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# Three Iowa libraries win special levys, several more alter library boards

Middletown, Pocahontas and Coon Rapids voters approved special library levys in their communities on November 3. Several other communities voted for changes in the make up of their library boards.

The special library levy (also called the 27 cent levy) is a potential source of additional funding for public libraries allowed by the Code of Iowa, 384.12 (21). The Code allows cities (including cities without their own public library) to levy an additional tax of up to \$0.27 per \$1,000 assessed property valuation for support of a public library. A petition and referendum is required to pass the levy. The levy question may be put on the ballot in regular city elections, held in odd numbered years. The next opportunity to have it on the ballot is November 2011, followed by 2013, 2015, etc. For information about the levy go to <http://www.statelibraryofiowa.org/ld/funding-info/sp-levy>.

There was a split decision on a ballot initiative establishing the library levy for the cities of Middletown and Danville. Middletown voters approved the tax levy, offsetting the cost to contract with the Burlington Public Library. Danville's initiative did not pass. Residents in both communities have been unable to access library services due to their city councils' refusal to pay service fees imposed by the Burlington Public Library board.

In the 2010-11 fiscal year, Burlington library services will cost Middletown \$2,944 and Danville \$7,736, which is the final year of a five-year phased-in payment schedule, according to the Burlington *Hawk Eye*.

Lola DeWall, Pocahontas Public Library Director, said their library levy passed by 142 to 17. She noted that the city did not put an ending date on the levy so it will not have to be voted on again. The amount they'll receive won't be known until late November.

Coon Rapids taxpayers will generate about \$6,000 a year when their library levy goes into effect. The vote passed 308 to 118.

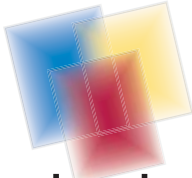
Ames Public Library had two propositions on the ballot. The first changed the term of office of trustees from six years (no reappointment permitted) to a three year term with eligibility for a second consecutive term. The second change delegates the hiring of employees and purchasing of materials to the librarian under board policies, using the language suggested in the State Library's "Iowa Library Trustee's Handbook." Formerly the wording stated that the trustees hired/fired all staff and purchased everything.

According to the Iowa Code, section 392.5, "A proposal to alter the composition, manner of selection, or charge of a library board, or to replace it with an alternate form of administrative agency, is subject to the approval of the voters of the city." Therefore, to change the number of board members, add a board member such as a rural resident or change the authority of the board (such as taking away or adding a responsibility), the proposed change needs to be voted on by city residents. The city council and/or the library board cannot, by themselves, make these types of changes to the library ordinance.

Other cities that voted for changes on their library boards were Sigourney (reduced number of trustees, term appointments and composition of board members), Central City (reduced the number of trustees and their terms of service), Rake (reduced number of board members), New Virginia (allows rural individuals to serve on the board), Marion (established term limits for board members), West Liberty (set term limits for board members), and Blainstown (added rural members to library board and restricts board members to no more than two consecutive terms).

Anyone who has further information about library-related ballot initiatives from November 3, 2009 should contact [Sandy Dixon, State Library](#).





# Hundreds “Make a Splash” at summer reading workshops

More than 485 public library staff attended this year’s summer reading workshops, “Make a Splash at Your Library, READ!” for children and “Make Waves at Your Library” for teens.

Workshop presenters were Karen Randleman, State Library, Brenda Hall, teen specialist at Des Moines Public Library, and Judy Proksa, head of children’s services at the West Des Moines Public Library.

This year’s four-hour program combined both children’s and teen’s workshops.

“We decided to experiment with this year’s presentations because most children’s librarians in Iowa are also the teen librarians,” said Randleman. “The summer reading themes of both groups are compatible and program age is really on a continuum with no specific cutoff. Programs that work for teens may be adapted to ‘tweens’ and programs for younger kids may be good venues for teen volunteers.”

Marty Stahl, Kothe Memorial Library in Parkersburg, wrote “I just want to say thanks to Karen, Brenda and Judy, as well as Carol [Simmons, State Library] and any others from behind the scenes for making this another great summer reading workshop. You do a fantastic job helping us prepare for the summer. We appreciate all that you do for us!”

The photos were taken at the Denison workshop.



*From left, Brenda Hall, Karen Randleman and Judy Proksa*





## Data Center updates population profiles

In partnership with other agencies, the State Data Center produces eight profiles a year on different Iowa populations, particularly if a group has a celebration like Black History Month or Hispanic Heritage Month.

Each profile contains interesting facts and figures about the particular group, as well as colorful photos and graphs.

The first publication was produced in 2005 with a profile on Asian Americans in Iowa at a request of the Commission on the Status of Iowans of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage.

Data Center staff had such a positive response from the profile that they started producing others, including:

- African Americans
- Latinos
- Older Americans
- Native Americans
- Women
- Iowans with disabilities

Profiles may be downloaded at <http://www.iowadatacenter.org/Publications/Profiles>.



*A new profile on Native Americans in Iowa was recently created by State Data Center staff.*

## Law librarian tells library story

*Mandy Easter, law library, recently shared this "breath-taking" story with staff.*

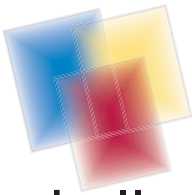
"Late today--almost closing time--I answered the phone and heard the caller say, 'Yeah, this is Sgt. (muffled) with the Des Moines Police Department.' Long pause while animated protestations are heard in the background. My heart raced, my breathing became suddenly shallow, my hands started to sweat, and the color drained from my face. I thought, where are my three children right now?"

"Finally, he spoke again: 'Yeah, I'm here with a guy who owns one of those storage unit rental places and he's going nuts because he wants to evict some renters who haven't paid in a while. I told him he can't just throw their stuff out, there's a protocol that has to be followed. I called the Polk County Attorney and he said that's not a county ordinance, it's a state law, and that I should call you guys. I've got my laptop right here. Can you tell me what state law governs this situation and how to access it on the computer and I'll print out a copy for this guy.'"

"Relief washed over me. While I quickly looked it up for him, I told him that I had three teenagers, so I nearly had a heart attack when he announced that he was calling from the police department. He said, 'Sorry. Didn't mean to scare you.' I told him the Iowa Code chapter number and walked him through the process of accessing it on the Internet. He said, 'Got it. Thank you so much. You guys are great and I appreciate the service.'"

"Cory [Quist, State Library] and I were absolutely elated that the Polk County Attorney's Office thought highly enough of the State Library to refer an on-duty police officer to us. They must have had our number handy!"





## Marshalltown, Conrad public libraries receive state, national awards.

Building projects began with LSTA grants from the State Library

The Iowa Architectural Foundation (IAF) recently named the Conrad Public Library as its recipient of the 2009 Community Design Excellence Award. The award was presented September 24 during the annual Iowa League of Cities convention in Davenport.

The new library in Conrad's downtown area was recognized due to local support of quality architecture and the impact the new library has on the community's quality of life. According to the IAF, "The library project exceeded expectations because new jobs were created, the structure is now home to several community-based events, and patron visits have increased significantly." Principal architect of the library was Tim Jones of Struxture Architects.



The Marshalltown Public Library received the Silver Award from the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) Great Plains Chapter at their Biennial Interior Design Awards held in Des Moines earlier this year. The library has also been LEED Gold certified by the U.S. Green Building Council as verified by the Green Building Certification Institution. LEED is the preminent program for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. John Karrmann, FEH Associates, Inc., was principal architect of the project.



Marshalltown Public Library

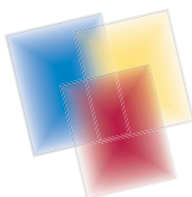
Both libraries (Marshalltown in 2000 and Conrad in 2003) began their building projects using space planning grants from the State Library. The State Library allocates [Library Services and Technology Act \(LSTA\) funds](#) to provide Iowa libraries with space planning consultation. These grants allow librarians to get professional advice from impartial consultants who provide guidance and recommendations to library staff, city officials and the community about use of existing space and/or preparing for a building project. The space planning grants have been funded by the State Library since fiscal year 1994. Grants of up to \$3,000 are awarded as funds are available. The grants are administered by Lily Lau, East Central Library Services, Cedar Rapids, (319) 365-0521; [llau@cls.lib.ia.us](mailto:llau@cls.lib.ia.us).

## Certification Update

Congratulations to the following public library staff certified for the first time through the [State Library's Iowa Certification Program for Public Librarians](#).

Jody Delany, Harpers Ferry  
Sarah Evans, Humboldt  
Carolyn Hartmann, Cumberland  
Jamie Williams, Boone





## All Iowa Reads “Driftless” in 2010

When David Rhodes’ first three novels were published in the mid-seventies, he was acclaimed as “one of the best eyes in recent fiction” (John Gardner), and compared favorably to Sherwood Anderson. In 1976, a motorcycle accident left him paralyzed from the waist down, and unpublished for the subsequent three decades.

With “Driftless,” the All Iowa Reads (AIR) selection for 2010, Rhodes returns to the midwestern landscape he knows so well, offering a fascinating and entirely unsentimental portrait of a town apparently left behind by the march of time. Home to a few hundred people yet absent from state maps, Words, Wisconsin, comes richly to life by way of an extraordinary cast of characters. Among them, a middle-aged couple guards the family farm from the mendacious schemes of their milk co-operative; a lifelong paraplegic suddenly regains the use of her legs, only to find herself crippled by fury at her sister and caretaker; a woman of conflicting impulses and pastor of the local Friends church stumbles upon an enlightenment she never expected; a cantankerous retiree discovers a cougar living in his haymow, haunting him like a childhood memory; and a former drifter forever alters the ties that bind a community together. *(Book review from Milkweed Editions)*

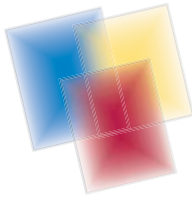
Book reviews, information about David Rhodes, and posters are available now. Book discussion questions, purchasing information and more public relations materials will be available soon. Check the [Iowa Center for the Book Web site](#) regularly, and remember to add your book discussion event to the Iowa Center for the Book Web site for a chance to win 10 copies of the 2011 book.

The 2010 selection was announced at the Iowa Library Association Conference on October 23. At that time, a drawing was held from the names of libraries that submitted information to the AIR Web site about their book discussions of the 2009 selection, “The Rope Walk.” Clear Lake Public Library won 10 copies of “Driftless.”



Don't forget.....  
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## News from around the state

### Brain food

Kids two years old through fifth grade were treated with books from the Le Mars Public Library this Halloween. According to an article in the *Daily Sentinel*, Lisa Vander Sluis, children's librarian, said "We believe the gift of reading is the best treat we can give the young people of the community." Vander Sluis accepts donations of gently used or new books from the public, and said she picks up many at garage sales.



### Walz rides for a cause

Estherville Public Library Director Carolyn Walz put on her helmet and took her first motorcycle ride recently for the annual Shayla Bee Fund ride. The event is named after a Spencer girl who died of a rare disease in 2005. Bee's family uses the money from the fundraiser to help families who have children with medical needs. At left, Tracy Nelson and Carolyn Walz

### New information about flood damaged libraries

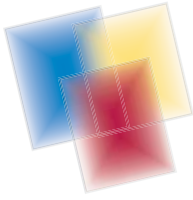
Recent newspaper articles regarding Cedar Rapids' flooded libraries report that the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library will remain in the same area as the original building, but FEMA mandated that the Cedar Rapids Public Library move to another site.

Associated Press stories noted that the Czech museum board of directors voted unanimously to build an exhibition center and library adjacent to the flood-damaged museum. Plans call for the museum and library to be built above a parking garage to ensure it will not flood again.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) said Cedar Rapids must build its new downtown library on a site other than where it was along the Cedar River. The city could receive an extra \$4 million in disaster payments for the library. Two sites have been identified as preferred locations for the new library.



*Czech museum/library entrance, June 24, 2008*



## Decorah staff receive mental health first aid training

Thirteen Decorah Public Library staff members and one city hall employee recently completed a 12-hour Mental Health First Aid USA training. The training teaches skills for providing initial assistance to people experiencing mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, and substance use disorders. Created for the lay person, the course is the mental health equivalent of CPR training: anyone can provide first responder-type assistance until professional help becomes available.

According to Library Director Lorraine Borowski, "The MHFA training will be extremely valuable because the library is a public facility meeting the needs of wide and varied constituents and more than 26 percent of American adults experience a mental health problem in any one year."



## Story County librarians "geek" trains with Governor Culver

When Ames Public Library Director Art Weeks was invited to take part in Governor Chet Culver's visit to Nevada to speak about his wind power initiative, he asked the governor to be part of a picture with other Story County librarians involved in the "Geek the Library" campaign.

The photo shoot went fine, and then things got even better. Expecting to only meet with the governor for a potluck in Nevada, the group was surprised at the invitation to join him on his whistle stop tour that included Iowa Falls, Mason City and Manly.

"The train tour took us up to Iowa Falls, at which point we disembarked and got a shuttle bus ride back to Nevada," said Weeks. "I figured the train ride

would be something like the Boone tourist train. Boy, I was wrong," said Weeks. "It was actually a train of the most elegantly appointed parlor cars I had ever seen. It was quite an afternoon with the governor!"

From left, Lynne Carey, Ames Public Library, Kathie Swift, OCLC field marketing manager for the Iowa "Geek" campaign, Weeks, Governor Culver, Beth Williams, Nevada Public Library, and Kolleen Taylor-Berven, Bertha Bartlett Public Library, Story City.

Remember...

