

BLFLI Monthly Meeting

Date: April 12, 2019

Time: 8:00am – 9:30am

Location: Kolak Center

GUESTS: Tara Tinder, Bill Flanagan, Courtney Schindler, Rachelle Elliott, John Wong, Sue Stein, Carol Mishler, Roxane Bartelt, Andrea Heckner, Monica Krysztopa, Kathy Pohl, Bradley Liggett, Drew Pennington, Shirley Williams, Paula Schutt, Jan Knutson, Bill Lock, Josh Lock, Gloria Heiss, Nick Dimassis, Lori Luther, Jeff Hoyt, Regina Dunkin, Heather Churches, Aaron Wilson, Andrew Janke

Tara Tinder - Welcome/Comments/Announcements

Tara started the meeting with introductions. She gave a recap about the foundation's small library at the Stateline Community Foundation. Tara announced that Paula Schutt is providing 900 books at the Dirty Dash in August. Tara gave a recap of the amount of scholarship applications we received. Through reviewing the application process, the advisors have noticed a lack of soft skills. SCF has found etiquette books for women and men to give out to the scholarship recipients. SCF grants are open until June 1st.

Bill Flanagan - Progress Since Last Meeting

Bill started with an introduction and explained the goal and importance of literacy. Bill gave an explanation and update about the advisory committee. The next meeting is next Monday April 15th at SCF at 4:30pm. Everyone who is a Partner is welcome to attend. The goal of the advisory committee is to develop the structure to ensure that the BLFLI lasts long term. The committee is going towards a different route but most importantly the BLFLI needs to have something in place to keep the initiative strong after Bill and Tara are no longer involved. Looking for suggestions to keep the BLFLI grass roots styled, increase and maintained partnerships, and community bound.

Rachelle Elliott – School District of Beloit, Early Literacy Director

Rachelle introduced Gloria Heiss, a high school senior at Beloit Memorial High School. Gloria has been planning an event to build your own library for 3-12 year olds. Gloria has partnered with Rachelle, the Beloit Public Library, the National Honor Society of Beloit Memorial, and the Hendricks Family Foundation. The event will be hosted at the Beloit Public Library from 12:00pm-1:00pm on May 11. Miss Beloit will be in attendance at the event to show her support. Gloria has requested for corporate partners of the BLFLI to share posts on Facebook in order to increase popularity. Gloria and Rachelle are also looking for volunteers to help out with the event. Gloria will be raffling off book shelves at the event which she built with CareerTek and volunteer students with the National Honor Society. An idea was introduced to Gloria to possibly find monies to get bus tokens throughout the schools so that transportation would become easier for those who wish to attend. Gloria paraphrased a little bit of information from her presentation. View the full video by clicking this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=0j1QIN07Oj8. As Gloria wrapped up, Rachelle handed out website link flyers for literacy and marketing flyers for literacy. Rachelle introduced Wild Sky Books as the donor for a large quantity of books. The little libraries around town need sponsors so these donated books are a good opportunity to get different types of books in the hands of families. Rachelle introduced Latricia to discuss literacy within the older range of students in the School District of Beloit. Over the past year and a half, Latricia has been looking at the curriculum and reading requirements to see if they really are the best option for the students. She and her team are also working to revamp the RTI (response to intervention) system. Historically, Beloit had a wonderful program but over time, the district has needed to clean up the path to figure out how to support the current population of students and their literacy needs. The other issue that Latricia introduced is about assessments for the students. They are looking at some of the assessments to decide if they are beneficial for students to be completing while keeping in mind some of them are mandatory throughout the state. Latricia explains that there needs to be a benchmark assessment to complete because it shows literacy levels over periods of time. She explained the purpose of why the assessments need to be done relates to funding which gets more people on board to complete the testing. Rachelle explained that this all comes together in the home when the parent can see that lightbulb turn on in their child's head, not just the teacher at school. Latricia explained that the reading specialists are working to partner with the teachers to support each other with literacy and make sure each student is knocking down their reading barriers. Latricia also works the gifted and talented students along with library marketing so that the students are excited about going into the library and read. Her next

project is the plan for next years' curriculum to find the holes regarding literacy and fixing them to provide a better experience for our students.

Partner announcements, plans, and reports on progress to date

- John Wong – Working with volunteers within the School District of Beloit to get them trained on the literacy program. So far there are approximately 20 volunteers and they are looking for more.
- Beloit Area Community Health Center – Introduced their new hire Mary Beth. They have received Highlights for their programs from a grant through the Steline Community Foundation which has been going well. All handouts have been getting printed out and placed in exam rooms for patients.
- Nutrition and Health Associates – Received a grant through the Steline Community Foundation to purchase books to handout to children. Rachelle has been coming to do the breakfast and books program which has been going well. Word art is being created to be placed around rooms to encourage reading and positive activities. They are looking for posters to put in treatment rooms that are colorful and vivid to get the literacy message across.
- Beloit Public Library – Has been working with Gloria on the Build Your Own Library event. Week of May 6th, third graders come to the library to get their cards. Met with the Beloit Clinic to get literacy involved in the waiting rooms. ABC Playgroups have been a good way to get individuals incorporated with literacy. The BPL is working to remove fines on children's books so that they are still allowed to checkout books.
- Headstart – Met with Welty to discuss partnerships for programs. Going to continue to concentrate on where and when you can read with your children, teaching new works, and connecting to books.
- Greater Economic Development – Working with Beloit students on literacy programs.
- Beloit Fire Department - Libraries are now installed by Eagle Scouts. Fries with a Firefighter are scheduled.
- St. Paul Lutheran Church – Summer literacy activities have been planned (Wednesday story time, punch cards with prize incentives). Volunteers are needed for story times every Wednesday from 12:15pm-1:45pm. Neighborhood family fun times occur each month of the summer where story times will be incorporated. St. Paul B & B (books for babies) is a new program to give books to newly baptized babies.
- Beloit Health System – Continuing Reach Out and Read program. They will be sponsoring Music at Harry's Place in June where they can have books to give out to children. Their main focus is the engage parents. Friends of RiverFront (Jennifer Kodl) will be doing a movie night on August 23rd around 6:30pm where books can also be given out.
- Welty Environmental Center – Able to expand programs working with Evenstart and now Headstart. Welty could use a wide diversity of books that are different each time so that the children can take different books home each time.
- City of Beloit – City Manager, Lori Luther, thanked all of the city partners in attendance. Working on the importance of literacy initiatives for the city and its future. Also focusing on building a literacy framework and looking for help along the way to reflect the bottom up philosophy.
- City of Beloit Parks and Recreation – Excited about giving away books at the Dirty Dash. They have been giving away books at school expos.
- School District of Beloit – Second and third graders are having a competition called Name That Book (similar to quiz bowl)
- Culver's – Guest readings have been occurring at the restaurant which have been going well. Their bookmark program is going well within schools and the library. They have approximately given out 2,500 bookmarks.
- NAACP – Continuing their program with literacy and skill development in the Merrill school.
- City Hall – Given out about 700 books from the bookshelf in the last year. They have tried an idea of engaging people in the waiting areas/lobby which has been going well. This idea is working well to diffuse tense conversations.

Upcoming Calendar of Events

- April 22nd through April 27th – Rising Professionals YP Week Book Drive
- May 1st – Build Your Own Library from 12:00pm-1:00pm at the Beloit Public Library
- June 21st – Music at Harry's Place from 7:00pm-9:00pm

Next Meeting: Friday, May 10th beginning at 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the Beloit Public Library