

# Best Sellers

*Our favorite stories about your Library's impact* • WINTER 2020

## Get Hooked on “Booked”

In the fall of 2018, we started a new program based on an idea from a former employee, Tom Powers. He writes a blog called Michigan in Books, and he said, “Wouldn’t it be cool if the Library could get noteworthy Michigan authors to come and speak about the backstory behind their books?”

**W**ouldn’t it, indeed! We thought the idea had merit, so a team started pulling together the list of authors and books we wanted to share. And that’s when the fun began.

The basic idea is simple. People come to the Library from 1:00-2:00pm, usually on the first Thursday of the month. They munch on lunch while they listen to an insider’s presentation by a notable Michigan author.

“One of our first speakers was Michael Gustafson, author of *Notes from a Public Typewriter*,” recalls librarian Michael Madden. “The book is a curated collection of notes that people wrote over the course of a year on a typewriter set out at Literati Bookstore in Ann Arbor. It became a sort of public art piece in prose form. He shared some of the funny as well as the heartbreaking stories that real people had written. At one point, he had to wipe away tears, and the audience was openly weeping. It was a moving moment.”

The whole premise of the event is to bring people together around good

literature that they might not encounter otherwise. And it works!

“We get a different crowd and a unique experience every time,” Michael notes. “John Borkovich is probably one of the only Michigan Conservation Officers who has literary groupies! His fans made a big showing when he talked about his book, *Wildlife 911: On Patrol*. Joe Grimm, author of *The Faygo Book*, kept everyone entertained with his costume changes, Faygo folklore and traveling museum of artifacts. His big punch line? Faygo executives wouldn’t return his calls when he wanted to interview them for the book, so he hunted down the great-granddaughter of the founder for source material. Once the book was published, Faygo called to purchase copies for all of their employees!”

Every one of these authors has an unusual story to tell, and something that sets them apart. “We hosted Edward Renehan, author of *The Life of Charles Stewart Mott: Industrialist, Philanthropist, Mr. Flint*, when



● Audience members listen with rapt attention to author Michael Zadoorian.

it came out,” Michael shares. “We were virtually the last stop on his weeklong tour, and figured attendance might be sparse. We were stunned when more than 90 people showed up! Younger people came because they wanted to learn about this incredible founding father of Flint. Older people came because they remembered him personally. Our event was the best-attended one of the whole week!”

One of our three primary service strategies is to be a community hub: a place where people gather to talk, learn, be entertained, and get to know each other. Booked for Lunch is proving to be an excellent way for new people to experience the Library, and for patrons from all walks of life to come together around great literature. Bring your lunch and join us!

*Booked for Lunch will resume in May at our temporary location in Courtland Center. Check the calendar at [fpl.info](http://fpl.info) for specific information.*

## “When You Tell Them, They’re In!”

“I never knew Flint Public Library needed philanthropy before I got involved with them,” Jane Worthing notes. “It was a huge learning for me to find out that tax dollars don’t do it all.”

Jane is no stranger to libraries! “My mom would tell you I was a voracious reader,” she remembers. “I would get so immersed in what I was reading, I would lose track of everything going on around me. I spent a lot of time as a teenager at the Cultural Center, and that’s how I got to know the Library as a reader.”

“My aha moment came when I attended the first Learn for Life Luncheon,” Jane recalls. “I thought I knew what a library does and how it’s funded. Turns out I had no idea about how many great services Flint Public Library provides to our community as well as to the county. I didn’t know that they’re not part of Genesee District Library. And I really didn’t understand that they depend on philanthropy to deliver many of those services.”

Jane is the President/CEO of Genesee Packaging, and she is learning firsthand about how important the Library is to people like her employees. “Many of my employees don’t have access to computers,” she observes. “The Library is a huge resource to help people build a resume, get a job, and access electronic information. It’s books, but it’s a whole lot



● *Jane Worthing is a lifelong book lover!*

more! It doesn’t cost anything to go there for all of these amazing family experiences. The enrichment is powerful...and free!”

Now Jane is an enthusiastic donor and supporter of the Library. “I volunteer as a host for the Learn for Life Luncheon every year,” she says. “I try to invite different

people each time. It’s such a great way to introduce new donors to the Library. The event is short and sweet, but extremely effective. Most people can slide a lunch into their schedule. It helps broaden the donor base, and get a cross-section of the community involved in the Library’s mission.”

What’s the payoff? “This luncheon helps donors understand the importance of the Library and what it can do for their family and neighbors. Usually, once you tell the story, people are in. They just didn’t know!”

***Have your own aha moment! Contact Ashoka Rao at 810.249.2040 or [arao@fpl.info](mailto:arao@fpl.info) to get a behind-the-scenes look at the Library’s impact.***

# All-Encompassing Energy At Library Concerts

What will draw strangers together, get them clapping and dancing with no thought about how they look? We know at least one thing with that kind of power, and that's music.

“Music is a universal language, and live music packs a special energy punch,” says Leslie Acevedo, Director of Library Operations for Flint Public Library. “I love seeing kids jumping up and down, and older folks lighting up as they belt out the lyrics from songs of their youth. People who come to our concerts are just plain happy!”

So why does the Library think it's important to provide free concerts? “This is another example of how we tailor our services to this community,” Leslie says. “We have an extensive and well-used music collection featuring almost every genre imaginable. But cost is a large barrier that prevents many people from enjoying a live musical performance. It can be \$100 or more to take a family to a concert. Thanks to a very generous grant from the A. G. Bishop Trust, we can provide equitable access to experiences that unite and move us. As a result, these concerts enrich 1,000 or more people each year. And if they find a genre they like, we often have more of it in our collection so they can continue to enjoy it.”

Flint Public Library hosts concerts every month, usually featuring Michigan performers. Our classroom concerts are designed for young kids to expand their experiences. We use grant dollars to bus students from Flint and surrounding communities to the Library so they can experience music and musicians up close.

“Kids aren't shy!” Leslie says. “They want to participate, to dance, to touch the instruments, and even play them. They're learning to move to a beat, sing, rhyme, and follow directions. And none of it feels like school! Along the way, they're rubbing shoulders with kids they might not otherwise meet.”

Family concerts are designed for everyone. Grandparents, parents, kids... all can come for an hour of family time in a comfortable, welcoming environment. “It is

important for generations to feel connected to each other,” Leslie notes. “When you have grandpa teaching line dance moves to his grandkids, that's a special moment. When parents can laugh and sing with their kids, that's important.”

“Concerts are an extension of the living room,” Leslie says simply. “We bring families and strangers together to laugh, sing, talk and get involved. Music is social. It supports learning. It's another way the Library can serve a bigger slice of the community.”



● Kids from all over Genesee County get into the music during Classroom Concerts.



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Our mission  
is to be Flint's go-to place  
to learn for life.

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## We're Moving!

**W**e are so grateful to City of Flint voters, who passed both Library millages in November 2019 by a wide margin. Now we're moving forward with our renovation plans, and there are some things you'll need to know.

### RENOVATION KICKOFF/LAST DAY OF SERVICE

Please join us on **Saturday, February 29** from noon to 4:00 PM as we celebrate our final day of service in the pre-renovated building. Enjoy music, refreshments, entertainment, story times, TechStudiOH! and the Friends Used Book Sale. Share your memories while you learn more about our renovation.

### OPENING IN MAY AT COURTLAND CENTER

Our temporary Library service location will be at Courtland Center, right next door to the temporary Sloan Museum. Moving is a big job, so we're not exactly sure how long it will take. The Library will be **closed starting March 1**, and we plan to open for service at our temporary location **sometime in May**. Our hours of service will be the same as they are now.

### STAY CONNECTED

Here are some important things for you to know while we are closed during March and April.

- Please return Library materials to the dropbox at Crapo Street. We will collect them while we are closed.
- No late fees will be assessed.
- Your Library card will automatically renew.
- Using your Library card, you can still download books and use our website portal for many services.
- You can reach us during the move at (810) 232-7111 or [askus@fpl.info](mailto:askus@fpl.info).

*Find full details online at [YourNewFPL.org](http://YourNewFPL.org) and sign up for e-mail updates to stay connected!*