

Libraries evolve to meet community needs

Rortvedt, Colleen . The Post - Crescent ; Appleton, Wis. [Appleton, Wis]16 Apr 2017: E.8.

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FULL TEXT

In reality, libraries have always been about knowledge creation. Throughout the Fox Cities you will find innovative services and programs that will delight you. Libraries are places where our residents can engage in creative pursuits and interact with resources, new technologies and with each other.

I am honored to kick off a monthly column that will feature contributions from Fox Cities libraries. It's the perfect time to start as we just celebrated National Library Week. This year's theme was "Libraries Transform," which highlights the changing nature of libraries as we evolve to meet the changing needs of our communities.

In the past, libraries served as protectors of information when resources were scarce. Today, we live in an era of information abundance and libraries and librarians serve as navigators.

Models for learning have changed and are responding to a knowledge-based economy. Learning has become individualized and learning methods emphasize collaboration and the inclusion of diverse viewpoints, giving libraries a more relevant role in supporting the needs of our communities. From babies to seniors, we support your learning development. In our ever-changing, competitive economy, we play an important role in nurturing your creative and intellectual pursuits.

In reality, libraries have always been about knowledge creation. Throughout the Fox Cities you will find innovative services and programs that will delight you. Libraries are places where our residents can engage in creative pursuits and interact with resources, new technologies and with each other. Libraries are experts in connecting people with resources, and in today's world we rely on our rich networks of community experts as some of the most important resources we have.

We are reliant on each other. You rely on us to develop quality services and programs that matter to you. In return, we rely on you. We rely on community support and a network of strong libraries and library systems to provide a richness and depth of resources that no single community could provide alone.

A public library is a unique institution that serves as a symbol to the entire community that every resident's success is important. Libraries mean something different to everyone and helping you accomplish what you want for your personal, professional, family or community development is our goal.

In future months, look for columns from libraries throughout the Fox Cities. I hope these articles pique your curiosity about something you didn't realize your library provides, or encourage you to visit if you haven't been to your library in a while. Libraries are constantly transforming so we can best respond to your needs and so you, in turn, can transform your life. Together we build a stronger community.

Colleen Rortvedt is the director of the Appleton Public Library. Fox Cities Libraries is a monthly column contributed

by leaders of local libraries.

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Caption: Getty Images/iStockphoto Libraries today provide a wide range of services. Colleen Rortved

DETAILS

Subject:	Public libraries; Community support
Publication title:	The Post - Crescent; Appleton, Wis.
First page:	E.8
Publication year:	2017
Publication date:	Apr 16, 2017
column:	FOX CITIES LIBRARIES
Section:	Features
Publisher:	Gannett Co., Inc.
Place of publication:	Appleton, Wis.
Country of publication:	United States
Publication subject:	General Interest Periodicals--United States
Source type:	Newspapers
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	Feature
ProQuest document ID:	1888484903
Document URL:	http://ezproxy.menashalibrary.org:2048/docview/1888484903?accountid=45911
Copyright:	Copyright 2017 - Post-Crescent, The Appleton, WI - All Rights Reserved
Last updated:	2017-04-16
Database:	US Midwest Newsstream

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