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FAYETTE COUNTY CELEBRATES NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

Uniontown, PA – National Library Week is well under way across Fayette County.

Established in 1958, National Library Week is sponsored by the American Library Association and libraries nationwide each April. Running through Saturday, the observance celebrates the life-changing work of libraries and library workers.

Fayette County Commissioners issued a proclamation last month, officially recognizing National Library Week and acknowledging libraries and librarians as leaders in innovation, pioneers in supporting democracy and social change through access to information, and friends to a diverse community.

Fayette County Commissioner Angela Zimmerlink said libraries' roles as cultural and community centers increase and we become a more digital world.

"Libraries are becoming a place where people gather to socialize, interact and explore and, as such, are community builders," Zimmerlink said. "Libraries also play an important role in business development, providing important resource tools - especially for small local businesses.

"Everyone should support our local libraries."

Fayette County Commissioner Vincent Vicites said libraries are the foundations of Fayette County communities.

"Citizens need access to resources to help with education and learning," Vicites said. "Our libraries provide access to computers and the internet as well."

Fayette County Commissioner Dave Lohr echoed Vicites' sentiments, emphasizing the importance of internet and information access countywide.

"With that, school students and adults can become library members and have access to better services and, in many situations, the most updated programs," Lohr said. "(By issuing) a proclamation, we may spark people to think and use libraries again and help strengthen their existence."



Upon receiving the proclamation, Brownsville Free Public Library Director Emma Beaver said times are changing and libraries are taking advantage of it.

“We’re more than just a room of books,” Beaver said. “We’re a room of resources.”

As part of National Library Week, Brownsville Free Public Library will host an art-making workshop for teens 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call 724-785-7272 or stop by the library at 100 Seneca Street, Brownsville.

Carnegie Free Library, located at 299 South Pittsburgh St., Connellsville, will host children’s story time, book club meetings, yoga classes, knitting and crocheting gatherings and other programming throughout the week.

The library is also celebrating National Poetry Month throughout April. For more information, call 724-628-1380.

German-Masontown Public Library, located at 104 South Main St., Masontown, will host a Lego Block Party 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, along with craft and makerspace events. Call 724-583-7030 to register.

Point Marion Public Library kicks off its spring story time programming Saturday. For more information, call 724-725-9553 or stop by the library at 399 Ontario St., Point Marion.

Uniontown Public Library Director Christy Fusco said her facility is using National Library Week to help increase its emphasis on technology and other resources libraries offer.

“One of the things we think is really important and think libraries can play a role in is people taking ownership of their own data and realizing all sources on the internet are not equal,” Fusco said. “People say, ‘Why do we need libraries? We have Google,’ but they don’t realize the search results they’re seeing are based on who paid the most money to appear at the top.

“Our goal is to let people know there are better sites available and that we are a conduit for them to get there.”

Fusco said libraries are a great resource for all forms of information literacy, offering countless free ebooks, online courses, 24-hour reference services, help for job-seekers, meeting spaces and much more.

“We really are a community hub,” she said. “We want folks to come in and experience the library and use it the way they want to use it, because it’s really your library. It’s a uniquely individual experience for each person.”



National Library Week is a way to market libraries as institutions that are “still here for you,” Fusco added.

“I think it’s important to celebrate, because as things change in our society, these community institutions are growing and changing with you. This is not your grandma’s library,” she said. “Libraries don’t just exist in a vacuum.

“They’re a reflection of the community and a chance for everyone to celebrate these great things that are part of our society and universal consciousness.”

Uniontown Public Library is located at 24 Jefferson Street. For more information, call 724-437-1165.

Other Fayette County libraries offering National Library Week programming are:

- Mary Fuller Frazier Community Library, 142 Constitution St., Perryopolis; 724-736-8480.
- Republic Library, 13 Degregory Circle, Republic; 724-246-0404.
- Brownfield Community Library, 291 Banning Road, Dawson; 724-529-2930.
- Dunbar Community Library, 60 Connellsville St., Dunbar; 724-277-4775.
- Smithfield Public Library, 14 Water St., Smithfield; 724-569-1777.

For more information on all local libraries, visit www.fayettelibraries.org.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettecountypa.info.

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