

October 2023 Director's Report:

### 2023 Friends Membership Drive Report

- **So far, the 2023 Membership Drive has brought in:**
  - 103 total members
  - \$3,105.00 total income
  - 11 have used the online payment method

### Library Programming / Events:

- **Online Knit & Crochet Group (continual)**
  - We continue to host weekly Zoom meetings, hosted by Tena.
- **Book Club (continual)**
  - This is hosted in-person, by Beth.
- **Story Times**
  - Paula and Beth have offered story time events in the Children's Department (and sometimes outdoors)
- **Lego League (monthly)**
  - Continues year-round as a passive program offered monthly on Saturdays.
- **Come & Go Crafts (on days with no school)**
  - Each time the school schedules a teacher in-service day, our Children's Department will host a come-and-go craft all day long.
- **Art Sparks**
  - Every third Saturday there will also be an art activity in the Children's Department.
- **Friends of the EPL Silent Auction**
  - The Friends' Silent Auction is back this year, accepting donations now through November 15<sup>th</sup>, with items on display November 1-16, and the bidding ending at closing time on November 16<sup>th</sup>.
- **Craft series for adults & teens**
  - Beth hosted a sewing series in September, and Tena plans a Crochet series for October and a knitting series for November.
- **Teen Events**
  - Beth is planning a series of fun opportunities for teens, beginning with ghost painting in October.
- **Upcoming:**

- **Lucille Ball**

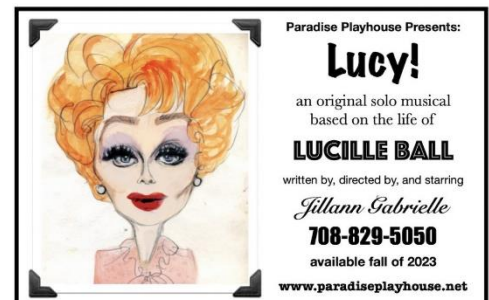
- Join us for a free musical theater event on November 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm as Jillann Gabrielle puts on a show as Lucille Ball.

- **Wonka Event**

- Our Children's Department is planning "A Day at Wonka's Chocolate Factory" on November 14<sup>th</sup> from 6-7pm.

- **December Holiday Event with Rosemarie & Tena**

- Still in the planning stages, this is tentatively set for Saturday, December 9 from 10-12 with food items and crafts for adults and teens.



## Other News:

- I attended the **ARSL Annual Conference** September 20-23 and have many notes to put to use as we make plans going forward. It was especially useful to hear sessions dealing with challenges to library collections and how those nationwide have dealt with this issue.
- Plans for our annual **Staff Development Day** are in place, and we currently have 10 people from other libraries planning to join us. We will have refresher sessions scheduled with EBSCO and Mango, and will also be hosting panels with local members of human service organizations including Hope Haven, Public Health, UDMO Housing Services, and IowaWORKS. There will be time for roundtable discussion, as well.
- Our **handicap door** continues to be problematic. For months now, we've gone through attempted adjustments, repairs, replacement with a refurbished unit (this one is no longer produced), then the warranty-covered replacement with another refurbished unit...and it continues to have problems. Paint & Glass has found a new unit that the company has recently put out and has not had issues with. We will be trying that next and hope that it solves the issue.
- We have recently been offered duplicate copies of materials from the **Norwegian American Historical Association** at St. Olaf College. With a rapidly-growing Sons of Norway group in our county, we expect these materials might draw an interest from the public. Searching for a place to house them, I reached out to Jeanne Egeland of our now-defunct Genealogical Society, and she shared that the DAR books we have in our genealogy section could be relocated to the museum. They are undergoing renovations that will allow them more space for their library. This opens up one full column of shelving for us. I consulted with Jan Grieg, who is currently on the museum board, and she brought it to them for approval at their September meeting. Once their renovation is complete, we will work with them to move the DAR materials there.
- Since 2018, I have been part of a nationwide committee working on a grant that would formulate a family experience that would encourage children to consider biomedical careers. Now, after several years of deferrals related to Covid, the project is currently in the test phase. It is called **STEM Escape (VENOMventure)**, and consists of an escape room experience for families with children ages 8 and up. This will be an 11x23' inflatable bus that contains a series of puzzles families must work out in order to escape. There are interactive pieces within the game, along with further games families can play before or after their turn in the escape room. These visits will need to be scheduled in advance, staffed by our staff or trained volunteers, and surveys will be conducted. It will be here in Estherville for a limited time in the fall of 2024, and is currently in the testing phase at a few locations nationwide. Reviews from families thus far are exceptionally positive, with most asking when they could do it again. This is a very exclusive opportunity that may or may not be made available to other libraries at the close of the project, so I'm excited we will get to offer it here!
- On September 28<sup>th</sup>, Shana Stuart from the **Carnegie Libraries in Iowa Project** stopped in to view our facility and collect any records we had from 1900-1920. She will digitize these and return them to us, and this will enable us to be included in her compilation of resources about each library in Iowa. I've also asked to be included on her list next spring when she returns to our area to give a program in Spirit Lake. When she does these, she customizes them to the library she's visiting, and I expect people would find this interesting.

