy for' on your list!

All items have the GRRL logo so you can proudly show your support of libraries.

Look for the Services/Store link on the library's home page, www.griver.org. Visit the store today for shopping at the library.

Have an item you would like to see? Let us know by sending us your suggestions on the store link. New items will be added periodically.



Ladies' Fleece Vest

This warm, comfortable fleece vest is available in violet, tea rose, celery and basic black, priced at just \$31 in sizes S, M, L & XL, \$36 in 2X.

Fleece Scarf

Stay warm this winter with a lightweight but warm scarf, 9" x 58", available in Alpine Green, Black, Heather Charcoal, Maroon, Midnight Navy, Red and Royal. Only \$11!



Twill Cap with Rolled Edge

Soft reinforcement at front crown. Contrasting fabric rolled edge visor. Contrast color sweatband with deluxe four-needle stitching. Self fabric strap with hook and loop closure. Contrast underpeak. Precurve bill. Low profile. 100% cotton. Only \$11.00!

Patron Services Specialist Hired



Sandy Toland has been hired as a Patron Services Specialist based in the St. Cloud Public Library.

Before coming to Great River Regional Library, Toland worked with Minitex, an information and resource sharing program of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the University of Minnesota Libraries. Originally from Florida, she received her MLS from the University of Tennessee. She has also worked at libraries in New Orleans and Iowa City and has expert knowledge of information resources in a library setting.

She recently read and recommends "Asterios Polyp," by David Mazzucchelli, a graphic novel the Los Angeles Times called "haunting and beautiful."

Save a Tree: Get Your Currents By Email

This Currents newsletter is available for those members requesting it via email. To reduce costs, save trees and, of course, protect our environment we encourage as many advocates as possible to consider taking full advantage of this by switching to the electronic .pdf version. Please contact Julie Henne at currents@grrl.lib.mn.us if you would like to receive the newsletter by email or have any questions or comments. As always, the newsletter is produced just for our library advocates. We thank you warmly for your support, and if you have any suggestions about content we would love to hear from you.



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