

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL LIBRARY LOVERS' MONTH

As we enter the season of valentine cards, conversation hearts and red roses, my thoughts turn to ... library support groups? Of course! February is National Library Lovers' Month, which is a great time to appreciate the dedicated organizations that help support the programs, services and collections of the Redwood City Public Library. In addition to strong support from the budget of the City of Redwood City, RCPL is very fortunate to have multiple groups of volunteers who help raise awareness, volunteers and money for library activities.

The Friends of the Redwood City Public Library was incorporated in 1972 to help support library activities like Summer Reading and other children's programs. Over the years, they have added other significant programs, including online homework help, author visits to local schools and annual support for the Traveling Storytime program in local preschools and day cares. This past year they contributed nearly \$100,000, raised through the efforts of a dedicated group of volunteers who run a bookstore in the lobby of the Downtown Library. Whether you're looking for gifts, needing to restock your little free library or just wanting something to read, the Friends' bookstore is a great place to start. You may also see them at the farmers market, on Amazon.com or at other community events.

Redwood City Library Foundation was founded in 1998, and since then the foundation has raised over \$3 million from corporate sponsorships, fundraising events and individual gifts to support initiatives like the opening day collection of the Redwood Shores Library, funding Baby Bay and early childhood learning spaces at Downtown and Redwood Shores libraries (and coming soon at Fair Oaks and Schaberg!), and organizing last year's STEM Festival on Courthouse Square. Current fundraising efforts include wireless hotspots for checkout by children without home internet access, as well as Career Online High School, which allows adults to earn an accredited high school diploma through coursework at the library. You can

support the foundation at several upcoming events: the Kermes festival on April 23 (a partnership with the Latino Community Council of Redwood City to raise funds for Fair Oaks Library), STEAMFest 2.0 (now including arts!) on April 29 at Courthouse Square or the Wild Wild West fundraiser on May 13.

Redwood City Friends of Literacy became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1991, and ever since they have been dedicated to promoting awareness, raising financial support and advocating for the intergenerational literacy services of Redwood City Project READ. Project READ's intergenerational programs are designed to break the cycle of illiteracy by surrounding adults and families with literacy services that promote education and a lifelong love of learning. With literacy services for at-risk students, adults in the community and correctional facilities, and children without preschool access, Project READ matches volunteer tutors with individual learners. The Friends of Literacy support this work through many activities, including the famous annual Trivia Bee for Literacy, started in 1989 and still going strong.

Take some time this month to show your love to these great organizations!

Editor's note: This article and information is supplied by Derek Wolfgram, library director at the Redwood City Public Library. Look for similar articles in upcoming Spectrum Magazine issues.