



Next Chapter Modernizes Library Accessibility



North Lake County Library Foundation's Next Chapter Campaign will bring much needed improvements to the library by creating a new entrance, easier access to restrooms, and wider space between shelves, all of which will bring the library into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"We're excited to relocate the library entrance to the corner of 1st Street and 1st Avenue. The new configuration will greatly ease accessibility for those with mobility issues and wheelchair users," Library Director Abbi Dooley said. "The current ramp is very steep and is difficult to negotiate."

The library has proudly served the community since 1912 and has been in the current location since 1989. The facility's ADA accommodations were grandfathered in but need to be brought up to code to better serve and support the community.

Wider spaces between shelves also will provide secure lines of sight for library staff and patrons. "Increasing the space between shelves and updating the bathrooms will not only help patrons in wheelchairs but also parents who have strollers and small children," Connie Brownell, president of the North Lake County Library Foundation said.

The \$2 million raised by the Next Chapter Campaign will help expand the usable space within the library by 2,000 square feet and create more room for valuable mission-driven offerings like children's programming, technology access and creative exploration.

"Our library has always been an important asset to our community, and we want everyone to have safe and easy access to enjoy our services and programs," Brownell said.

Donor Calls Library a Positive Force



Growing up on a farm, Penny Jarecki's mom read to her after lunch every day. Penny did not live near a library but would have loved to have been able to go like the "town kids" did.

Seeing the children visiting the North Lake County Public Library for story hour reminds Jarecki of her love of reading as a child and how vital the library is to the community. For this reason, Jarecki has pledged her support to the library's Next Chapter Campaign to expand and improve its facilities.

"The library is one of the first places for children to go to find out how much fun and adventurous reading is," Jarecki said.

In 1970 she married local rancher, Chuck Jarecki. During their years on the ranch, the Jareckis were deeply involved with beef industry organizations on local, state, and national levels.

After the ranch sold in 1990, Penny volunteered her time to community projects. She was a founder of the Greater Polson Community Foundation, which was created to support the needs of the community - including grants to the North Lake County Public Library.

Jarecki said that besides the children's programs, the library has stayed in step with the times by offering computer access and technical support, Wi-Fi, eBooks, access to books from other libraries in the state, and meeting rooms for the community.

"The library is a magnet, a positive force with so many aspects including bringing in authors, guest speakers, and special films," Jarecki said.

She supports the \$2 million capital campaign to renovate the library because the library is committed to using its existing location by repurposing 2,000 square feet of interior space in the renovation. Jarecki believes updates that will bring the library into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act are important.

"It really is time for a renovation," Jarecki said. "The remodel project will make more efficient use of the existing space for both library staff and library users."

