



Library IN THE LOOP



Peoria Public Library's New Chapter

"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." - A.A. Milne (Winnie-the-Pooh)
Yes, how lucky we have been to have had Deputy Director Roberta Koscielski with us for so long.

After 38 years, our 2020 Illinois Librarian of the Year has decided to hang up her cardigan, so to speak, and retire. Her last, official day with Peoria Public Library is May 13, but Roberta will never be far from our hearts – or our bookshelves.

In being honored as the state's top librarian in 2020, she was recognized as "a passionate, dedicated champion of her community, her library's role in it and the profession at large." Roberta was the first Peoria Public Library librarian to

receive this statewide honor.

During her career, she forged connections with city leaders, area nonprofits and other organizations. For decades, she was an adult literacy tutor and Board member for first Common Place and then Neighborhood House. Her tireless volunteer efforts garnered her a Volunteer Service Award and a one-on-one meeting with then-President George W. Bush in 2007.

Her work in raising opioid addiction awareness in libraries was recognized nationally. She was dubbed "a new first responder" by U.S. News and World Report and named as one of Library Journal's Movers and Shakers in 2018.

She started Peoria Reads!, our one city, one book program, with Common Place in 2001 and was its main steward for 20 years, attracting additional community partners, including Bradley University, Methodist College and Neighborhood House.

Peoria Public Library's Board of Trustees honored Roberta with a memorial tree and plaque in Lakeview Park just outside Lakeview Branch, where Roberta started her career with PPL in 1984. Library staff, current and past, friends and community leaders will also celebrate her during a reception on her last day.

"Roberta has meant so much to Peoria Public Library and to our city," said Peoria Public Library Executive Director Randall Yelverton. "Roberta has been an invaluable partner during my time here. Working side-by-side with her has been a gift, and I will truly miss her on a personal and professional basis, as I know our entire staff will."

Added Yelverton, "We've all faced a lot of challenges and change since the pandemic, but

please don't let this be a sad thing. The programs and community partnerships that Roberta created and led will live on, and, as she herself notes, she's excited about the library's future. Let's be excited and happy for Roberta as she takes advantage of the opportunity to enjoy retirement."

Part of the library's new chapter includes a warm welcome to incoming Deputy Director Veronica De Fazio, who comes to Peoria Public Library from Plainfield Public Library. Her experience also includes more than a decade at Des Plaines Public Library and several years of experience on the Illinois Library Association's Executive Board. She is currently the ILA's immediate past president.

Check out our June newsletter for a profile on our new Deputy Director Veronica De Fazio.



Summer Reading Sign-Up Starts May 15

Summer Reading 2022 officially starts June 5, but you can get your entire family signed up as early as May 15.

Exciting news this year is that our Summer Reading round-up party will be at the Peoria Zoo, which is very much in keeping with this year's theme of "Read Beyond the Beaten Path."

Anyone who completes five of the six weeks of Summer Reading will be eligible to come to our Zoo party. We're also bringing back our popular Adults (only!) Summer Reading party. Details coming soon.

Until then, look for Summer Reading sign-up information at your favorite Peoria Public Library location starting May 15. You can sign up in person at your favorite branch or [register online via Beanstack](#)

Starting June 5, log your reading – anything and everything counts. Parents, reading to your child counts.

Summer Reading is open to everyone – ages 0 to 99+

McClure Branch Closed for Repairs through May 23

Peoria Public Library's McClure Branch is expected to be closed through May 23 as the library's elevator is replaced.

During this time, the book drop at McClure Branch, 315 W. McClure Ave., will also be closed. As always, patrons can return materials to any Peoria Public Library book drop.

Peoria Public Library's four other locations will be open as usual. [Visit our website for location details.](#)

Let the Games Begin

Be among the first to check out brand-new games at Lakeview Branch.

Browse the selection in person (Lakeview is open noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays) or visit our online catalog. Online, limit your search to Lakeview Branch and limit the format to "Realia/Misc. item" so you only pull up physical games.

Our collection is small to start, but we promise it will grow.

Also feel free to browse Lakeview's Puzzle & Board Game Swap table. Take a game, leave a game.





Murder Mystery Prom at Peoria Public Library North Branch

Register now for our May Murder Mystery event at 7 p.m., Friday, May 20 at Peoria Public Library North Branch, 3001 W. Grand Pkwy.

The Gladstone High class of 1987 has gathered for their prom, and what a night it will be! The hair is big, the dresses are puffy and the social hierarchy is the stuff John Hughes movies are made of.

Until.....murder!

While this mystery does contain a murder plot, there are no mentions of drugs, sex or alcohol.

Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. to get checked in. The mystery will begin promptly at 7 p.m.

While the event is free, space is limited and registration is required.

Sign up by calling 309-497-2100 or [click here](#):

Ages 18 and older.

Costumes encouraged!

Musical May! Three Free Concerts at Peoria Public Library North Branch This Month

From jukebox hits to jazz, join us for three free concerts this month at Peoria Public Library North Branch, 3001 W. Grand Pkwy.
Sunday, May 22 – 2 p.m., Goodnight Gracie
A local favorite, Goodnight Gracie is a quartet known for a jukebox-like variety of genres, including originals.

Monday, May 23 – 6:30 p.m., Adam Larson Trio

Adam, who grew up in Normal, is a well-known and respected jazz saxophonist, but also a composer and author. He comes back every so often from touring the U.S., and we're very lucky to have him. There's so much to unravel with him – his books on jazz are sold in over 30 countries; he has a popular online masterclass; he's a teaching artist at Lincoln Center's 'Let Freedom Swing' program and the IMEA commissioned him to compose the All-State composition for the 2020 convention.

Wednesday, May 25 – 6 p.m., Water Street Stompers

Peoria local band, the Water Street Stompers, will bring the spirit of Mardi Gras to Peoria with traditional Jazz.

All concerts are free and open to the public.

Peoria Reads! 2022 Celebrates Loving Where You Live

Each year, we feature an important book through our annual Peoria Reads! one city, one book project. Now 20-plus years strong.

For 2022, we have chosen a book that helps us celebrate where we are in life — something that perhaps we all need during this ongoing global pandemic.

This is Where You Belong: Finding Home Wherever You Are by Melody Warnick will inspire you to love where you live — whether you are a lifelong Peorian or a new transplant.

In collaboration with our Peoria Reads! partners – Bradley University, Methodist College and Neighborhood House -- we will continue hosting programs tied to this book throughout most of 2022.

In May, we will bring Storytime out into our community, with storytime at Luthy Botanical Garden, the Peoria Riverfront Market and Springdale Cemetery.

[Find more details about all our Peoria Reads! events](#)

ALL LOCATIONS OF PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY

will be

CLOSED

for

Memorial Day

SATURDAY, MAY 28 through MONDAY, MAY 30

