THE BUILDING THAT CHANGES LIBRARY SERVICE FOREVER

Take a look inside the Library’s new high-tech distribution center.
This summer, the Library hosted engagement sessions at our 40 branch locations and our Downtown Main Library. These moderated sessions gave community members a chance to learn a lot about our Library system. Attendees shared their ideas about the future of our facilities.

These sessions are an essential part of our overall Building the Next Generation Library initiative. While complete details about that initiative are available at CincinnatiLibrary.org/NextGenerationLibrary, I want to focus on these important summer sessions and the thoughtful, passionate feedback we received.

We welcomed between five and 15 people at most sessions, but some had as many as 50 people in attendance. The sessions drew a range of supportive community members including tweens, teens, senior citizens, township council members, and even a few city mayors.

I was struck by how much people love our Library and our Library staff. I also appreciate how much people know about their Library. Attendees eagerly shared their insight and curiosity about new services with each other.

There were common themes when it came to our facilities. People have a strong desire for similar items in nearly every community, including increased accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges, better and/or more parking, upgraded restrooms, more meeting rooms, the creation of small group quiet or study rooms, outdoor spaces, and separate “quiet” large rooms or areas.

Attendees also talked about how they use their home Library and other libraries in the region. Many session attendees use two or more branches for a variety of reasons varying from convenience to program offerings to open hours.

Our planning partners in the Building the Next Generation Library initiative, Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning, will use the information gathered at the sessions, in conjunction with assessments and a variety of other data, to inform the development of the Facility Master Plan document.

We continue to review and organize all the feedback received via the surveys, feedback form, community listening sessions and also the 15 focus groups conducted by Design Impact, a local not-for-profit specializing in helping organizations connect with under-represented voices. While much of the feedback focused on facilities, we certainly heard helpful insights related to services.

This was only the beginning of listening and engaging with our community. The final report about our future facilities plans is coming at the end of 2019. Then, we’ll talk with our community leaders and members about what the next five, 10, and 20 years hold for our Library.

“One thing I am certain about, after talking with more than 1,000 community members this summer, is that the future is bright and hopeful for our Library.”
PLANS FOR **PRICE HILL BRANCH RENOVATION REVEALED**

It’s been more than a year since the Price Hill Branch Library was forced to close and relocate to the Price Hill Recreation Center due to a damaged ceiling. On Sept. 12, the Library unveiled the final design for the Carnegie branch renovation and the new addition approved by the Board of Trustees.

The plans come after many conversations during community forums held earlier this year to uncover the needs and wants of the branch’s customers. Community input also was gathered about some of the design elements for the branch, such as opportunities for public art. “We’re looking forward to re-opening a renovated, fully accessible branch that can better serve our customers,” said Paula Brehm-Heeger, the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director of the Library. “The renovations will include quiet adult areas, spaces for children and teens, and more meeting space, while still maintaining the legacy of the building and honoring the community.”

The Library hopes to break ground in late 2019 and to complete the renovation by late 2020. The renovation plans can be viewed at [CincinnatiLibrary.org/NextGenerationLibrary](http://CincinnatiLibrary.org/NextGenerationLibrary).

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**Honor Book collection from Library available at OhioMeansJobs Center**

The Library is committed to helping residents looking for work or aspiring to a more financially and emotionally fulfilling career. Now, along with our partners at OhioMeansJobs (OMJ), we’ve placed an honor book collection of donated materials at the OhioMeansJobs Center at 1916 Central Parkway. Thanks to the support of the Friends of the Public Library, OMJ clients can take books home and enjoy them.

“Every day we serve parents who are trying to make their lives and the lives of their children better by finding a new job—but often they need to bring their children with them,” said Cindy Frietch of OMJ. “Reading is such an important part of lifelong success. I wanted the families that are here waiting for service to be able to enjoy a book, as well as to take a book home with them.”
Born in Germany and shaped in New Jersey, Geoffrey Girard earned a B.A. at Washington College, then an M.A. in English literature and an M.F.A. in creative writing from Miami University. He teaches writing at Mount St. Joseph University and is the English Department chair at Moeller High School. He writes nonfiction, thrillers, historical fiction, and speculative fiction. His novel *PROJECT CAIN* was nominated for a Bram Stoker award for “Superior Achievement in a Young Adult Novel.” He also ghostwrites memoirs and has published fiction under various pen names.

**What inspired you to start writing books?**

Books were my first and, for decades, greatest love. By the fourth grade, I was addicted to my school and local libraries and had commandeered my father’s *Lord of the Rings* and my mom’s *Watership Down*. I was writing imitations of Tolkien and Terry Brooks and Mary Stewart by the fifth grade. I wanted to be, as Ariel says, part of that world... to add a book or two to humanity’s enormous shelf.

**What do you enjoy the most about writing?**

I’ll choose those projects which provide an opportunity to learn. I once pitched a book to a publisher about Indigenous Americans just because I felt I didn’t know enough about those people. The book sold and I spent one year learning. *African Samurai*, the latest book, got me a month in Japan, learning just enough Japanese to be dangerous, working beside a professor of Japanese history for a year, and reading the words of people who existed 400-plus years ago. We even ate in the same Kyoto restaurant this man had dined in 400 years before. Our goal was to fill in the missing pieces where history had failed to record this man’s life.

**What role did the Library play in your life?**

The local library for me was, no exaggeration, hallow ground. It was in walking distance from home and I’d spend literal hours there, several days a week, lost in the stacks, running my hands over the books, learning all the authors’ names and what they’d written. I checked out too many books beyond my reading skills. I could spend hours just with the magazines downstairs — from Asimov’s Science Fiction to *National Geographic*.

**What are you currently reading?**

THE BUILDING THAT CHANGES LIBRARY SERVICE FOREVER

The Library’s new high-tech distribution center will mean better service for you

Leanne Montgomery is a fan of the Symmes Township Branch Library. Allison Walsh uses the Blue Ash Branch Library. They don’t know each other but they have at least two things in common: both love to read and they both love to put items on hold and have them delivered to their branch as fast as possible.

“The emailed receipts, the auto-renew feature, and the ease with which I can put materials on hold online and then get the notification to pick them up when they are available is invaluable in today’s busy world,” said Walsh. “Being able to name your favorite authors and be on the hold list automatically simply rocks,” said Montgomery.

These two Library fans and thousands of other Hamilton County residents who love the Library will benefit from a major decision to move to a new Library distribution center in the West End. The facility officially opened in September and it's having a big impact on the speed in which the Library can deliver materials to cardholders.

“Opening the distribution center is not an end point,” said Holbook Sample, the Library’s Chief Technology Officer. “It’s actually the start of bringing in these different tools and techniques and finding new ways of providing service to our customers, getting them the materials that they want when and where they want them.”

The distribution center is a five-minute drive from the Downtown Main Library and near I-75, which allows Library trucks easy highway access to make their deliveries. A new large-capacity sorter has been purchased. The Library had been using a 20-bin sorter purchased in 2011. The machine was at the end of its useful life and the new sorter is able to keep up with increased demand for Library materials.

“The new distribution center will speed up the process of getting materials through a production line and sorting machine,” said Matthew Todd, manager of Shipping & Receiving. “We will be able to unload and load trucks at the same time and get everyone back on the road promptly. It will help get the customers’ holds out to them in a timely manner.”

One of the main reasons the Library decided to move distribution from the Downtown Main Library to a new location was to improve efficiency and safety. During 2018, the Library circulated almost 20 million items. The team needed a bigger loading dock area, with a higher clearance and more room to safely maneuver vehicles. The West End distribution center has multiple loading bays and plenty of space to move vehicles around.

“Every day we think of new things we could do to help our collections and make our customers happier,” said Sample. “We’re working on making changes so when people go into our locations there’s a greater diversity of titles that reflect the communities that they come from and that we speedily get the things that they want. If it’s not available to them in their location then we get it to them very quickly.”

You can get a look inside the new distribution center and get to see the new sorter in action by watching the video at cinlib.org/distribution.
Thanks to an eagle-eyed cardholder, the Library now has the complete run of *Independent Eye* available in its digital library. The *Independent Eye* was a counterculture newspaper printed out of a house in Clifton in the late 1960s into the mid-1970s.

Last November, Mark Neeley was reading the book *Free Press* by Jean-François Bizot about underground newspapers published in the late 1960s. While looking through a list of publications in the book, Neeley noticed that one of them, *Independent Eye*, was published in Cincinnati. This unexpected piece of information sparked his curiosity and led him to the Downtown Main Library.

“One Saturday I went and requested to see the collection in the rare book room (Joseph S. Stern, Jr. Cincinnati Room), and I was completely blown away,” said Neeley. “I was immediately taken by the artwork and design, the progressive nature of the content, and the counterculture movement of the late ’60s and early ’70s through a local lens.”

Neeley’s interest led him to track down one of the paper’s staff, Ellen Bierhorst, who still lives in the Clifton house that was home to the paper.

“She was very kind, answering all of my questions about the paper’s history and sharing personal stories about what it was like to publish such a radical paper in Cincinnati at that time,” said Neeley.

With Bierhorst’s permission, the Library digitized the entire collection of the *Independent Eye*. To honor this digital addition to the collection, the Library held a special panel discussion moderated by Reference Librarian Chris Smith on Nov. 13 that included Neeley, Bierhorst, and former Cincinnati City Councilmember and Vice-Mayor Jim Tarbell.

“The artwork, social commentary, artist interviews, photos and concert advertisements are what caught the eye of many who read the paper during its publication,” said Smith. “I hope that people who read the paper now can get a better understanding of Cincinnati and all the great things that were happening here at the time.”

To read the *Independent Eye* online, visit the Digital Library at [cinlib.org/independenteye](http://cinlib.org/independenteye).
The Library celebrates the cultural history and heritage of African Americans in Hamilton County with special events planned in February 2020. Programs are happening at the Downtown Main Library and at many branch libraries. Watch CincinnatiLibrary.org and the Library’s social media channels for exact dates and times.

**UNDER ONE ROOF**

The African American Experience in Music Hall

Jazz greats, from Duke Ellington to Billie Holiday, as well as the earliest R&B and rock musicians immortalized on King Records, performed in the South Hall of Cincinnati’s Music Hall. In the North Hall, World Heavyweight Champion Ezzard Charles fought some of his most important bouts, while in Springer Auditorium operatic divas broke the color barrier on the main stage. Preservationist Thea Tjepkema explores the history of African Americans whose determination and artistry helped forge the ethos of our city and laid the foundation of American music. Watch CincinnatiLibrary.org and the Library’s social media channels for exact date and time of this event.

**SOCIETY COLUMNS OFFER RARE GLIMPSE INTO LIFE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE 1800S**

The Library’s Digital Library contains a treasure—scans of society columns for African Americans in Cincinnati. Stephen Headley, a Reference Librarian in the Downtown Main Library’s Genealogy & Local History Department, stumbled upon the weekly write-ups while doing research. The articles talk about social events like weddings and church gatherings, as well as the comings and goings of prominent African Americans. They were published between 1884 and 1896 in various Cincinnati newspapers. The columns provide a wealth of information for historians and genealogists looking for information on a community which was generally not mentioned in newspapers. Headley will present some of his findings from the columns during an event in February 2020 at the Downtown Main Library. Details are yet to be finalized. In the meantime, you can read all about the columns on the Library’s blog at Cinlib.org/societycolumns.
WHO REALLY WAS THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIBRARIAN IN CINCINNATI?

In one of the Downtown Main Library’s staff break rooms, there is a picture of Bessie Russell Stone with a caption under it stating that Stone was the first African American librarian to work for the Library. But research recently revealed that Stone had multiple predecessors, and the earliest may have been Hattie Walker.

Walker was born in Philadelphia in 1878, and her father was the first African American policeman in Philadelphia, so Walker wasn’t a stranger to firsts. Walker was hired by the Library in 1922 and at the time, was the only African American at the Downtown Main Library. Walker was likely the first African American to take the Library’s training course.

Walker was the first head Librarian at the Stowe Branch Library in the West End. Located in the Harriet Beecher Stowe School for Colored Children, the branch opened with the school in 1923. Before becoming a librarian at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Walker taught night classes at Stowe, and was a school attendance officer.

As a librarian at Stowe, Walker tailored the Library's collection and services to the predominantly African American community it served. There were pictures of African American educators, sociologists, and scientists like Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver on the branch's walls. She curated works by African American authors and about African American history and culture for the branch. Every year, Walker helped students when neighboring schools celebrated “Negro History Week.”

After serving the Library for 27 years, Walker retired in 1948. Upon her retirement, Carl Vitz, the Library’s director at the time, said Walker “made a real contribution to the work of the library and I believe also to interracial understanding.” She died in 1972 at the age of 94 years old.

You can read more about Walker and get lots of other Library stories by visiting blog.cincinnatilibrary.org.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Cincinnati’s Woman’s Suffrage Movement

As early as 1855, Cincinnati hosted a National Women’s Rights Convention. By 1914 the campaign for Woman Suffrage became a hot issue in Ohio and specifically Cincinnati. The Queen City had at least three active suffrage organizations. The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was finally approved in 1919 and a year later officially adopted. That finally giving women the right to vote in all state and national elections.

To celebrate the centennial of Woman Suffrage there will be an exhibit in the Joseph S. Stern, Jr. Cincinnati Room inside the Downtown Main Library from Jan.31-April 26. Learn about the women and men who worked for years to get women the right to vote. This exhibit is guest curated by local historian Katherine Durack, Ph.D., who hosts a series of podcasts titled Genius of Liberty. Learn more by visiting the Digital Library at cinlib.org/geniusofliberty.
The Friends’ mission is to support the Library financially, but we also have a wider goal of promoting literacy in our community. The Friends’ leadership team, inspired by the Library’s wealth of teacher resources and our own professional experience, has begun an initiative to reach local educators.

Teachers bear the responsibility of equipping young minds to think critically, ask questions, and ultimately, to find answers for themselves. Educators are critical to our children’s development. Despite their vital role, they are often underpaid and given a shoestring budget for their classroom materials.

Thankfully, the teachers of Cincinnati and Hamilton County have resources in our Library. Our Librarians curate materials to complement curriculum and lesson plans. Educators have access to a their own Library card with unique borrowing privileges. There are also a myriad of digital resources for both students and teachers. Homework Help is readily available at many Libraries. The Summer Adventure program, which the Friends are proud to support, encourages reading over summer break with prizes and activities for all ages.

Educators, however, often want to grow their personal classroom libraries. Buying children’s books can be a huge financial burden. We saw this need as an opportunity to fulfill our mission, so at the end of 2018 we began hosting Educator Open Houses.

Our initial plan was simply to increase awareness of the Used Book Store at the Warehouse. We knew that if we could get teachers through our doors that they’d return with their friends in tow. When shown the increased savings that a Friends’ membership affords, they might join, increasing our base of support for the Library.

Initial attendance at our open houses was low, but we adapted and learned what was effective. Deep discounts bring in new faces. Teacher-specific deals are wildly popular. Holding events at convenient times is key. We want teachers to know we aren’t just a bookstore. We support educators on a deeper level.

When we talk with teachers about their classrooms, we begin a relationship that transcends a commercial interaction. Yes, they can count on us for a wide selection and fantastic prices, but they also can rely on us for individual care and encouragement. Every open house is a chance to meet new people, and further develop our strategic plan.

If we can relieve even some educator burden, be it low-cost books or a cheerful word, then we’ve made a measurable change. We are here in Hartwell, cheering for teachers. We’re promoting literacy in our community.

We invite educators to join us for our open Houses. Dates will be posted at cincylibraryfriends.org. If you have a suggestion about how we can serve teachers more effectively, please email us at info@cincylibraryfriends.org.
The following gifts were received between July 1 and Sept. 30, 2019. For more information about donating to the Library Foundation, visit our website at CincinnatiLibraryFoundation.org.

Thank you...

The Library is deeply grateful for the generosity of our community and welcomes gifts of all sizes. Your donations are essential to ensuring delivery of excellent Library services and the availability of the widest possible range of informational resources for all ages. For inquiries regarding contributions, please contact Staci Dennison, Thomas W. Jones Executive Director, at 513 369-4595.

Memorials and Tributes

Theresa Alesbury, Jacqueline Armstrong, Joleen Coffaro, Charles P. Coffaro, Sara Combs, Barbara Ellison, Julia and Jerome Keller, Thomas Lane, Andrew Morgan, Gary Ploehs, Nita and Ralph Sierreveld, and Owen Williams in memory of Charles Coffaro designated for the Harrison Branch Library

William Clark, Susan Cappa, Jeanette Key, Mary Desollar, Priscilla G. Haffner, Marjorie Hirt, Sylvia Johnson, Connie and Roger Miller, Caroline C. Richards, Mary Stewart, and Martha Wilson in memory of Elizabeth “Betty” Weber designated for the Hyde Park Branch Library

Katie Early in memory of Mary Adelaide Rutledge

Allan Evans in memory of Wanda Plummer

William Feeney in honor of Mary and John Shorten

Jill Grisco, Janet Grisco, and Bruce Lever in memory of Rae B. Grisco designated for the Madisonville Branch Library

Patricia Klein in memory of Lewis Wittman

Allison Lingo in honor of Sandra Lingo

Rebecca Olson in honor of Amy Koshoffer

Susan and Joseph Pichler in memory of Joseph H. Head, Jr.

Ann C. Regan in memory of Beulah L. Weppler designated for the Deer Park Branch Library

Sandra Swanon and OrangeBoy, Inc. in honor of Paula Brehm-Heeger

William Dreyer and Sue Wettstein in memory of Darrin Dreyer's beloved pet Madison

Game Day Communications in memory of Kristen and Mike Schlotman's beloved pet Cash

Paul, Karen, and Charlie Glink in memory of Terry Ray's beloved pet Murphy

Carolyn Gutjahr in memory of Chris Humphrey and Mike Lacinak's beloved pet Dylan, in memory of Martha Dourson's beloved pet Micha, and in memory of the Meyers Family's beloved pet Brizzy

Barbara Heldman in memory of Karen Petrosky's beloved pet Ralphie

Rick and Paula Helmes in memory of the Sheely family's beloved pets Dilly and Elbow

Eric Heskamp in memory of Traci Bugg's beloved pet Jesse

Janice Kagermeier in memory of Aaron Kent's beloved pet Steeler

Cheryl Klink in memory of her beloved pet Misty Saldivar

Robin Lippelman in memory of Kelly Enwright's beloved pet Bella

Mandy Ng in memory of Sandy Hamilton's beloved pet Soleil

Susan Pace and Bill Scrivener in memory of Shiloh Roby's beloved pet Walter

Betsy and Paul Sittenfeld in memory of Rhoda and John Brooks’ beloved pet Nelson

Pet Memorials

Sharon and Ronald Buhr in memory of their beloved pet Rikki

Timothy W. Carrier in memory of the Smith family's beloved pet Puss and Boots

Phyllis Crawford in memory of the Black family's beloved pet Lional

Befriend A Branch

Doug Black designated for the Deer Park Branch Library

Robert Hadden designated for the Blue Ash Branch Library

Patricia Haug designated for the College Hill Branch Library

The Hawthorn Club designated for the Clifton Branch Library
AWARD-WINNING JOURNALIST IS LIBRARY FOUNDATION’S WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE FOR 2020

A reporter and author whose work has been featured in *Time*, *Slate*, and *EBONY.com* will serve as the Library Foundation’s Writer-in-Residence for 2020. Dani McClain is a contributing writer for *The Nation* magazine and a fellow with the Type Media Center in New York. Her work centers on reproductive health, race, and activism.

McClain will serve as the Library’s literary ambassador to the community, and receive a $10,000 stipend thanks to the generous support of Naomi Tucker Gerwin and the Library Foundation. She’ll host a monthly podcast, write blog posts, hold office hours, and lead writing workshops during her tenure.

McClain attended Columbia University for both her undergraduate and graduate work, earning a Master of Science from their prestigious Graduate School of Journalism. She has received numerous awards including the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism, and awards from the National Association of Black Journalists and the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association. She is the author of *We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood* and has contributed chapters to other books including *Killing Trayvons: An Anthology of American Violence* and *Octavia’s Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*. To learn more about McClain and to see how you can connect with her, visit [CincinnatiLibrary.org/writerinresidence](http://CincinnatiLibrary.org/writerinresidence).

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Donations from Trustee lets MakerSpace add to high-tech equipment

The MakerSpace at the Downtown Main Library added a state-of-the-art large format scanner to its repertoire of equipment thanks to a generous donation from the LaMacchia Family Foundation to The Library Foundation. Equipment in the MakerSpace helps the creative community bring its visions to life.

The new IQ Flex scanner features a maximum sheet size of 24-by-18 inches, with the ability to scan images up to double that size thanks to its innovative stitching capability. It is also capable of creating scans with an optical resolution of 1,200 dpi. After scanning media, it’s possible to edit the image digitally using Photoshop, which is available on the Digital Creation Stations in the MakerSpace. Users can also reproduce scans onto paper or vinyl using the large format printers.

The IQ Flex scanner is ideal for artists, graphic designers, architects, photographers, archivists and anyone with a special project since it’s capable of transforming fragile originals or large scale works that won’t fit onto a traditional scanner. It can be used for photo collages, digital scrapbooks and map and blueprint preservations.

MakerSpace staff is available to help users with set-up and questions during their appointment. To set up an appointment for any of the equipment, go to [CincinnatiLibrary.org/Makerspace](http://CincinnatiLibrary.org/Makerspace).

Besty LaMacchia has served as a Trustee of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County since 1998. She has also served on the board of directors for the Friends of the Public Library and has chaired numerous fundraisers.
HOW THE LIBRARY RESCUED ME

By Peter Bour, Library Services Assistant, Forest Park Branch Library

For 25 years, I was an Emmy award-winning television producer, working seven days a week, discovering, investigating, and developing stories that enlightened and empowered my audience.

In 2013, my life took a dramatic turn for the worse. Four months shy of my 50th birthday, the owners of my station downsized me. I was shattered, emotionally and financially, and the downward spiral that followed cost me my career, my marriage, and my home.

In 2017, after three months in a homeless shelter, I walked to the Library to make one last stab at creating the elusive perfect résumé. I tweaked my résumé with the help of Library staff and friends at JobWorks. Still the farthest thing from my mind was a new career at the Library. When a job opportunity opened up, I threw my hat into the ring. I got hired.

Why me, you ask? I’m not a Librarian. I don’t have a master’s degree. I’m not a walking encyclopedia of books and authors, and I’m more likely to read nonfiction books and magazines than novels. What I do have is an intense desire for lifelong learning and a devotion to customers who depend on me to discover resources that empower and enable them. I will always be indebted to our libraries and plan to pay it forward by learning and using every Library asset there is to help our customers, because I know there are many more people like me who need inspiration and hope to transform their lives.