A VISION FOR 2024
Prioritizing community needs.

FREE TO READ
Celebrating access to banned books.
A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM DIRECTOR

I like this quote because the library is possibilities. We encourage the aspiring writers who devour our current novels and attend writing classes and programs and the young entrepreneurs seeking information from databases and classes on how to launch their business. We assist the recently unemployed individual using our computers to fill out job applications, and welcome new parents learning how to build early literacy skills for their children through picture books and tips at our storytimes.

We provide a space, a collection, programs, and services open to anyone and everyone.

We know things are tough right now for many. Rising costs, housing challenges, financial instability, and general uncertainty in the world are common stressors. We took some extra time this year to review community assessments and other resources to better understand the needs of our residents and determine where library efforts can make the most impact. For 2024, we identified two audiences and areas of focus: people experiencing financial hardship and folks building life skills.

HPL is already making a concerted effort to promote our services for those needing life skills or trying to address money challenges. We partner with agencies such as ADRC, Second Harvest, Healthcare for Homeless Veterans, Project 16:49, and others which have periodic office hours in our study rooms. We offer MyChart training, social media misinformation and safety programs, and computer and job-hunting programs at GIFTS Men’s Shelter. We partner with Faith Literacy andYWCA on citizenship and English Language Learning materials and classes, work with P4J and HeadStart on early literacy efforts, and provide inspirational memoirs and self-help books. The Library coordinates clothing exchange events, collaborates with ECHO and individual donors to provide essential hygiene, food, and clothing items for those in need, and serves as a safe-place warming and cooling center.

We will continue to explore ways to serve these audiences using library resources. Whether it’s our bookmobile, programs like our Hedberg Hangout, or a new and exciting initiative called Healthy at Hedberg, our vision for the upcoming year is focused on meeting essential community needs.

The library will still have storytimes at our main location and the Express Branch and host booktalks, still provide programs of interest, and purchase titles ranging from bestsellers to the esoteric. We will continue to explore ways to serve these audiences using library resources. Whether it’s our bookmobile, programs like our Hedberg Hangout, or a new and exciting initiative called Healthy at Hedberg, our vision for the upcoming year is focused on meeting essential community needs.

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On Tuesday, October 3, more than 240 book lovers gathered in Library Park for our first ever Banned Books Giveaway to celebrate their freedom to read. The free books (more than 130!) were gone in less than an hour and the library collected over 40 postcards to send to local legislators.

Three HPL librarians planned the event, recognizing that libraries across the country are struggling with book bans and protests.

“We had a wonderful time chatting with patrons of all ages,” said Claire Kinder, Innovation Librarian at HPL. “And we also got to witness fantastic conversations about the different ways banning books harms people and their right to read.”

The team, which also includes Young Adult Librarian Gabi Draxler and Public Services Librarian Kasey Weiland, is looking forward to making the event bigger and better in 2024.

Q&A WITH OUR NEW DEPARTMENT HEAD

HPL has welcomed a new Lead Librarian as the head of the Public Services Librarian team.

Laura Gest brings with her 14 years of library experience in both small and medium sized libraries, including some time as a library director. She lives nearby on a small hobby farm with her husband and two daughters, ages 10 and 12.

Q: What is your favorite library service?
A: LIBBY! I listen to audio books all the time and have already read or listened to 69 books this year.

Q: What is the strangest thing you’ve found in a returned library book?
A: A homemade tortilla.

Q: What is the biggest highlight of your career so far?
A: Being asked to be an earlier reader for Amy E. Reichert’s book Once upon a December.

“I am excited to learn more about a large library and to work in such a beautifully remodeled building.” - Laura Gest, Lead Librarian
LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

STORYTIMES BEGIN
JANUARY 3

Music and Movement
Mondays at 6 p.m.

Babies in the Library
Wednesdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Wiggle and Rhyme
Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

An ASL interpreter will be available at both storytimes.

Fridays with Friends
Fridays at 10 a.m.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY
Saturdays from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
January 13 & March 2
PROGRAM ROOM

Drop in to explore play stations and activities that help kids express emotions, build relationships, and master difficult situations. Discover how you can duplicate the stations at home! An adult caregiver must accompany children. Families welcome. No registration necessary.

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HPL once again offered Stories with Santa & Mrs. Claus during downtown’s Janesville Jolly Jingle, held the first weekend in December. Computer Systems Manager, Emrick Gunderson and JATV’s Tina Breeze-Wahlers reprised their roles as the famous North Pole couple.

Visit our StoryWalk at the Robert O. Cook Memorial Arboretum, offered in partnership with the City of Janesville’s Parks and Recreation Division and the School District of Janesville.

WINTER TITLE:
Ten Ways to Hear Snow
by Cathy Camper
Installed around the winter equinox.

A snowy day, a trip to Grandma’s, time spent cooking with one another, and space to pause and discover the world around you come together in this perfect book for reading and sharing on a cozy winter day.

DYK? You have access to an entire library of animated books and games for children with your library card. Tumblebooks is a great computer program you can access from home 24/7 or within the library. The website has a wide variety of picture books, as well as easy reader and chapter books that your child can listen to and follow along with. Visit hedbergpubliclibrary.org to get started today!

Kanopy Kids is a collection of movies and shows for kids available in public libraries only! HPL offers unlimited plays in Kanopy Kids, so your kids are free to explore enriching, educational and entertaining films and TV series. Visit Kanopy.com to start watching!

Jamila & Spotty are back! After months of construction, The Children’s Room is fully open, the giraffes have returned, and we’re excited to unveil some new features and fun additions over the next few months. Watch for details on our website and social media!

Love has no language, but you should.

Hedberg Public Library
In November, HPL Children’s Room staff began their 24th year of visiting first grade classrooms of public and private schools. This early literacy initiative started in 2000 as a way to reach out to community elementary school students and their families, explains Julie Westby, HPL Youth Services Librarian.

“We thought first grade was a great grade level for the visits since these kids are just starting to read on their own,” she says. “Our hope for these visits is that kids and their families will learn about the library and come and visit us.”

Library staff begins each visit by sharing a story called If You Take a Mouse to the Library. The story, based on If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, by Laura Joffe Numeroff, was created by HPL Youth Services staff members and follows Mouse as he enters the library, signs up for a library card, and enjoys a variety of fun activities in the HPL Children’s Room, like meeting Jamila and Spotty, the HPL resident giraffes, finding a new book, and spending some time on the KidSpace computers, Julie explains.

Staff then shares basic library information, such as details about the three locations and types of materials available for checkout, as well as reads another book or two with the children. “We try to use newer books published in the past year,” Julie notes. “Over the years, teachers have commented how much they appreciate seeing books that they may not have yet seen.”

Each first grader is left with a take-home bag (this year’s features literary characters Elephant and Piggie) that includes a letter to caregivers about HPL, a library card application, and a flyer explaining the organization of our Easy Reader collection. The goody bag also includes a sticker, bookmark, and a pencil. All printed material is presented in Spanish as well.

Julie says this program typically gets Children’s Room staff in front of 600-700 students each year. “We usually get quite a few families coming in after the visits,” she notes. “All the staff members tell the kids to say ‘hi’ when they come in to visit, and it’s always fun to be on the desk when a kiddo from the school you visited comes in!”

“These visits allow us the opportunity to get out into the schools to introduce young people to the world of possibilities inside the library,” says Charles Teval, Interim Library Director.

In addition to this annual program, visits and presentations by library staff and/or the HPL Bookmobile as well as tours of HPL are available by request.

** Want the library to visit your school or organization? **
Visit our website to fill out our online request form or call 608-758-6600 to find out how request a visit to or from your library!
We are so lucky to have such a great library. As one of my pastor friends said as he moved to Minnesota... the Janesville library is its best kept secret! People need to know! I agree agree agree.

"YOU SAID IT!"

"We are so lucky to have such a great library. As one of my pastor friends said as he moved to Minnesota... the Janesville library is its best kept secret! People need to know! I agree agree agree." - Judi H.

JM4C is a state-certified prevention agency with a focus on reducing substance use and promoting mental wellness. Earlier this year, Janesville Mobilizing 4 Change (JM4C) announced it had received an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant from the Rock County Board of Supervisors. This grant allowed Director Xandi Finn to implement Project H.O.P.E. (Homeless Outreach Prevention Efforts), which hosts monthly training sessions at Hedberg Public Library for those experiencing homelessness.

"The goal with the ARPA program is to build skills and knowledge within the unhoused community to help them find and maintain housing," explains Xandi. "Being unhoused is a pretty massive risk factor for substance abuse. Reducing the number of unhoused individuals will reduce the rate of drug and alcohol addiction."

As a division of the City of Janesville, JM4C operates under the oversight of the director of HPL. This partnership has strengthened the outreach and impact of the nonprofit, which is housed at the library. "Being here has been beneficial to the library patrons and JM4C," Xandi says.

"It’s a great partnership that we’re learning to lean into more- to not just be supportive of each other but collaborate on things."

-Xandi Finn, JM4C Director, on working with HPL

The number of unhoused individuals in the city has grown over the last two years as the availability of affordable housing has decreased. Notably, an increase in the number of dual income families experiencing housing insecurity. Xandi shares that she was surprised to learn many participants she’s encountered through Project H.O.P.E. are in fact employed.

“We try not to have those judgments, but that came up for me,” she relates. “That made it very real—you just don’t become unhoused by just not having a job. Jobs aren’t enough to maintain a home.”

Additionally, there are more than 500 unhoused children in Janesville—ranging from those that may be couch surfing or in temporary living arrangements to those sleeping in vehicles.

Each month, Xandi works with attendees to “look at what is holding them back from being able to access housing, trying to figure out the roadblocks and what we can do to connect them with the services they need.” Monthly workshops focus on different pillars of well-being, including mental health, budgeting, job skills, nutrition and healthy cooking through a collaboration with UW Extension, and physical education—including where one can work out for free. “For so many reasons that’s a good thing,” Xandi points out.

The work of the program also includes acting as a liaison and encouraging connections with community organizations that could provide support to those experiencing homelessness.

“We’ve partnered with community organizations and are trying to bridge that gap,” Xandi explains. “Once you’ve been hurt by the system, you don’t have that trust.”

Since Xandi began the workshops at HPL, the number of those attending has increased, up to 20 participants each month, she says. “There was some hesitation and discomfort when it first started. I had to go out [to the lot the City of Janesville has designated for overnight parking] and invite them in and let them know we want them to come hang out with us.”

LEND A HELPING HAND

As cooler weather sets in, JM4C is collecting donations to support those who attend Project H.O.P.E. workshops at HPL. Items specifically requested include:

- Gallons of water
- Baby wipes
- Small propane tanks
- Socks
- Sweatshirts (sizes M-4XL)
- Regular and super tampons
- Fanny packs

Find a full wish list and learn how you can support the mission of JM4C at www.jm4c.org.
We appreciate the generosity of the individuals who gave to the HPL Foundation during July - September.

Interested in supporting your library? Visit our website to learn all the ways you can give to HPL.

Joann Anderson
Beloit Memorial Hospital
Dr. S.W. Chang
Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin
G.R. Cope
Gregg and Helen Dickinson
Delores Dilley
Friends of Hedberg Public Library
Nancy Hough
Janesville Noon Lions

Joann G. Rivas Revocable Trust
Katchen Ringelstetter
Rock County 4H Fair
In Memory of:
Kay Harrison
Joan Malin
Teresa Terrill
Arlene Ferguson
John Ringelstetter

The HPL Foundation helps to support library programs, services, and facility needs.

Interested in making a donation to the library’s Foundation? Visit HedbergPublicLibrary.org, scan the QR code, or call 608-758-6600.

The Friends of HPL have generously supported the renovation of the Youth Services department that included a new ceiling and lighting fixtures.

Gifting the library $15,000 and $10,000, respectively, the two nonprofit organizations helped make the necessary improvements possible, creating a bright and updated space for young minds to explore.

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Stop in to the library or HPL Express through the month of December to grab an ornament off the Friends of HPL Giving Tree and donate an item of need to support a variety of library programs and services in 2024. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Library Matters, HPL’s quarterly newsletter, will no longer be mailed to Friends members as part of their membership.

Using our safe and secure PayPal link online or fill out our membership form to become a Friend of HPL.

Membership dues and proceeds from the shop and other fundraisers enhance the library and its services.

Membership starts at just $20.

Get an emailed copy
All library cardholders with an email on file will receive an emailed copy of the newsletter.

Not a cardholder?
Get a library card today or visit our website to subscribe to library news.

Scan the QR code with your phone’s camera to learn more about the Friends of HPL!

Hedberg Public Library's 14th annual fall fundraiser, A Night at the Library, was held on Saturday, October 21 and welcomed about 75 people as they glammed up for our “Art Gala.” Visit the library’s Facebook page for fun photos.

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Scan the QR code with your phone’s camera to learn more about the Friends of HPL!

Happiness is a cup of coffee & a good book.
Lucky for you, we have both!

Friends of HPL get 20% off their purchase.
This mailing is sponsored by the
FRIENDS OF
HEDBERG PUBLIC LIBRARY

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to learn more about the Friends of HPL!

CONNECT WITH HPL ONLINE

NONPROFIT DISPLAYS

Need a space to promote your community organization? Check out the library’s display areas!

Contact Jodi at 608-758-6593 or jrichards@hedbergpubliclibrary.org.

LIBRARY ART, EXHIBITS & DISPLAYS

DECEMBER
Watercolors by Woody Olsen

JANUARY
Acrylics by Rachel Klimczyk
Acrylics & Watercolors by Sukey Ryan
Model Trains by WIS-ILL HO Modular RR Group

FEBRUARY
Student Art by School District of Janesville

INTERESTED IN DISPLAYING YOUR ART?
Call 608-758-5803 to learn how.

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Introduction to Finding Grants

Inform and focus grant seeking efforts using this comprehensive directory of grantmakers, grant recipients, grants, and 990s across the globe.

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