



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2025



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Looking outside you can see the season changing, but what hasn't changed is the generosity of the Coralville community. Because of your generosity we were able to fund many extra programs at the library. Here's the amounts that the Friends have raised in each of the last 4 sales:

11/24 \$5,250
02/25 \$6,900
05/25 \$5,200
08/25 \$7,050

We were also able to give grants to Coralville Central, Northwest Middle School (which was in great need because of the addition of the 6th grade to the facility), Kirkwood Elementary, and the Community Food Pantry. What a blessing. Everyone is a winner—the donor, the buyer, the library, and the community. We have our next sale on **November 7 and 8**. Book donations are always needed and it's also a great place to find some great Christmas gifts.

Some of you have asked what is the difference between the Friends, the Foundation and the Library Trustees. Think of this as levels of service. The **Friend's** main concern is fostering the love of reading by providing funds to the library basically from the book sales. Each year we get a wish list from the Library staff. One of the projects we used to do was Baby Book Bags. We now support Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, co-sponsoring that program with the Foundation and the Library Board. We also provide funds to local schools and the Food Pantry to foster reading. The Friends Board is elected by its membership. Our monthly meetings are open to the public

*The **Foundation** is the next level up. Started in 1998 they handle larger projects and are equipped to receive gifts and bequests. They build funds to help ensure the long-term stability of the Library and coordinate fundraising for major capital projects. They also sponsor the sale of shirts through a partnership with Raygun—all proceeds, beyond cost, go to the foundation. New foundation members are appointed by current foundation membership, per their by-laws.

The **Library Board of Trustees** members are appointed by the Coralville mayor and approved by city council. It is the top level overseeing the operation and expenditures of the library. The library director presents budget and policy issues in monthly meetings with the trustees.

The **Friends'** success is primarily due to your support—donations and membership—and is greatly appreciated.
See you at the sale.

Bill Benson



**See editor's note page 6*

IMPORTANT

2026

Membership Renewal
New Sale Schedule

Officers & Board Members

President
BILL BENSON

Vice President
LEE ANN LOGAN

**Secretary &
Community Outreach**
MARGARET MELLECKER

Treasurer
PAT DARLING

Archivist
LINDA CRETZMEYER

Book Sales
DEB GILL

Library Liaison
SARA JANE PITCHER

Members at Large
SHIRLEY ALTENHOFEN
WENDY GRASBY
DEVAN KADUCE

Newsletter
SANDIE HERWIG

Publicity
SARA JANE PITCHER
MARIE WAKEMAN

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We had a very busy summer "leveling up" at the library! More than 1,050 children signed up for the Summer Reading Challenge. We hosted 43 events for children at the library and ventured out to North Ridge Park and the Coralville Community Food Pantry weekly. Thanks to support from the Friends, we were able to invite many special guests. Through all of these events, we strive to foster positive feelings toward the library and within the community and create lasting memories for families.

On June 2, more than 180 people attended a reptile show with the **Cold-Blooded Redhead**. Kids and families enjoyed interacting with the animals, especially the snakes and giant tortoise. **Prairie Patch Farms** was a huge hit with children, adults, and library staff! The 110-person audience learned fascinating facts about llamas and alpacas and then posed for selfies with two llamas. **Carole Stephens** of Macaroni Soup has been a popular entertainer and returned June 24 with an interactive music show for 88 preschoolers and caregivers, complete with puppets and "snowballs." On July 9, more

than 50 school-aged children and caregivers watched and participated in a mix of science experiments with the **Grout Museum of Iowa**. The combination of dry ice and a balloon was a particular favorite.

Thank you for funding fabulous incentives for Summer Reading participants. We love being able to provide a book as a halfway prize; caregivers always seem happy about this reward as well. It's so special for the children to get to choose from a variety of titles; 420 books were selected this summer! Participants may also enter into a prize drawing when their reading challenge is completed. This added bonus can make all the difference in motivating a child to finish. Your gift allowed us to purchase prizes related to the Level Up theme for each age group. This year we offered board games, puzzles, movie theater and bookstore gift certificates, and "mystery bags" of games.

Thank you for your ongoing support of **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Coralville**. Our program has served a total of 917 chil-

dren; 506 are currently registered! So far, children in Coralville and rural Johnson County have received 17,596 books.

Thank you for your steadfast support of children's services at the library and your dedication to serving the community of Coralville.

Sincerely,

Sara Glenn and
Erika Binegar



LLAMAZING

More pictures on page 7.

TEENS / TEEN ADVISORY BOARD (TAB)

On behalf of the teens who participate in the Coralville Public Library's teen programs, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks for your continued support.

This summer's reading program theme, "*Level Up at Your Library*," was a huge success—with more than 425 teens signing up to participate in reading challenges and library activities. It was a busy and wonderful summer!

Thanks to the Friends' generosity, we were once again able to offer a teen intern position, which made a tremendous difference. We hired **Bodie Williamson**, a University of Iowa senior and former Teen Advisory Board member.

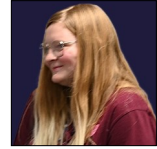
Bodie brought not only extra help at our many events, but also exceptional graphic design skills and a positive, college-aged role model for our teens. He was truly an invaluable addition to the team!

We're also deeply grateful for your sponsorship of our teen programs—including funding for supplies, food, and prizes. The Friends made it possible for teens who completed the program to choose a free book and helped us provide exciting Prize Baskets for the Grand Prize Drawing at the Teen Finale Pizza Party.

Another highlight was the t-shirts for our Teen Advisory Board members, designed by the teens

themselves and worn proudly throughout the summer at every event. Your support helped them feel recognized and connected as a team.

Finally, we want to thank you for continuing to honor our dedicated teen volunteers through the Friends Teen Service Award. This year's \$1,000 award went to **Aster Jacobson**, a most deserving high school senior. This recognition will help Aster pursue their future education and goals.



Your generosity makes all of this possible. The impact of your support extends far beyond the library walls—it helps nurture confidence, creativity, and community in our youth. Investing in them is one of the best investments our community can make.

With sincere gratitude,
Karen Stierler
Teen Services Librarian



In her own words . . .

Shirley Altenhofen

I was born in Mitchell and grew up in Parkston, SD. My education included a BS and MS in Education (Elementary and Special) both from USD in Vermillion, SD. I taught at Yankton High School, where I was tasked with starting a Resource Room to support educationally challenged students.

I moved to Iowa 1984 when I married my husband and started a craft business making and selling wood, iron, and sand-blasted items.

I was widowed in 2001, after which time I joined Master Gardeners and became a member of the American Conifer Soci-



ety collecting miniature and unusual plants and trees.

While in Harper, I became an election worker and joined the city council, later becoming mayor. While on the council, I was a board member and later president of the Keokuk County Community Foundation, which distributed funds from the casino through grants to the towns in the county.

In 2014 because my friend wanted to move, I made the decisions to go if it would be to the Iowa City area. When my friend found a great condo association in a really convenient area, I decided to buy into the same neighborhood—close to the library, Performing Arts Center, grocery stores and gas stations, medical facilities, rec center, park, shopping and restaurants, as well as emergency services.

There were hiking trails and even free public transit for seniors, among other amenities. I've ushered at the Performing Arts Center and also am a volunteer for the Coralville

Friends, currently working at the book sales and community meals.

Before Friends supported the Imagination Library, I co-chaired the Friends Baby Book Bag program ordering, organizing and distributing the books where needed, later developing an additional program that allowed the Friends to support other early childhood readers.

I enjoy reading murder mysteries, crossword puzzles, going to the theater and movies, and visiting the Minnesota Arboretum.

The move Coralville was a great decision.

ADULT PROGRAMMING

Thank you, Friends, for supporting our Adult Summer Reading Challenge and activities. This summer we were able to provide more programs for adults including a Puzzle Competition and Trivia Event. Both programs were well attended, and because of the Friends, we were able to award prizes to the winning teams

I once heard the Friends described as the Library's indulgent grandparents; an apt description as

they fund all of our prizes. Friends money allowed us to give away \$600 worth of gift cards to local businesses for the Adult Summer Reading Challenge Grand Prize Drawings.

But you didn't have to win to walk away with a prize. Due to the generosity of the Friends and of our community's like-new book donations, we gave away a free book to everyone who completed our Adult

Summer Reading Challenge—a total of 496 books!

New this year by request, we had a Large Print Prize Cart which was welcomed by older readers.

Thank you, Friends, for everything you do to make our events and programs extra special.

Mike Jorgensen



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

A big thank you for your ongoing support of our reading programs. We had over 1,000 children participate in this year's summer reading challenge, and over 400 teens. We had close to 950 adults sign up for the adult summer reading challenge with half of those submitting a reading log at the end of the summer. The programs throughout the summer were extremely well attended—a very successful summer of reading across the board!

Fall is well under way, and that means the Engle Prize event at CPL is coming up. The **Paul Engle Prize**, awarded by the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, is made possible through the generous support of the City of Coralville and is held annually at the Coralville Public Library.

The annual Paul Engle Prize event will be on Sunday, November 16 at 2:00 p.m. **Cole Swensen**, an acclaimed poet who has authored 20 collections of poetry and taught at the Iowa Writers' Workshop for more than a decade, is this year's winner. Swenson, a prolific translator, has translated more than 30 books of French poetry, creative nonfiction, and art and criticism. She will be in conversation with **Christopher Merrill**, director of the International Writers' Program. I hope you can attend the event as well as the reception afterwards, held in the CPL rotunda and sponsored by the Foundation. The event is free and everyone is welcome!

Paul Engle's daughter, **Mary Engle Burge**, will also be back in Iowa for the Engle Prize event. Many

of you had the opportunity to attend her presentation at CPL last fall. She will be doing an event for the public on November 18, 7:00 pm, at the Iowa City Public Library—sharing memories from her childhood in Iowa City, her father and the Iowa Writers' Workshop in the early days. Mary has wonderfully vivid memories of her childhood and growing up in Iowa City and fascinating stories about the famous authors who were guests in the Engle home. Like last year's program, I'm sure it will be a delightful evening.

Alison Ames Galstad

... and Remembering



Established in 1996, the T. Patricia Dee Award is presented on behalf of the Trustees of the Coralville Public Library to recognize outstanding long-term volunteerism. The picture of them is from the 2011 Friends fall newsletter.

The Friends lost another one of our dedicated supporters this July when **Les Cullers** passed away at 92. He and fellow Patricia Dee Volunteer Award winner Roman Steciw worked tirelessly in helping the Friends and by extension the Library.

Paraphrasing from the nominating letter: *Les and Roman were a major reason that it was actually enjoyable to sort books. They quite literally did the heavy lifting and admonished those of us who tried to pick up an overloaded book box. They planned and relocated the shelving in the Friends then brand-new work room. Disassembling the substantial shelving and putting it all back together was a herculean undertaking.*

Though in recent years, Les was retired from book sale duty, we not only appreciate all the good works, but we will also miss his one-of-a-kind sense of humor.

MEMBERSHIP

The Friends have a yearly renewal model—
ALL renewals will be due in January.

We ask that you consider a \$20 dues payment and know that your contribution is very much appreciated.

2026 BOOK SALES

February 5-7
April 30-May 2
August 6-8
November 5-7

Friday 10:00-5:30
Saturday 10:00-3:00

**From the editor: As with every newsletter I had considerable help in bringing this newsletter together. For this issue—in addition to the writing contributions—several gave information surrounding the organization of the entities that support the Library. I also had input for the . . . Remembering article. Any errors in interpreting the information are mine.*

November Happenings

Jolaboklaflod, (yo-la-bok-a-flot) meaning “Christmas book flood,” is a tradition in Iceland where people exchange books and chocolate and then spend the evening reading together.

We thought this was a tradition worth emulating. To help people have their own jolaboklaflod this winter at the November Book Sale (Friday, November 7, 10:00 am – 5:30 pm & Saturday, November 8, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm), the Friends will have a gift wrapping table and will be selling hot chocolate packets. Proceeds from chocolate sales will go toward the Friend's annual Kids Book Giveaway.

Make It: Bookmarks

On Saturday, November 8, from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (during the November Book Sale), the Library is holding a free drop-in bookmark making event in the Discovery Corner. All ages are welcome!

Dried leaves, old book pages, markers, and more will be available to make personalized bookmarks for gifting or to mark the pages of your winter reading haul from the book sale.

Hope to see you

Sara Jane

New!

Update your membership online!

Visit

<https://coralvillepubliclibrary.org/about/friends-of-the-library/>

Membership form that follows is not interactive—go
to the above web site

MORE SUMMER FUN



what DO YOU love about the Library?

the book sales!
thanks for being
great library!

