

## Oshkosh Public Library Highlights February 2024

1. Community Engagement Librarian Sandy Toland presented several talks on a variety of topics that are proving to be popular with local community groups. On Jan. 22 she delivered a talk on Blue Zones, developed in partnership with the Oshkosh Seniors Center, to a group of 15 at Bella Vista; on Jan. 30 members of the AAUW learned about the Orphan Train; and 23 members of Winnebago County Association of Home & Community Education gathered under the Dome on Feb. 19 to learn about the Underground Railroad.
2. Ten local children in grades K-5 wrote stories for the library's Young Authors Program. Using winter-themed prompts, the writers wove whimsical tales about building the coolest snow fort and life as a snowman. Their stories and illustrations were bound into an anthology and presented at the Young Authors Celebration on Feb. 24 – bringing the kids into the ranks of published authors! Copies of the anthology will be available for checkout and included in the library's local history collection. For these fledgling writers, the program met its goal – to empower the next generation of authors to explore their imaginations, develop their writing skills and build self-confidence through the art of storytelling.
3. Mad Science of Wisconsin returned to the library Jan. 27 with its interactive program, Sounds Like Science. The 24 kids who attended this high energy event learned about sounds and sound waves, using ordinary objects to demonstrate the concepts behind these complex ideas.
4. The Lunar New Year took center stage at OPL in January and February, with displays and programs focused on celebrating the Year of the Dragon.
  - A cultural program presented by the Northeast Wisconsin Chinese Association featured traditional dances, authentic snacks, and hands-on activities, including a small dragon dance and crafts. Twenty-eight children, teens and adults attended the event under the Dome.
  - A mini-mural created for the N.E.W. Dragon Boat Festival in September was displayed in the First Floor Reading Room throughout January and February.
  - Cultural items were displayed on the second floor and a collection of LEGO dragons created by a library volunteer was displayed in the Reading Room.
  - The powerful beats of Oshkosh Taiko filled the Dome and beyond on Feb. 10 when the UW Oshkosh-based group brought its dynamic performance to the library. The ensemble entertained 100 people with their drumming, shared lessons about Japanese culture and engaged the audience in song and dance throughout the performance.
5. Local History and Genealogy Librarian Michael McArthur showcased additions to the library's treasure trove of genealogy and local history resources on Feb. 8. The program was sponsored by the Winnebagoland Genealogical Society, with 13 people attending.
6. Two fourth grade classes from Webster Stanley Elementary School visited the library recently to do research for a unit on biographies. Their teachers bring students to the library at least four times each year to learn how to search for materials, check out fiction titles and get excited about the Summer Reading Challenge.

7. The library is now offering Saturday sessions of the popular Read to a Dog program to better accommodate the busy schedules of local families. In addition to the longstanding Monday time slots, appointments can now be scheduled on select Saturdays starting at 10 a.m. to read to Gracie, a black Lab who is a wonderful listener! Read to a Dog gives kids a fun opportunity to improve their confidence and reading skills.