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Libraries are community hubs that provide essential services and resources to everyone. Some of our library users sent us their comments. These stories illustrate the depth of engagement and the value IFLS-member libraries provide, enriching lives and communities.

Thank you for your continued support!



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Altoona Public Library

"Helpful, patient, friendly, and resourceful."

I have four kids and we love to visit the Altoona library. The summer reading program is a huge favorite of ours, and more recently as my kids have gotten older, the programs for teens. We have circled on our calendar pingpong and pizza nights! Thank you for providing a **safe and fun place for my kids to learn and play, make new friends, and even find new books that interest them.** Thank you for all you guys do!

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We love the Altoona Library! I have been taking my kids there for the past 6 years. Regina is so kind and does a great job organizing so many fun activities for the kids. They loved weekly story time when they were little and now enjoy Lego Club and the fun activities and entertainment during the summer reading program. When we go check out books my kids always find themselves entertained putting on a puppet show in the kids area. *Leslie Schillinger*

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Many summers the **library trips were exciting,** getting piles of books for two weeks and going back on bikes two weeks later and getting more.

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The Altoona library is a very special place to me and many others.

My husband and I moved here about a year and a half ago, from a small town in Minnesota. Having been a frequent patron of our old public library, my first instinct was to visit our new one, get registered, and start utilizing the many resources available to us here in Altoona!

Not only are there seemingly endless books to enjoy, but there are countless other items to check out, like snowshoes, games, puppets, activities for

eldercare, and book club sets. There are also several clubs and activity-based classes to join.

Our library serves as a warm and inviting place for our young granddaughter, as well. She smiles and giggles when we tell her we are headed to the library, where she can find books, puzzles, blocks, trains, and dolls to play with, as well as live fish to count.

But the most important resources of all are the tremendously **helpful, patient, friendly, and resourceful Altoona library staff members!** *Anne*

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Altoona became my permanent home when my husband died in 2018. Reading books has always been my habit but in 2018 reading became my salvation. I go to the Altoona Public Library at least once a week. I head over to the New Fiction bookshelf and pick up a couple books. I easily read two books a week, sometimes more. **The library is like a safe haven** to me and I especially like its location in that quaint but thriving little area--post office, Rumps, Nostalgic Bean, VFW--it's a perfect location for so many people, with even a Kwik Trip a few blocks away. The librarians are helpful, friendly and professional. Really, the Altoona Public Library is an important part of my life. *Kathy Mortwedt-Hanson*

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I love the library! I have lived here in Wisconsin for 3.5 years and one of the first places I visited after unpacking was the Altoona Library! I loved learning about the Amish people I pass when I drive to visit my children. (We are all Southern California Natives) I love checking out books on quilting - my favorite hobby. I have 16 grandchildren and when they come and stay with me, I love to take them to the library. We check out books and enjoy reading them at my house. The younger kids love the puppet show theater and trains. There are lots of books and lots of helpful librarians. I feel so blessed to live in a place that I can check out books for

FREE. I also LOVE my Libby app for checking out books on my kindle - this saves me about \$40-\$60 per month, as I am an avid reader. *Brenda Sommers*

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I enjoy the Altoona Public Library as an 80-year-old senior citizen. It is a perfect 2-mile walk from my apartment so gets me out for good exercise. I like using the MORE System as I can request any books online and walk to pick up when they arrive. **The staff are very helpful using the computers and getting information for you.** *René Kurth*

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We live in Eau Claire and go to the Altoona library because of their wonderful storytime and summer programs! Ms. Regina makes the kids feel welcome, special, and independent. The themed cookies are a huge hit with all the kiddos. **The summer program is amazing...a perfect way to keep the children enriched.** We love our public libraries! *The Lodge family*

Balsam Lake Public Library

"A welcoming space for everyone who enters."

I love my library! With everything online or easy to access with the internet many would think libraries are obsolete. I like my computer, I like my iPad, and I do have a love/hate relationship with my smartphone. But where do I go when I want a newly released bestseller? Yup, my helpful library and librarians. Where do I go when I start a new hobby? The nonfiction area of my Balsam Lake library. Going stir crazy with the grandkids? You got it, programs, games, stories, arts and crafts. pure sanity saver. With all these reasons why I love my library, I almost didn't mention my favorite reason.....row upon row of books...hold in my hand page turners. My idea of a great day? Time to browse these rows upon rows and to be able to bring a stack home with me! *Micky Palewicz*

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I love going to the Balsam Lake Library, the ladies that work there are so very helpful and make it a joy to come to the library. **The library is very welcoming and comforting, it doesn't matter if you are there just to work on the computer, check out a book, or just sit and read the local paper.** They are always accommodating to your needs and do it with a smile. I have had several computer questions, and problems with printing items out, and they accommodate and help me through it all. They are just GREAT! Thank you all

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I use the library for tutoring. It's a terrific space to work with students because it is friendly, motivating and we are surrounded with positive things to do. All the librarians are welcoming and helpful with technology and finding a book. When there are people around us using computers and books it's a **positive influence on my students.** My students have received their own library cards and are taking home books to share with their family.

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I love that we have a library here in town! I check out books here, pick up and return books here that I got through MORE Libraries, and use the computer. I love being able to **look up and print lessons for my Sunday school class** and copy other things I need. And the staff is so helpful to someone who isn't very computer literate. Such an asset to our area!

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I appreciate the helpfulness of the staff at my library and they are always friendly. I also appreciate the opportunity to see upcoming new releases that will be available and to request those ahead of time. I feel the library provides many **opportunities for the community** to participate in and look forward to authors coming to make presentations.

I have used the Libby app too for many years and am very satisfied with it. *Betsy Nigon*

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I am a resident of Georgetown, WI. I love this library! The staff is always willing to make suggestions on what to read and if the book isn't at this branch, they offer to have it transferred to this location. And they are so pleasant! **This library is a welcoming space for everyone who enters.**

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I have gotten some good references for the types of books that I enjoy. I also loved in a recent visit, that there were magnifying glasses on the shelves. Overall, I love that I can borrow books rather than purchasing them - a huge savings of money. I additionally use and enjoy the Libby app. I usually have two or three books going at once.

Barron Public Library

"The Library has become so much more than just checking out books."

The library is the life blood of my family. My kids grew up in the library. I grew up in the library. We know **the library is always there to support us and help the community grow.**

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I am grateful that I have a free library. When my sister lived in New Zealand there were costs associated with some of the library services. I know she had to pay to reserve books and I believe there were different costs based on hardcovers, paperbacks and new releases.

I am confident that **I can request almost any book or material and the library will locate it for me.**

I also appreciate the stitching group that began last spring. It is so wonderful to meet others in the community as we stitch together. The Barron library has a wonderful group of **staff members who are always willing to help.**

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Books for grandson's ADHD.

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I am amazed how many people don't understand how important a library is to the community! My kids love the library and I am excited to bring them here. They are excited to come. Their love of reading, I know, comes from bringing them to the library, and opening the world of imagination from an early age. It has helped them blossom into very creative kids.

I hope people start realizing how important the library is to a community and how important it can be for their life. Books are amazing, but **the Library has become so much more than just checking out books.** From the programming, the technology, the safe space, the atmosphere, to the connections the librarians make with the patrons. It all creates something amazing and I hope everyone gets a chance to experience it! Spread the word- Libraries are Amazing!

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My Library is my Safe Space. The library helps me to have a place I can exist without worry. With so many expectations when being in the public to spend money, I am grateful to be able to borrow media that I otherwise would not be able to afford on my own.

I am also so happy we now have a "Stitching Hour" that I try to utilize every week. It's helped me feel more connected to my community in ways I did not realize I was missing. It's been wonderful for my mental health.

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The library helps me to stay grounded & trust that there will always be a tangible world to hold onto. Lynne

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You can learn a lot from 1 book. Alexis

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The Library helps me to return books that I've read and pick up held books as it is hard for me to see the bottom two shelves. The receipt tells me the books and authors and the due date, and it also tells me how much I've read by using the Barron Public Library. The Library is my favorite "store". I received a Kindle for Christmas & Justina helped me set it up to the library computer and to get Libby for Kindle.

I come to Barron Public Library twice a week, I have read thousands of books since I moved back home. I use the library's MORE site to order books coming soon. If I can't find a book in the Wisconsin Library system, the librarians will check out of state.

The Librarians are so helpful & kind. Last winter when there was too much snow & ice on the sidewalk the librarian would get my return books and bring me my holds. I use a cane and am very careful not to fall as I can't get up because of my disability. This winter had been fine as it has been a mild winter. I sent the librarians flowers for Valentine's Day but no roses this year as one of the girls is allergic to roses. I retired to read and enjoy it immensely. Gladys

Bruce Area Library

"A hidden gem."

My nine-month-old daughter loves visiting different libraries. We love the Bruce library for its friendly staff, fun toys and variety of children's books. It's a very nice library, especially for a small town. I refer to it as **a hidden gem** and hope local families are taking advantage of this wonderful place! If not, they're missing out! Jennifer

Cadott Community Library

"There's lots to love at my library!"

In 2023 my 5-year-old son excitedly signed up for a library card and began checking out books for us to read to him. He was so excited to carry his library

card with him everywhere that we ended up getting him a wallet to reduce the chance of losing the card. There are very few places that my son gets excited to go to, but the Cadott Library is one of them. He's enjoyed picking out new books, playing with games and puzzles, participating in classes and story time. Thanks for being **a positive and supportive environment** for my son! *Nicole Tiry*

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I love the continued dedication and commitment of our library staff, trustees, Friends organization, and community members. I love that we have an endowment fund, thanks to local philanthropists years ago, who understood that libraries offer much more than books. I love that anyone can freely use library facilities, services, technology and internet connection, and resources. And when I don't find the book, video, audiobook, e-book, or magazine I want at my local library, I can likely obtain it through the MORE Library System. **There's lots to love at my library.** Cookie Kaste

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Carleton A. Friday Memorial Library (New Richmond)

"Our library is one of our greatest assets."

I love my library. It is an integral part of the community! I have worked with the library staff in different capacities over the years. As a patron and as a fellow professional. I have worked as a Recreation Coordinator at different senior living facilities in the area and the library is always a wonderful community connection for the residents. To have the staff get to know the residents and bring books with them monthly tailored to their likes is an art form.

I love all the learning opportunities available at the library. I have been to several that have started some lifelong crafting hobbies. Paint pouring, book page folding, etc. I enjoy the fact that I can go online and order whatever book I want, and it will

come to my library for me to pick up. And if the book isn't on the list, they help me find it. I enjoy reading events like the Monopoly game, which gets my competition juices going and brings different genres into my life. I have joined a book club through the library and found friends. **It is a wonderful place!**

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Our library provides such a calm small town feel in what now feels like a large busy town. You walk in, and you are always greeted with a warm smile and feel so at home. It's cozy, it's relaxing, and it's a much-needed break from the loud busy lives most of us live. The youth librarians do such an amazing job at engaging the kids and making them feel like they are part of the library family.

With how much our community has grown the library acts as a great tool for our community to use. You don't have to have a certain economic standing to be able to utilize all the wonderful family-bonding things it has to offer. The kits and backpacks for parents to do with their kiddos, or siblings to do together are a great addition, as well as the fun yard games you can check out in the summer. The free activities and classes are wonderful bonding experiences for families to share together as well.

I have overheard the staff on more than one occasion offering guidance to those trying to submit or type resumes using the libraries wifi and computers, and they do it in a way that never sounds or feels forced. **Our library is one of our town's greatest assets.** *Amanda Flores*

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My husband and I have 3 kids. The first outing for our twins at 2 weeks old and 3 years old was a visit to the library. It's their favorite place to go on a Saturday. They can't wait to see what activities are set up to play with and the librarians are great at remembering the kids and helping them pick out

books. It's an enjoyable outing for everyone, whether we're there for 30 minutes or an hour.

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We LOVE coming to our library for Storytime. Our first experience at our library was just a typical outing with young kids - we were tired of the same old bedtime stories and wanted some new ones to read. We headed to the library on a random day to find some books. Turns out it was on the same day and time as Storytime, so we stayed! **I was so impressed with the knowledge of the librarians, quality of stories read, and educational benefits of the after-story activity.** From then on, we made Storytime a weekly ritual. I recommend it to all the mommies I meet in the community.

I also love all the other events the library is a part of: discontinued book sales (free-will donation), STEM Mondays, and all the countless other things they do.

The oddest book request was for books that had pictures of actual babies in them (for my baby/toddler) I was impressed that Julie was able to find board books for us by that criteria!

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New Richmond library has been known as being one of the best around for years. 30 years ago, my mom was driving my brothers and I 40 mins one way to the New Richmond library every 2-3 weeks because it was such an amazing library. I now bring my kids and it's still my favorite. We love the way children's books are organized. It's so much easier to pick out books by topic than it is to sort through random books organized by author. **The staff is THE BEST EVER!** We always feel welcome when we visit.

The programs are so fun for kids and such a needed wonderful way to get them free, educational, social, fun outings (esp in winter). We love our library!

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The librarians in the children's area of the New Richmond library are amazing! They remember my

kids' names and greet them every time we come in, no matter how long it's been since we were there last! They are helpful and understanding, we are so lucky to have such special people working at our library and in our community. **They create a fun space for kids to play, read and learn.** Thank you for all that you do!

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Over the summer I discovered **large print** fiction books. Oh, what a blessing! Having the ability to order large print books from MORE system to be picked up in New Richmond is wonderful. I don't have an opportunity to read during the school year, but love reading in the summer. The large print books make reading so much easier for me to enjoy. Thank you for making them available.

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I came to the library as a stay-at-home mom of a young toddler who had just moved to the area. Coming out of COVID times, being incredibly isolated for the first year of my child's life and having no community, I was eager to find anything that got us connected. We were blown away with how wonderful the children's story times, science and sensory time, and intentionality of the librarians were. **We have found such a wonderful community** and love having somewhere fun and educational to bring our (now 2) kids. It made such an impact during our first few months in New Richmond and continues to two years later!

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My girls LOVE the library! We make a weekly stop and are greeted with warm "hellos" and smiles. It is a great place for the kids to play and find wonderful books! They love to read because of the library!! **This place is so valuable!**

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Our toddler loves to come to the library and play with the toys and books in the children's section. The librarians Miss Julie and Miss Ashley are so fun

and welcoming, and always greet and engage with our daughter.

Chippewa Falls

"The public library offered me a refuge."

I frequent the libraries of Chippewa Falls, Altoona, Eau Claire, and Bloomer. I love the children's programs/activities at each. The staff in Chippewa and Altoona are so sweet and are always so welcoming and inclusive. They know the kids by their names and always create a positive and fun time with lots of **learning, singing, dancing, and laughter.**

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As a retired high school English teacher and as a current rural educator who teaches basic tech classes throughout Wisconsin, I have had the joy of visiting and using many of our state's libraries. I can honestly say that our public library in Chippewa Falls is one of the best- the librarians are welcoming and efficient. **They create and promote programming to fit the needs of our community.** I worked with teens for over 36 years and our local library works exceptionally hard to engage these same teens with events and activities that fit them and their interests. I so appreciated this as a teacher in the community. Most importantly, my love of our local library is based on my love of books. Our ability as a community to provide free books for all is a privilege that I will always appreciate. Thank you!
Pam

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My husband and I took our children to the library at least once a week and each of them would bring home a pile of books to read throughout the week. I believe by doing this, we gave our children the opportunity to explore all different subjects, and now at adult age, our children are voracious readers.

- I love reading. Always have. Enjoyed the old Carnegie Library. I loved the downstairs which was for children and then graduated to the upstairs.

Joe the director has done an awesome job heading up the library along with the children's librarian. When I stop in to the current library it is nice to be greeted by name especially from Beth, Ann, Sue and Joe. I was privileged to be on the library board when we hired Joe. Barb Rasmus

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As a young reader in a one-room country school, I soon had gone through the meager library the school contained. Then in fifth grade, Mrs. Frenette came to teach. Each Monday morning, she brought me a grocery bag full of books from the Chippewa Public Library, and each Friday night, she returned them.

I was to do the same thing several years later. My first year of teaching was at Holy Ghost School. There were no social studies books. I used a sample as a curriculum guide and ordered books at several reading levels for the fifth graders I taught that accompanied the unit of study.

From that time on, I was hooked. The Chippewa Falls Library is my **'home away from home.'** *Connie Russell*

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Love our library. Great programs and **community outreach**. We love to borrow books, CDs, audiobooks, DVDs. The puzzle and magazine swap is great. Keep up the great work! *Nancy*

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When I was a kid, I didn't have a very good home life... a lot of neglect, a lot of abuse. My local library offered me a safe place to just be. The librarians were kind, the environment was quiet and safe. I would spend almost every day, all day (open to close) in the summer there. **The public library offered me a refuge from a bad home. I can never**

thank them enough. The library likely saved my life. *Heather Martell, City Council*

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I was recently diagnosed with ADHD and was able to check out multiple books that were able to **help me understand** what I was going through and ways to handle the condition.

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Great knowledge and lots of time to study, I love to read and have time alone. **This library is a huge help to our community!**

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CFPL helps me **learn more about my children's diagnoses with resources I cannot afford**. I am more knowledgeable, prepared, and a happier mom for them!

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I have loved the library and been a regular library user for over 50 years. When I visit my hometown, I go to the Wauwatosa Public Library. When I visit my brother, I go to the West Allis Public Library. When I feel like walking, I go to L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library. When I feel like biking up a big hill, I go to the Altoona Public Library. When I go on vacation each summer, I visit the public libraries in Cable, Bayfield, and La Pointe. I go to the library when I am happy, but especially when I am sad. Books save lives. **I've never had a problem that I couldn't find a balm for in a book**. It has been my life-long habit to read about 65 books a year and share them and the benefits of public libraries widely.

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My favorite reason for coming to the library is that **it has something for everyone**. I am a single mom, so my toddler enjoys the kid section. I'm a YA buff so I enjoy popping over there when we are almost done. The library staff is always so helpful, especially when I accidentally put my personal books in the book return on accident! The only

thing I wish there were more of were programs for kids in the evening. Like 4:30-5:30 or something. I work all day and can never make the storytimes. I know this would be hard with staffing, however.

Amy Randall

D.R. Moon Memorial Library (Stanley)

"Come on in and see us."

I've recently started working at the library. The atmosphere is so calm and relaxing. Our library staff love helping people as they come in for many different reasons. Faxing, copies, DVDs, books, reading the current Hometown newspaper, internet access (this one gets used a lot). There are many different things to do at the library. Come on in and see us. You will be greeted with a smile and a hello. Everyone is always welcome at the library. Wendy Stelter

Durand Community Library

"My love for reading developed at the library."

When I was a kid, the library was the only place that was cool during the summer. I would go almost every day to sit and read Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, and many others!! **My love for reading developed at the library - probably even more than it developed at school** - because it was always comfortable and quiet, and I would become so immersed in the stories that time as well as pages just flew by. Jane Winter

Ellsworth Public Library

"Having the library we have in Ellsworth gives me a sense of pride."

My family and I absolutely love the Ellsworth Public Library. The librarians are so helpful and kind and it offers **a wide range of activities for our family**. My 6-year-old daughter and I enjoy the makerspace to play games and enjoy the various crafts and projects that are available. Being surrounded by books is so important and my daughter looks forward to checking out new books each time. It has

been a great way to **foster a love of reading/learning and teach her responsibility** through her own library card.

Each time we go to the library I ask my daughter "What would you like to learn more about today?" This usually prompts her to choose a non-fiction book to learn about something totally new and often very random. We have learned about mummies, Hannukah, weather, Ramadan, the Day of the Dead, and emergency workers (just to name a few topics). I believe this also helps with opportunities to educate her about diversity and to expose her to topics/cultures that might not otherwise come up in our daily life.

The library gives us something fun to look forward to, to get out of the house. We have recently begun bringing the baby with us and find books to read to him as well. The kids enjoy playing with the toys, meeting new friends, and taking home the book-related crafts to do at home. It is fun to see the theme of the month! In addition, this past fall librarian Carolyn was kind enough to host our first-grade daisy girl scout troop. She gave them a tour, read them a book, taught them all about the library, and they had an opportunity to complete a fun library scavenger hunt. **The girls had a wonderful experience, and this helped them earn a badge about responsibility.** Thank you for all that you librarians do for our community! Kristie Ineichen

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I love the library. I probably read an average of two books a week and can't imagine life without "free" reading material. I know the library also provides many other services as well but for me it's all about the stories. **My life is so much richer because of the public library.** Judy Fahrendorff

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The staff at the Ellsworth Public Library are the champions for me. They are extremely friendly, cheerful, helpful, patient, and kind. They always make me feel welcome, never like I'm a bother. So

patient to review the technology, procedures, systems, etc----multiple times. They kindly offer suggestions for reading materials, ease of searching, card maintenance, use of meeting rooms, and more. Besides the staff, the building itself is very warm, tidy, and welcoming. First impressions are important and **EPL has nailed it!** *Lanette Place*

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I enjoy going to the library. I'm there about once a week. **I'm so thankful** for the opportunity to get books in my area as I love to read. When my Granddaughters were younger they loved story hour.

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We are a rural family who use the Ellsworth Public Library extensively. **Rural areas often lack the abundance of activities that larger communities have to offer, but our library works hard to make up the difference.** We often use the MORE system to check out books and other items such as puzzles, games, and kits. Where else can someone learn Japanese, find a Wii game we haven't played before, find a kids' version of Beowulf, get almost every possible graphic novel my kids could ever want to read, supplement science concepts learned at school, get passes to state parks, check out a disc golf set, and test out board games.... for FREE?

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My favorite thing to do is check out the new books in the teen section, picture books and chapter books. I enjoy reading what has been printed for the younger generation. *Ruth Baumgartner*

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Love Morning Book Group!

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Mrs. Caroline knows my kiddos by name, she remembers things they like. I think all **the staff works hard** to keep the facility clean and organized! They provide great programs. Both of my kiddos

went to story time almost every week until they started school. They do a great job in the summer of bringing in other people and groups to story time. Example the post office, fire department, animal education. My girls ask to go to the library to see what the project of the week is in the makers space!
Kristi Erickson

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As a person who lives alone, I appreciate being able to go to the library and connect with others, be they patrons or the employees of the library. The staff is always welcoming. I've met new people from both my community and the surrounding area when attending the morning book club monthly discussions. I've deepened friendships while there as well as when attending other events sponsored by the library. The books chosen by staff to be read for book club have forced me out of my comfort zone, broadened my awareness, and made me come to realize that one cannot always "judge a book by its cover." Volunteering through the library gives my life purpose. Browsing the books on the shelves and artwork on display gives my life pleasure. **Having the library we have in Ellsworth gives me a sense of pride.** I love our library.

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Our family's favorite reason to go to the library is it's our third place. A place we can exist outside of work and home, especially during the wintertime. We go weekly, and if we could we would go more, if it worked in our schedule!

We love checking out books weekly. We read them multiple times. We also enjoy taking advantage of story time with Miss Caroline! She puts on a fantastic program for the kids! One of our favorite spaces at the library is the makerspace. I love that they are coloring pages, we color every single time as a family. There are so many different activities available in the makerspace that it gives my daughter new opportunities to try something new!

I have also used **conference rooms for personal work**. Days that I don't have to go into the office, but don't want to be at home and still feel productive in a space. I love knowing that that option is there.
Honestly, thank you to the Ellsworth public library!
We love this place! *Chelsea*

You have a wonderful selection of movies. I used to get two per week then my player broke. I love just coming in and relaxing with the periodicals. There have been a number of meet –and-greets that I have enjoyed! *Miller Rogers*

My favorite thing about the library is coming in to grab the books on hold you're excited to read. Whether it's fiction or non-fiction, it broadens my mind or lets me escape to another world. The library provides me all the books I could ever read without having to make a purchase. It **provides me great conversation and connections** with others that like to read too! *Kelli*

I can't find this anywhere but the library: **the people who work there!** So many fun activities.

The library is my second home!

Love the Makerspace! There's so much to do here and you've got so many items available for check-out (puzzles, crafts etc...) They keep me and the kids busy during the winter months!

I love crafts and reading. My favorite book is The One and Only. *Ivan*

I love crafts. My favorite book is Llama Llama

The library helps me to teach my kids to love books, let's them explore fun things in the children's area and create in the Makerspace.

I love dress-up and reading shark books!

My favorite thing at the library is EVERYTHING!

I love books and art stuff (especially pop-up activities with unique art supplies/crafting). My favorite book is Madame Badabahah.

I love playing with the books and art stuff. And LEGO club!

My favorite thing at the library is LEGOs.

I love to play dress up at the library. My favorite books are anything with animals.

I love the Ellsworth Public Library for all it has to offer me and the community. I am always able to find books that interest me to check out. The library staff is very helpful and friendly. I appreciate the reading room, History Room, programming and computers to use if needed. **It is wonderful that the public library is open and available for all people in the community it serves and beyond!** Jeanette Wright

I love the teen room so much honestly it is the best spot to **work on homework** when the teachers give us too much or going there to hang out with friends.

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One of my favorite memories of the library was PJ Storytime. I loved sitting in my pajamas and listening to a great book that was read to us. Sometimes we had fun activities which were also very fun. Now that I am a teenager, I love all the activities in the Makerspace. They are all so similar but different at the same time!

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Meet new people, become friends, puzzle area has been a very nice added area. Donating and checking out. I like to be in the **reading challenges**. Different books that I wouldn't have read. Just looking at other books. Using the rooms for for Book Clubs. C. Baird

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To look at **magazines** I wish I could subscribe to but can't afford to. To go to the library and spend time going through all those magazines, consumer reports and various cooking magazines. Recipes to try? Also looking at new books as they come in and see, to remind me of past books I wanted to read and forgot about that maybe I should go back and read. *Dennis Baird*

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I love Story Hour at the library. I love reading and checking out new books. My favorite book is **Claris: The Chicest Mouse in Paris** Flora, age 3 (entered by library staff)

Fall Creek Public Library

"A haven for connection, education and empowerment."

I love bringing my kids to the library! Besides being able to keep our reading list fresh, our local library has such a fun little play area, and my littles love to visit. Audra runs such a delightful storytime program for the kids, and she saves us crafts when we can't make it. Both my 4- and 2-year-old are 600 books deep in their **"1,000 books before**

Kindergarten" journey, and I am thrilled at how much they relish books, reading, and the library. *Anna Westaby*

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Have picked books up from Libby. always friendly. Then, being older, I needed things copied and the librarian took the time, even after showing me once, **helping me** until I was finished.

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Audra does AMAZING with the weekly storytime. She always has a fun theme and includes a craft or another activity to go along. It is a highlight of my kids' week! It's been a fun year of us attending storytime & seeing my shy kids become comfortable with the library in a very short time. Thanks, Audra, for **making it a fun place** for them. They are always asking to go to storytime! *Allie*

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I moved to Fall Creek in 3rd grade and, now granted, I no longer live in Fall Creek but I remember the many, many trips I used to make to Fall Creek Public Library. It was above the fire station and the the stairs to it were long and for my legs steep. The smell of old books and floor wax. Ahhh. I would go in and search behind the glass doors of the children's books section. I read them all Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew and so many other books I can't even remember. I would take my selection to Mrs. Green and she would stamp my book and I would take them home and read. Then a week or so later I would ride my bike back and return them and get some more. I also remember as I got older and started reading "grown up" books. Sometimes, I would sit in the library and read. I loved that old library so much. *Karen Wood Freid*

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My daughter LOVES this library. When the weather was nice, she would get home from school and beg to go. Then it became a routine. She'd drop off her books and grab more! She has never been so into

reading and is really enjoying it! **She used to be at the bottom of her class for spelling. Now, she is one of the best!** I contribute this to her avid reading. Although she has read most of the books she is interested in at the library, she can request others to come in! When the weather isn't nice enough to walk or bike, we still have to make sure to get there. P.S. the staff there is wonderful!

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Thanks for all you do to help the library run smoothly. I appreciate you in all your hard work. **We are lucky to have you as our librarian.**

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The library always helps me find good books for my **school book reports**

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The library is a fun place for **meeting with my friends after school**

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My children's love for the library and books started with Story-time when they were little and has only grown since then. We spend a lot of time here **learning, discovering, and growing!** We love the Fall Creek Public Library!

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Three years ago, I moved to Fall Creek to care for two granddaughters. One of the first things I did after getting settled in their routine was to take them to the Fall Creek Library. I am so grateful for the warm welcoming staff and how they made us feel from day one.

When my granddaughter turned two, I signed her up for her library card. She proudly wore it on a lanyard on Wednesdays when we attended the children's storytime. Audra helped us sign up for the reading program, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten!

Now that she is attending school and her goal has been achieved, her sister has obtained her own card. We continue to attend the children's program weekly, and now are reading another 1000 books before kindergarten. My daughter's family has grown since I arrived, and when my third granddaughter turns two, she will also have a library card.

I asked my granddaughters what their favorite part of the library is.

"All the books I can choose to read!"

"Storytime! I like the crafts we make!"

I feel so blessed to have **The Fall Creek Library as an important part of raising my granddaughters.** Their love of books is heartwarming.

Exposing children at an early age to reading is important in their cognitive development, as well as promoting a stronger vocabulary, and stimulates imagination and emotional development. Most importantly, they will have a lifelong love of reading! *Debbie Spindler*

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I rarely get to the library in person, so communication with the librarian is important to me. I have such special rapport with Charlene. She is very **helpful and patient in explaining things to me.** I read several books each week, mostly from the library in addition to a few purchases or shares from others. Reading has always been very important to me. I am amazed by how much I learn when reading. Always something new, even now that I'm over 80 years old. The world is changing and reading keeps me updated! *Patricia Meyer*

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The Fall Creek Public Library is more than just a place for books, it's a welcoming space for everyone. Charlene Conradi, the director, does an excellent job of **creating a haven for connection, education and empowerment** by sponsoring

reading initiatives and various workshops and learning programs.

G.E. Bleskacek Family Memorial Library (Bloomer)

"A fantastic resource in our community".

The library provides my kids (and me) with so much. Socialization with other kids and adults, books to read, new toys to play with. The current economy doesn't allow us to do a whole lot of extracurriculars because everything is extremely expensive. The library is always free, inviting, kind, and a safe place for us to go to. **We are forever grateful to have such a fantastic resource in our community.**

Geraldine E. Anderson Village Library (Dresser)

"Small-town cozy library with practically limitless resources."

The quaint Dresser Library is a **godsend**. The knowledgeable staff provides insight as my questions are answered and the new reads made available. Without the library, a large social and intellectual void would be created. Our library is run on a shoestring budget. **It needs financial increase for this dedicated and devoted staff.**

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I LOVE to read and usually use Libby. I check out two or three books a week. (I'm sure my husband thinks I have better things to do...) I love Libby for reading in bed (I can have the lights off) but I prefer an actual book and appreciate the selection at the Dresser Library. The librarians are friendly and helpful. One time I came in needing a color copy of my dad's death certificate and she cheerfully helped me out, even though the color copier isn't usually used for patrons. Thank you! I usually don't have my library card with me and no one gives me a hard time or rolls their eyes at me. Thank you for being open, being friendly, and being helpful. **This is such a small-town library. I love it!**

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We love the vast selection of children's books. My kids have especially enjoyed the graphic novel section. When we go, my kids each grab a book and immediately start reading.

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The Dresser Library is cozy; but the size is deceptive because it connected to the MORE System so the **availability of resources is practically limitless.**

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I find books that interest me, fiction and non-fiction. I always have at least one book checked out. Our librarian is wonderful. The more.lib.wi.us system is terrific. I can access books and movies that a small library wouldn't be able to provide. **The library is a great part of my life!** *Ruth T*

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Love audiobooks on CD and am trying digital (Libby). Please consider more funding for digital items.

Hazel Mackin Community Library (Roberts)

"A staple in the community."

The library in Roberts is such a great small-town library, The entire staff is so helpful and pleasant whenever I go in there. **There always seems to be activities going on there for the young or old!** I firmly believe this is an important part of our community! Keep up the good work and thank you. *Kevin Odle*

-

I recently started frequenting the library a couple months ago after moving to the area in April. I am SO happy I started going to the library. The staff is so friendly, the library is so nice and there is such a great selection! I go almost every week now, and absolutely love it. I cannot give enough praise to Hazel Mackin library, it is **a staple in the community**

and simply the best! Reading has been an extremely great stress reliever for me. I use the Libby app to check out electronic copies of books on my kindle but read about 50/50 e books and physical copies. I CANNOT stress the importance of physical books enough. I love my kindle, but there is nothing like a physical book. Thank you to the library system for Hazel Mackin, it is an amazing part of the Roberts community! Alyssa Dworak

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I love coffee and cookies with games and good conversation on Fridays and the Book of the Month club!

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I love the large choice of jigsaw puzzles and coffee and cookie Fridays

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The first thing we did when we moved to Roberts was get our library cards.

Jill has always been a welcoming face at the library. She has helped us **discover all the resources that the library has to offer**. She has helped us find authors, old and new. Sue

L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library (Eau Claire)

"Unlimited opportunities."

When I was a kid, the only place I had was the library. It was quiet and peaceful, when my home was loud and chaotic. **I had access to anything my heart desired, despite being dirt poor.** I had unlimited opportunities to learn and grow. I will always love the library and its staff for what it gave me when I had nobody. *Layla*

Luck Public Library

"Hub of the community."

The libraries in both Luck and Milltown are so accommodating to all ages and all walks of life. They

listen to what the patron's wants and needs are. They are **the hub of the community** and are very welcoming. They are willing to try new ideas and make it fun to come in. I have seen people who seldom participate in social events feel comfortable in joining activities because there is no judgement. Yoga has been so important to the senior community and needs to continue for their health and safety. Both libraries have supported this program. They also do their best to order books and DVDs that people request. The MORE system opens a world to many people they have not experienced before. Please support the community libraries, winter would be depressing if there were no place to treat your body and mind. *Kathy Weeks*

Menomonie Public Library

"A resource of surprises and solutions."

This is a fantastic library!!!! The librarians in the past 2 weeks have **helped me with the copier for my taxes** and they have been wonderful! Just one of many offerings of this library. Thank you! *Bonnie DeHoff*

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My husband and I are transplants to WI (from PA). A few weeks after moving from PA to WI in August 2023, we stopped by the library and applied for our library cards. We were as giddy as small children in a candy store. We were accustomed to using the library in PA just to borrow books. **But the Menomonie Library just seemed different. So much more was available** - the community bulletin board, yoga classes, Information Desk, free Hotspots, free workshops and classes and on and on. The differences were so obvious to us.

Over the course of the next six months, we stopped in the library at least twice a week for something. Because our internet service had not been connected yet, we used the computers, the printer, the scanner, we borrowed a Hotspot. We requested books online with ease. We discovered community resources through the bulletin board. We met

neighbors and new friends. I joined the Friends of the Library and volunteered at the December Book Sale. We enjoyed the reading area overlooking Menomin Lake.

The library was and continues to be **a resource of surprises and solutions**. The Menomonie library helped us find our space in our new community.

Joan Jepsen-Burger, Ed Burger

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We moved here in 1989. One of the criteria we have when moving anywhere is that there be an outstanding Public Library close by. The library was one of the first places that we visited while my husband went to an interview for a job. If the library had been substandard, we would not have even considered taking the job if it were offered.

We were thrilled that the library was new, beautiful, staffed by welcoming people, and well stocked with books for the entire family.

Over the past 35 years the library has offered more and more services and so many great community events with **music on the lawn, guest speakers on a wide range of topics, yoga classes, childrens programming, fantastic book sales and so much more!**

The Public Library quickly found a way to serve us during COVID with curbside pickup of books. When our Grandson visits, the library is at the top of the list of places he wants to visit while he is here. Sometimes we stop at the library every day that he is with us.

Thank you for all that you do for the community.

Jan Erdman

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I am shy, so I try to get in and out past the hold shelf as quickly as possible. I have never been farther into the library than the hold shelf, so I have no clue where anything is actually located because I don't pursue the shelves. The librarians who say "hello" even though I am quiet and don't ask for

help and get in/out as fast as possible **always make my day**. I can just tell they are so kind!

Milltown Public Library

"Vital to the community."

In 2010 I was at Milltown Public Library and saw a new mom. We'd see each other every Tuesday at children's programming. I never saw her anywhere but MPL. Our kids were the same age so they'd play, we'd chat but mostly small talk. My daughter came home from school in 1st grade and told me the mom from the library braided her hair because she was the sub that day. I still knew very little about her at that point. The more we saw each other, the more we talked and we soon became fast friends. It didn't take long until we were close friends, then the very best of friends. We often talked about the fate of the children's section that brought us together. In 2020 she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She fought hard and won. In August 2022 the cancer came back at stage 4. She fought again and we thought she'd beat the odds and have years left. In January 2023 her fight was no match for the cancer, and it stunned us. She was gone within days of learning how far the cancer had spread. Our last text exchange recalled how our paths crossed at MPL and how **one of my favorite places in Milltown gave me my favorite friend** and I'll never forget this. I think of her each time I stop in, which is almost every Thursday. My library nurtures my love of books and reading and as I continue to grieve my dear, sweet friend, the library sparks many, many memories of her that bring me moments of joy when I need it most. *Tara*

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When my aging mother was living with me **the library was an essential stop**. She loved to read and looked forward to getting new books. She used a walker and had fitted a large cloth bag between the handles. When the bag was full, we were done. Sometimes I needed 2 trips to get them out to the car since I had books as well. Sometimes Bonnie

helped us. My mom truly enjoyed her visits to the library. Chris Wojcik

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This location is vital to the community. A nice, friendly place in Milltown. Wonderful staff willing to help find a book or have it transferred from another location. It's a highlight when coming into town.

Ogema Public Library

"A safe place."

I love our sweet little Ogema library. It's been a wonderful place to come bring my son and help instill in him a love for a good story. We look forward to our weekly Wednesday library visits very much. I'm grateful to have a place close by to pick up a good read or movie to watch. I love the variety of books in the kids' section and appreciate seeing many wholesome stories available. **I'm so thankful our library is a safe place for patrons** and feel comfortable bringing my son in. Thanks for being a part of our small community. You are an asset and a valued part of Ogema. *Emma Blomberg*

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The library is an awesome resource institution that every community large or small needs! Books and media **provide countless ways to learn, grow and expand our minds** at any age! Contribute, Donate and Support the Library. *Drew Charpentier*

Park Falls Public Library

"Supporting the community."

One thing I remember during the Covid Pandemic, you could order books, when they came in, they would call and bring the books to your car! **It's just a happy place!** Mary L. Miller

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Local libraries are very important to the community, especially to our youth and our older adults. The internet has become a crutch to acquire

knowledge. Nothing can compare to learning from a book you're holding in your hands. Youth need books to realize what all is out in the world. Older adults need books to relearn what they've forgotten and visit new worlds. The people in between are busy keeping house, going to work, raising families; waiting for the time when they can just sit down and read a book.

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I truly enjoy going into our public library and seeing a friendly face. All the librarians are friendly and helpful; they have helped me find books close to an author I enjoy reading. **They are true ambassadors for the City of Park Falls.**

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We love the variety of books, games and toys. Our whole family loves visiting the library together. We have **spent a lot of quality family time there almost weekly.** The children's and young adult sections are so well organized and have a great variety of activities. I also enjoy heading up to the adult section to pick out my next great read. We always leave with amazing books and recommendations from all the great librarians. *Ashley Kortbein*

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The Park Falls Library is the best library in the world!

As a child walking to the library with my mother was one of my earliest and fondest memories and one that is treasured. The dark wood, cold floor, smell and process of finding and checking out books was fascinating to me. I was in awe of the library cards along with the pencil and date stamp. This caused me to put my own little paper cards in all the books in our home...I had a special pencil but alas, no date stamp. I can still remember where the Snip, Snap, and Snur, and Madeline books were shelved – in a corner, available only by kneeling on the floor to remove them for check out.

In high school we (students) would meet there for research or projects - it was the place to be. Plus some of the young adult books were sooooo good. During the summer reading for enjoyment was just part of growing up in Park Falls.

Luckily both of my parents were lifelong readers, one fiction, the other non-fiction. The Park Falls library never disappointed - my parents were always reading something. The librarians couldn't have been more kind to them as they aged.

Although we only live in Park Falls four months of the year, I still consider the Park Falls Library my home library. I suspect the Park Falls Library had a great deal to do with my career choice. For twenty-seven years I was employed as a K - 12, and community college reading specialist in the Dallas, Texas area. A big thank you to all the wonderful Park Falls librarians, the fantastic programs, classes, and activities, even the shots we had there as children, the building itself and the influence reading has had in my life. *Suzy Esterl Boyle*

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15 years ago this past November I began a Yarn Group (knitting/crochet, plastic canvas, embroidering) on Monday afternoons. We have had large groups and small groups throughout the 15 years. We love getting together **sharing ideas/patterns, helping each other with problems and just visiting**. We have had potlucks for holidays or just for fun. We have been there for each other when someone is ill/surgeries/deaths. The friendships we have gained are unbelievable. The ladies are so great to us yarn ladies -- so friendly and happy to see us come. I cannot imagine not being to meet on Monday afternoons from 4 - 6:30 with my yarn ladies. Besides the yarn group I love borrowing books from the Library. *Kathy Wilson*

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I love the PF library. It's a beautiful facility, very well-tended by the wonderful staff. While I love the availability of books and resources (including quick

access to a computer and printer when I forget things at home), I think what I enjoy most about the library is the community events. I've been to cooking class, learned some new crafts, learned how to decorate cookies, all at the library. It's given me numerous opportunities to do things with my friends and neighbors.

I would also like to **commend the staff for their knowledge and kindness**. They are always willing to answer questions and help you find what you need. Julie, especially, has been a treasure.

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I can't imagine limiting my response to one story. Our library has been such a huge part of my life as well as my family's. We have used the library through all stages of family life, from play groups and story hours to research and home school resources, to book clubs, movies, crafts, civic meetings, concerts, games and more. **The library to be one of the few truly public spaces in society.** This isn't always easy to achieve, but our librarians have done a heroic job of making sure this public space remains inclusive. Thank you, Park Falls Public Library!! *Andrea Nicolaus*

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I used the library when I was **working on my degree**...quiet place to study!

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My most memorable story of our library was when Shirley Pritzl worked there. She would get on the floor with my little ones and read to them. My kids are now 22, 22, 20. I still remember her kindness. She was also there when we lost power at our house, and we went to the library for a few hours to have a warm shelter until closing time. Shirley was always so welcoming. I remember the times that Deb Hyde would sit with our oldest and would let him twirl her long beautiful hair while she read to him, and our other two. **This library has always been a gem for our family.**

I use it about once a week, picking up audio books, movies, and books. I've used the library to supplement my curriculum in my after-school programs, sometimes selecting 20 plus books, with a large selection, at a time to have available for my students. The children's programs that I used to attend with my kids were amazing. We had so many programs to choose from over the years. I love the continuation of decorating the Christmas tree and my husband and youngest were featured in a picture in the local newspaper as he hung an ornament on the tree when he was about 4 years old. These are a few memories I cherish from our local Park Falls Public Library. *Kris Mineau*

-

Peace & comfort is my library. Thanks for all the wonderful events from cookouts to book clubs. **We appreciate all the people who help the library!**
Jane N

-

We began visiting the library in Park Falls shortly after moving here a few years ago. We explored a few libraries in the area, and **Park Falls library stood out for its excellence.** Our children absolutely love and benefit from the programs that the library offers. If a week goes by that we are unable to make it to the library, the kids are noticeably disappointed.

We've found that the opportunity for our young children to engage and learn with other children of varying ages quickly and naturally fostered social development in that area of their growth. It allows a regular opportunity for them to practice these skills. They can do so in a safe, controlled and healthy environment, where many responsible adults can monitor the engagements.

I've found that the majority of staff members are kind, patient and helpful, to say the least. Our children have formed bonds with many of them, and greatly enjoy seeing them each week. Aside from the benefit that the library offers to our

children, my husband and I find the library resources to be useful as well. We regularly reserve and borrow materials for investigating, researching and developing ourselves, as well as reading for entertainment. I also find it rewarding to have the opportunity to engage with other mothers in the area. It's a wonderful meeting place for parents concerned with the intellectual and social development of their children.

It came to my attention that the library was being assessed for value, and I wanted to make it known that, to our family, **the library is one of the most valuable offerings in the area.** We use it regularly. It is a valued and cherished asset. I would urge the community to support the library, as the library does a great job of supporting the community. *Jon and Angie Hynes*

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In November 2008 I began a Yarn Group in the Library - we have been meeting for over 15 years. So many great friends and fun every Monday Night. Last week we were featured on Channel 12 News in Rhinelander. Love our group. **We thank the Park Falls ladies a great deal.** *Kathy Wilson*

Phillips Public Library

"Access to so much information."

My local library is one of the few places I can go in my community and feel safe. They are all such amazing people that just want to share love and light with anyone who walks in the door. They also have had amazing random things available like Spice of the Month and Craft Exchange that has helped me find new things to try and enjoy. **Without the public library I wouldn't have access to so much information and books** because of how expensive it can be.

-

When I moved to Phillips at the end of 2022 the library was my first stop to get a card. But I also go find out who/where to get information re: things

like garbage pick-up, local ordinances, etc. **The librarians were wonderfully helpful & accommodating**, pointing me where I needed to go or getting me contact information on whom I needed to speak with.

I moved from a larger community & I was delighted to see displays for Pride Month, Indigenous People Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month. I'm also delighted to see the voracity in which the local library fights to keep ALL materials available.

I most look forward to discussing my current reads with the librarians. It's amazing how much they read. I don't think I've read a book yet one of them has not. They ask open-ended questions & never seemed put out taking the time to dissect complicated reads. **I love that I have a library that also networks with other libraries** so books I cannot find are available still. My favorite reason to utilize the library is that it's FREE! I read 85 books last year & spent \$0.

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I visit my local library about every other week on one of my days off. When I see books I want to read on social media or book publications I use the MORE app to reserve them and have them sent to my local branch. When my holds come in **I'm always excited to head in** to pick them up. Every time I stop in to pick up my holds, I check the adult fiction and nonfiction new release racks, the YA new release rack and the used books sale table if there is one. I love to check out new cookbooks and knitting books to preview them and see if it's something I should buy before spending the money.

A few of the librarians share some of my interests so I **look forward to talking to them** when I stop in. I use the Libby app for audiobooks and love that I can access library materials online but these visits to the actual library are still my favorite. My kids are older now so we aren't doing all the children's activities anymore, but I always look over at the little kid section with nostalgia and think about all


the hours we spent at library story times and special events when they were small. *Krista*

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I look forward to the library book sales. I love books but times are tight.

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These are handwritten notes from patrons of the Phillips Public Library -
The library helps me to:

- Have a **warm and safe place to come to**.
- Escape the real world and help me write my own story.
- Have **friends**.
- Learn things about axolotls and more things so I know things in school. Maeijah
- We love and appreciate all that you do. Always going above and beyond. Thank you! Krystal T.
- Jody always finds me the best books to read.
- Finding new books to read as a family.
- My Library is many things, besides  books. It's always a friendly face, **always helpful, and caring, beyond words**. Thank you. *June G.*
- Find great books with no late fees! Thank you! **You are a true blessing to our family.**

Rice Lake Public Library

"Helpful."

Love the Rice Lake Library. All the staff is so helpful. They have many events held for the community.

Somerset Public Library

"Above and beyond typical library services."

I really appreciate the in-person class offerings at Somerset Library. As a remote worker, I've started attending library programs to **learn new things and**

enjoy social interaction with community members.
Jean M.

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Thank you very much for offering such a wide variety of services to our community. I've enjoyed bringing my grandson to storytime and to check out books, I've attended a wonderful book club meeting where I learned about many new-to-me authors and met some great people, and I've shopped at an annual plant sale a couple years in a row. The library staff work hard to offer **fun and informative programs that go above and beyond typical library services**. Sherry H.

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Thank you for providing **educational experiences like this to the public**. It's something we used to be able to do in school but now with school funding experiences like this often are cut. It's so nice to have a safe and clean space to bring kids and provide them with educational experiences that will create memories for a long time to come. The Starlab experience also resulted in my kids wanting to learn more about the stars and space so the learning can continue with checking out books to learn more. *Melissa B.*

-

The library is a **great resource for this town! It is such a valuable asset** not only to kids but also the parents. As a homeschool parent we love when we are able to attend events for the kids at the library in Somerset! *Samantha C.*

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I loved attending Books on Tap. Was a great time, sharing thoughts on the book and enjoying company of others. *Carrie B.*

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The Somerset Library has some of the **most friendly and kind staff!** As homeschoolers we are very regulars there! Mr. Danial has especially been very

friendly and patient with my children and their many questions and requests about books they would like to read or are reading. I really appreciate him and the other staff members who have really taken the time and to have listened to the children.
Vanessa Z.

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It's great that the library runs evening **programs for adults in community locations**. It promotes community businesses, creates community among patrons, and encourages reading. *Kathleen D.*

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We love the library's kids' area, **I am able to work or read while my kiddos play in a safe and fun place.**

Spring Valley Public Library

"Our library is such a foundation of our community."

I have built so many friendships through my visits to the library, along with our library book club that meets monthly. The support the staff offers is incredible. I enjoy visiting the library and being greeted with a smiling face and having a quick chat with any and all staff present!

Our library is such a foundation of our community.

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AMAZING is the word that immediately comes to mind when I think about the Spring Valley Library! The entire team is very welcoming and helpful when calling or visiting. **They are involved in the community** during special-event days, doing crafts, book club, trivia nights, unique check out items, teen and child activities. They also support the homebound population as well. We are so very blessed to have a library system that's attitude is "we can give that a try" when looking at ways to support literacy in Spring Valley. Our community is so much better WITH our local library! Funding needs to be increased to do even more!! Cheri J

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Kate and the library have renewed my love for reading again!!! and to meet such wonderful people in the community that I normally would not have met has been so much fun!!

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I love to read. A library, free to all, is so amazing. At times I worry it could be taken away from our small town. But then Katie arrived. She has so much good energy. She started doing things like having snowshoes, skates, pickle ball rackets for people to check out. She is drawing more kids and adults to the library. The Friends of the Library has become large and very active. I have to laugh now when I read in our local newspaper about village board meetings because the library report section is the largest. **So many activities and events to report!** Hooray for Katie and the Spring Valley library. *Jan*

•

I love to read, and I love the Spring Valley Library. Katie Schneider with her boundless energy and wealth of wonderful ideas has created an **interesting and stimulating place** for the kids and adults alike in our community. I often want books not in our library or in the MORE system but that can only be found in the broader WISCAT system. Katie gets them for me quickly. Eric Hatling

•

The library is, without a doubt, MY home away from home. When I was younger the library was one of the most hated places by me- but I absolutely loved reading. That doesn't make any sense, right? Well, when I was little the library was a place that you went into to get a book and go straight out. Then our amazing librarian came along; she started activities, got new books and introduced me to a whole new world! I found books I hadn't read many times, and many people in my community gather to talk and have fun! **The library is a warm, welcoming place to be- for everyone in the community.**

People can stay and have a hot chocolate or coffee, stop to study for their schoolwork, talk to a welcoming librarian, and relax for a while!

Home does get to be a little overwhelming sometimes, and the library has helped me be a better person. I remember when I couldn't find my place in my community, I was lost. The library helped me find that. *Aurora Durrence*

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The students of Spring Valley Elementary get the wonderful opportunity to visit the public library once a month. The students are so excited to go every month and they gain access to **many more books than just our school library can provide**. The positive ongoing partnership Katie creates with the Elementary and Middle School truly creates a love of reading in all our students. *Kaitlyn Miller*

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In a traditional use of the library, I have been able to find or obtain, and read unusual books not generally available in all libraries. It has also been a place to meditate during some lonely times in my life. *ROC*

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Love our small-town library! The librarian and her staff are the BEST! **They do so much for the community** with all their programs. My reading interests have increased due to the wonderful staff!

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I started going to libraries when I went to a bookmobile as a kid. When I didn't live in the United States I missed "the library" incredibly. It is such an important part of American culture. It's an important part of my life. In the library I can find all sorts of books that give me information about the world and how I fit in, how anyone fits in.

These days I can find all sort of **media**, and the **computers** are important for the many people who do not always have access to the internet. There are

forms for doing taxes. There are **photocopy machines.** There are **little classes to build community.** There are **blood pressure cuffs** to check out as well as **skates!** It's a safe space for kids and adults alike. I use it for tutoring. I use two different libraries for tutoring! What would we do without libraries in our communities? They should be open 7 days a week! *Joyce Borgerding*

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I love our library because it's the library of things and has so many wonderful things for patrons to check out. I also love that Katie works so hard to create events and programs for people of all ages and is always open to new ideas. **The partnership between the school and library is also important** to me and creates another opportunity for students to visit the library monthly with their grade level. *Katie Manor*

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I grew up outside small-town Spring Valley but didn't really utilize the library. After being away for over 20 years I moved back. I felt like the new person and really did not have a social circle. It was spring of 2021 and I was preparing for the graduation of my youngest and a friend invited me to Spring Valley Library Book Club. I hadn't read in years, but I wanted a circle. I went and haven't missed many gatherings since then. This is the best group for age range from 20's to 80's and everything in between.

Since then the circle has grown as Katie had a turnover in her Friends of the Library and I became involved with that as the vice president. Supporting Spring Valley library has now been a new passtime. After high school my daughter was able to have a great experience as Katie's assistant for about a year. During her time there, she ordered books for her own great-grandma and great-great aunt. For her, to be able to share her love of reading with her elderly relatives was a great experience.

Recently Katie has started a very successful book challenge. A new topic is released each month. The excitement she brought to this was amazing and she had people from all over the region sign up. Katie brings an energy and excitement to reading. As I stated before, in 2021 I hadn't read for many years. Since then I have continued to increase my yearly reading. I enjoy checking out the physical books from the library and utilizing the full MORE system but then having Libby as the option for digital and audio. **The library is so much more than books, it's a family.** *Marla Butler*

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Just wanted to say how **helpful the staff at this library is** for getting the items requested! *Chris Geiger*

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I always love how when I enter the Spring Valley Public Library, I see smiles!! Everyone is always so helpful and willing to lend a hand. I feel like I am part of ONE BIG BOOKLOVING FAMILY! Thank you for ALL YOU DO! **Having a Public Library opens a WHOLE NEW WORLD of literature for young and old alike.** I don't know how I would survive without the thought of brand new, unexplored books waiting for me at the library!!! Keep on being AWESOME! *Harper Turner*

St. Croix Falls Public Library

"A space for exploration, learning and growth."

The library helps me to have a place for my kids to play. To have activities available to host meetings. To be able to read books and not have to spend money to finish series began in other ways. **Public Libraries are a resource that can never go away!** In my college days, public libraries were a place I could study off-campus.

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The Library helps me learn a lot

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Stay Connected. The available computers and printers are so nice to be able to take advantage of. The friendliness of the staff is very welcoming. I love our library.

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My library helps me to

- read books within a specific time (on deadline!)
- watch old movies
- explore unknown musical artists with CDs
- listen to audiobooks on Libby!
- Save money on magazine subscriptions!
- Have a quiet place to relax

My mom used to take my sister and I to the library in Montgomery MN. We would check out as many kids' books as we were allowed. In the summer we would sit on the living room floor with a fan behind us and she would read us books. **The library has always been a special place to me.** Thank you for being here.

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I love the library because it gives me books I can't buy! My favorite books are the Wings of Fire graphic novels.

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I love the library because it gives me knowledge. The library is like a home to me.

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I don't want to buy another printer just to scan and email something once a year. I'm so glad I can come down here and do it!

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I've lived in many, many places-all over the states! I came to SCF for love, and the library has been a delightful bonus love! It's a visually gorgeous place, so welcoming, just such a **space for exploration,**

learning and growth. It's been a resource for me in so many ways-from groovy summer programs for my visiting grandson to my husband's far-fetched book requests to my hard-to-find documentary searches. And such lovely humans who work there!! I'm thankful for all of it! *Carrie*

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We love the **community events** at the library! We most enjoy the kid lounge and the chess board.

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Learn to draw and jump! It's cool and quiet.

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We started going to storytime 2 summers ago. My son was so shy and didn't like to be with or around anyone but Mom and was also a bit behind in speech. He refused to say his name for a ball intro game or answer any questions. By the end of the summer, he had started coming out of his shell, he would gladly say his name, answer questions and interact with other kids and Miss Laura. We continued to do storytime until we moved to Somerset. **The growth I saw in him was amazing and I'm so glad that storytime was available to us all year.** I'm so glad Miss Laura continued to include him even when he wasn't responsive because that is what he needed to come out of his shell. Now he is always talking, he is interactive with others, and I know storytime played a huge part. My daughter also loved going and I'm sure it also played a big part in her early speech and her social butterfly nature. *Brittany Juvrud (Nolan and Kennedy)*

Wilberg Memorial Public Library (Osceola)

"Vital and necessary."

When I was pregnant with my son, I went through a major urge to downsize. So I went through my books that I had collected over the years and gave away most of them. I realized I want to read more books, not just reread the same books I had, but I

didn't want to pay for each new book I read. Then I got a library card. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made. In the last three years, I've read over 120 books and it has been amazing. I would have spent hundreds of dollars on books that I can read for free. The savings alone (especially when it's listed on the bottom of my check-out receipt) is eye-opening and serves to emphasize the great need for libraries to stay open.

I've also participated in a couple of our library's craft nights. While I'm not the craftiest person, this opportunity (also free) let me try something new, meet new people, and have a souvenir that I can take home.

Not only that, my son absolutely loves the "library days" when we come in and pick out new books for him to read. He particularly enjoys the craft and play areas, especially in the winter when he can't always play outside. We go to the library at least once per week to see what's new.

Last, but certainly not least, the librarians are truly wonderful people. **They're kind, knowledgeable, and love talking about books!** They make us feel like we're heard and that we belong. *Brenna Weston*

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Needed to send pkg to Waupun public library, I neglected to realize address was NOT on pkg. Walked to public library. Not only did the librarian look up info for me, but she also suggested I use library courier service to get the items back to Waupun public library, called WPL (they renewed the DVDs for friend who'd left them at my house!) and took care of return for me! **Score two for libraries!**

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I love ordering **large print** books from the MORE system. *Peggy*

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Wisconsin legislators – We in Polk County are so grateful that you have chosen to support the MORE library materials sharing system. It means a lot to us that you underwrite the **inter-library sharing of informational and recreational materials**. We ask that you continue doing this. Thank you, *Sandy & Doug Wellumson, Osceola*.

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I love my library!

I love the variety of books, movies and audio books that are available through the MORE system. I can almost always find a book in the MORE system. If I can't find the book I want I can request that the library buy a copy. A friend who has moved to a different state is jealous that I have access to such a variety of books. When I tell her what I have been reading she says her library doesn't have the newer books or have that type of book.

The library has also provided a way for me to meet friends who also love to read. We have 2 different book discussion groups so people can read and discuss different books every month. Our librarian does a good job of picking a variety of books to help us expand our minds. The meetings are organized and varied so we have lively discussions. I have read many excellent books I never would have read on my own.

I love the library because there are a variety of classes or discussions offered to the community. **There's always something new to learn.**

I love my library because they offer craft classes for patrons. The cost is low so people can afford to attend.

I love my library because it is INCLUSIVE. The library staff are friendly and helpful to all people. There are books on many topics and it is not easy to ban books. I love that they believe books should be available for everyone and if someone doesn't like the book, they should just not get it but that doesn't give them the right to stop others from reading it.

I love my library because they are **looking out for our community**. Our library recently got a grant to purchase more material for our aging community. Our librarian has purchased more large print books and even some CD players so seniors can borrow books on CDs. I love my library because it is FREE. It allows equal access to everyone for the materials.

I love my library because it is a sunny, friendly space to read. *Miriam Flysjo*

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This library is a beautiful building, and the staff is so welcoming. It also offers 2 book clubs in addition to craft classes every couple of months. I use the library for checking out books, mostly through Libby. I view the **library as a community gathering place and great for young readers**.

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When I moved from TC to rural WI, I was thrilled to find a welcoming, well-stocked library in Osceola. The staff were all so helpful and friendly, not only providing information about the books and take-home videos I was looking for, but **answers to many questions about the surrounding area**- where, how, when, etc. And, I was introduced to the MORE system where all the reading not found at this library could quickly be requested and delivered to Osceola from across the state and more!

After some time, I became a member of the Friends of the Osceola Library, made lifelong friendships, had fun being a part of contributing to the library, and observed as the library grew and eventually moved into a brand-new space. It now offers more and more to a vibrant community: CE programs, author visits, craft classes, children's reading programs, computer and copy machine use, and so much more. The library in this community and every community across the state offers so much to residents: educational and entertainment value in the form of books, magazines, movies, but also it fulfills many other needs and provides community support as well.

I am thankful that our legislators can see how important continued financial support is for maintaining a **vital and necessary service in our communities**. *Marian Quinn*

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I love and need our libraries and library services. I love our library because I can access materials from anywhere in the state if our library doesn't have them. I love to browse the shelves to find books I've heard about, by writers who present **points of view different from my own**; thankfully the Bill of Rights allows that. I love libraries because they are public and library cards are free. I love our library because the programs open my mind to different and new ideas. I love our library because I make friends with other library users. Libraries create community. *Barb Wetzel*

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My story of why the Osceola Public Library is a truly valuable resource:

Starts with my age and ability to use technology and have success. Being the president of a nonprofit that I am passionate about, the helpful staff at the Library has been priceless. The capability of the copy machine has been excellent because the staff knows how to use the numerous functions. The kind, friendly, helpful staff are outstanding!

Thank you so much being an asset to the Osceola community!😊 *Trudy Lorenz*

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Our family has been in the Osceola area for over 30 years. We come from families with a long history of readers and we regard the local library as an essential community resource. Since the start of the country and the modern library emerging because of Benjamin Franklin's largess and vision for a future of a well-educated populace, we have seen the many benefits as the library system has grown. Libraries allow everyone, regardless of financial status, age, and mobility, the opportunity to learn

and benefit from an expanding amount of resources. **I am so proud of our local Osceola Wilberg Memorial Public Library and the wonderful people that work to keep it functioning at a high level.** The MORE Library system is the best I've ever experienced. I admire the common sense sharing of resources amongst the MORE Library participants. This is a great way to save money and use our resources efficiently and effectively. Just as we need publicly funded roads, fire stations, police forces, public works, public schools, clean water, and infrastructure, we need public libraries to serve us all. **Public Libraries are one of the best of American inventions.** It is a reflection of our joint efforts for freedom and a well-educated populace.
Bret Ethier

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I love my library because it is where all my friends are. I moved to the area 19 years ago and knew no one except my son and daughter-in-law. Shortly after moving here my granddaughter was born. Being recently retired I was able to be her daycare provider. When she was about one year old, encouraged by her mother, we started going to Storytime every week. Through Storytime we met others. Little kids for her and parents for me. Kids she'll be graduating with this year.

I love my library because moving on from Storytime I started reading the monthly book discussion books and eventually started going to the monthly discussions. Here I met others, some closer to my age, and I liked the idea that I was reading books I probably wouldn't have picked on my own.

I love my library because the book discussion group led me to the Friends of the Library. At the Friends I **found the best friends I have ever had!** Together we sort books, work the book sales, go to lunch and dinner, go to the theater and movies, take day trips and even longer vacation trips. All of these things happened because of the library! I love my Library!!! 📖❤️📖❤️😊 *Grandma*

Reach out to your local library to schedule a visit, use a community meeting room and meet community members.

Find your local library at iflsweb.org.