

Friends of the Anoka County Library



The only Anoka County Library (ACL) in 1958 and the main Northtown Library now.

ACL & Friends Celebrate!

This year marks the 65th anniversary of the opening of the first library in Anoka County. The original library headquarters was in Spring Lake Park and is now located in Blaine at the Northtown Library. The number of branches grew from one, in 1958, to the current eight branches, as the population of Anoka County grew from 85,916 (1960 census) to 367,018 (2021 census). ACL will celebrate its Sapphire Anniversary with music, activities, and cake at the Northtown Library on November 18 from 10:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

2023 also marks the 20th anniversary of the incorporation of the Friends of the Anoka County Library. The Friends support ACL by raising funds and awareness of Anoka County Library in its mission to connect the community to ideas, information, and inspiration. The most successful fundraiser for Friends is its book sales. A photo of one of the first sales was found in the Library archives (below) with a note indicating it raised \$100. The photo on the right shows the crowd waiting for the start of the latest Friends' book sale at Rum River Library. That sale raised \$3,415. The Friends' efforts and community support allowed the Friends to present a check to ACL for \$12,500 in May. That money supports collections and these annual programs: Park Packs, Book Club in a Bag, Local Author Fair, Reading Bridge, Book prizes for summer reading, the Teen Write On Contest, diapers, USBs, and bike locks at each branch in case of patron "emergency," and, this year, prize baskets at the 65th anniversary party. An additional \$2,500 was presented to individual branches in January for their unique needs.



One of the first ACL book sales, 1968.

Presentation of 2023 check.



Crowd waiting for Rum River book sale, 2023.

Branching Out: Mississippi Library

Within our Anoka County Library system, we have many wonderful branches! This column will feature a different library with each newsletter so that you can get to know a little more about each one.



Mississippi Library staff.

Featuring our Mississippi Library with ACL's 65th anniversary coming up was an easy choice! First opened in 1961, it has had several different locations until settling into its current location in 1975. In 2020, the interior of the building received a complete refresh with new carpet and furniture, added study rooms, a new service desk and glass walls to create a creative and fun children's space. The courtyard also received a makeover including 2 benches donated by the Fridley Lions Club.

In June, the branch also added a new manager, Stacy Cutinella to replace Shannon Melham who has moved to our Rum River branch. Stacy was a research librarian at Augsburg University for 17 years where she managed student staff, provided research to undergraduate and graduate students and taught an informational literacy course.

Coming up in 2024, the Mississippi Library will be adding a Thursday evening Storytime from 6:00 to 6:45 starting February 1. Curiosity Kitchen classes will also be back featuring adaptive cooking classes for teens with disabilities. Compact mobile kitchens called Charlie Carts were provided by Anoka County SHIP (Statewide Health Improvement Partnership) and make these fun and educational classes possible



If you're looking to head out to a State Park this fall or winter, be sure to check at the desk to see if a 7 day pass is available! Mississippi, along with Columbia Heights Library, has partnered with Minnesota State Parks to offer three park passes available on a first come, first served basis. Simply check one out and you have access to any State Park for 7 days! No need to return anything, your pass will expire once your week is up! Be sure to take advantage of this unique program and get outside!

The Mississippi Library is a great place to learn, explore, and connect with your community. We encourage you to visit us soon!

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for future Friends of the Anoka County Library book sales. The Friends organization set the following 2024 dates and locations for the sale:

- January 13, 2024 at Northtown Library
- May 11, 2024 at Centennial Library
- October 12, 2024 at Rum River Location

Donations of 1-2 boxes of good-condition newer books, especially children's books, may be dropped off the day before the sale between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the hosting library.

Here are a few of the upcoming events at ACL:

- November 18: Anoka County Library Sapphire Anniversary (Northtown Library, 10:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)
- December 2: Reading celebration (Mississippi Library, 10:00 a.m.-12 p.m.)
- February 24, 2024: Annual Author Fair (Northtown Library) The keynote speaker will be Curtis Sittenfeld and the event will debut the sixteen 2024 Featured Local Authors.

Please consider supporting the Friends of the Anoka County Library through GiveMN/Give to the MAX Day.



For a direct link to the GiveMN/Give to the MAX Day Friends page, please go to: <https://www.givemn.org/organization/Acl> and click DONATE. Each time a gift is made to ACL, during Give to the Max, could help Friends of the ACL win part of the \$100,000+ Prize Pool! Early Giving, began November 1 and runs through November 15. Give to the MAX day is November 16.

Joining the Friends

Continued active involvement by Friends' members and the community will help the ACL stimulate and inspire library patrons for many years to come. To renew membership or join Friends of the ACL, simply go to the Friends page on the ACL website to join via the online form or to print the form and mail it in: (<https://www.anokacountymn.gov/2680/Friends-of-the-Library>)