

# CHECK IT OUT

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER



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210 COURT STREET,  
BURLINGTON, IA 52601

[WWW.BURLINGTON.LIB.IA.US](http://WWW.BURLINGTON.LIB.IA.US)



## LIBRARY CLOSINGS

WEDNESDAY 1/1  
NEW YEAR'S DAY

## LIBRARY HOURS

MONDAY-THURSDAY  
9 AM - 8 PM

FRIDAY-SATURDAY  
9 AM - 5 PM

SUNDAY - CLOSED

## LIBRARY NEWS

## FRIENDS NEWS

Happy 2025! This is a banner year for the Burlington Public Library as it rings in our 140th year of continuous service as a public library! In 1885 the city of Burlington enacted Ordinance 21, establishing a 'free public library', making us the first public library established West of the Mississippi - prior to this, libraries West of the river were subscription libraries requiring annual payments for 'stockholders.' This year marks 140 years of continuous service for the Burlington Public Library, and while our services in 2025 will look radically different than the stacks of our 1885 library, the core tenant of providing access to information for the purpose of self-education still rings true.

In 2024 we saw over 120,000 people come through our doors for services, which range from traditional book lending to meeting room use, program participation, technology help, and so much more. It takes a community of trained professionals to keep an institution like the Burlington Public Library thriving for 140 years, and your current staff of 27 fabulous individuals is a standout team that regularly goes above and beyond to meet the needs of our community. A big thanks to you as well, for being a part of the BPL community. Year 140 brings some difficult times our way with budget issues, legislative hurdles, and threats to our First Amendment right to read. The best way to support your library is to use it, so I hope to see you around BPL as we start what will be another fabulous year of library service.

Happy New Year,

Brittany Jacobs  
Library Director

Welcome to the new year! The first thing on the Friends of the Burlington Public Library schedule is our January Book Sale. The Friends Sale will be held on Friday, January 24 from 9-5. The Public Sale will be Saturday, January 25 from 9-5. The Clearance Sale will be Monday, January 27 from 9-2.

As most of you know, this sale includes hundreds of well-used books and other items at outrageously low prices. This is a great time to pick up your winter reading materials.

If you are interested in working at the sale, a sign-up sheet will be in Footnotes. Sign up for any opening your calendar allows.

We will see you at the sale, either working or shopping!

Cindy Murphy, Book Sale Chair



# JANUARY EVENTS

## ALL AGES PROGRAMS

### TECH HELP ALL DAY EVERY DAY!

Technology help is now available during all open library hours! If you've got a new phone, an old computer, or anything in-between, bring your device and questions to the library's Tech Help Desk and we'll do our best to help you out. Do you need more tech help beyond a drop-in session? Call or email to schedule an appointment for one-on-one assistance. 319-753-1647 or email us at [lowaBPL@gmail.com](mailto:lowaBPL@gmail.com)

### CHESS CLUB

Saturdays, January 4, 18 || 9 AM - 12 PM

Interested in learning chess or brushing up on your skills? Join us for this drop-in chess club in the Create Space. No registration required; all skill levels welcome.

### SEED SWAP

Saturday, January 25 || 9 AM - 5 PM

Join us for Iowa's largest simultaneous seed swap! In partnership with Nine Square Feet, libraries across the state will be hosting a seed swap on January 25 to promote home gardening and "backyard food producers." We're looking ahead to spring by offering seeds for you to start in order to have a bountiful summer and fall. \*Iowa State Extension and local Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer questions and share their expertise. No registration required; seeds available while supplies last.

### FROST FAIR 2025

Friday, January 31 || 9 AM - 5 PM

Come join the wintery fun at our 2nd annual Frost Fair! Enjoy a variety of activities and workshops throughout the day. See our website for details.

## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

### BRICKMASTERS

Saturday, January 11, 25 || 10 AM

Brickmasters is bringing a whole new meaning to LEGO building! Brickmasters offers a unique and creative LEGO building experience for kids in K+. Come join us and explore your inner creativity! Don't miss out on the fun - come and join us for a morning of LEGO building! No registration is required!

## TWEEN PROGRAMS

### READY SET SEW!

Thursday, January 9 || 6 - 7 PM

Ready Set Sew is a beginner sewing class for tween and teens in grades 4-12. Learn how to use a sewing machine and make a simple project. Registration is required and class size is limited. This class meets monthly.

## TEEN PROGRAMS

### TICOS

Tuesday, January 2 || 6:30 - 7:30 PM

TICOS is a Junior Optimist Club that doubles as our Teen Advisory Club. It is open to all students in 6-12th grades who want to volunteer for the library and in the community. It meets monthly on the first Thursday of the month and usually has a second event/project sometime in the month.

### RPG NIGHT

Tuesday, January 16 || 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Role Playing Games are a fun and creative way to do active storytelling. Join us in the Create Space to play D&D or other RPG's.

## ADULT PROGRAMS

### FIRST FRIDAY: THE MYSTERY AND HISTORY OF CHOCOLATE

Friday, January 3 || 10 AM

We will trace chocolate through the ages from how it is grown, processed, and used. Where did it get its name? Are there any health benefits? View the largest chocolate molds ever created and more.

### THAT'S YESTERDAY'S NEWS

Saturday, January 4 || 10 AM

Join local historian, Terry Abrisz, for some coffee, pastries and Burlington history. Terry uses the local newspaper to share the story of the community with a different topic each month. This month's topic is Burlington's historic hotels in a presentation titled "Mr. and Mrs. John Smith Checking In." No registration required; all are welcome.

## SEW WHAT?

Thursday, January 23 || 6 - 7 PM

Sew What is a beginner sewing class for adults. This class is for you if: 1 You haven't sewn in ages and need a refresher. 2. You have a sewing machine but no clue what to do with it. 3 You want to learn some new skills and have some fun. Registration required. Please visit our online calendar to register.

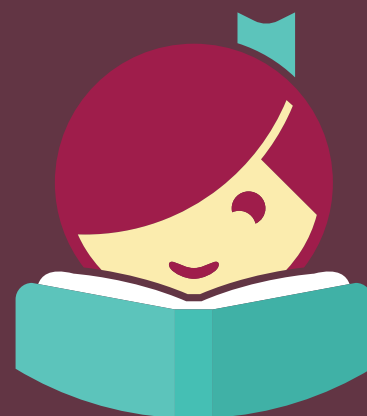
## MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, January 28 || 12 - 1 PM

Our January book is *Burying the Lede* by Joseph Lavalley. Mr Lavalley was a featured writer at the Sterling Lord Writers & Readers Festival in November. The novel, set in a small Iowa town, has it all: mystery, courtroom drama, romance, action, tragedy, villains, and heroes. Throughout the book, LeValley draws on his real-life experiences as a newspaper reporter to create a narrative with compelling details about the worlds of newspapers and the criminal justice system. The novel is as entertaining as it is shocking. Once you start reading *Burying the Lede*, you won't want to put it down.

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LIBRARY CARD!**

# LIBRARY BOARD NEWS

Did you know that while our library is a city department, it is governed by a Board of Trustees? Our seven trustees are appointed by the mayor and approved by city council. They hire and oversee the library director who manages day to day operations. They also help to write policies and develop the strategic plan that guides the library's future, they set and approve a budget and expenses, and they advocate for our library within the community and beyond.

The advocacy and budgeting duties of our trustees are more important than ever as of a result of 2023 property tax reform legislation at the state level. To understand exactly why, we need to take a look at our local library levy, and how recent legislation has impacted it.

Our community came together in the 1970's in support of our local library, and to preserve its funding, by voting to approve a local tax levy. This levy specifically provided for funds from all Burlington residents to be designated toward the operation of our library. During the 2023 legislative season, our state legislators passed House File 718, with the goal of reforming property tax. One of the consequences of HF 718 was that it limited the ability of cities to implement these local levies that would allow them to fund important components of their local communities. The impact to libraries across the state was

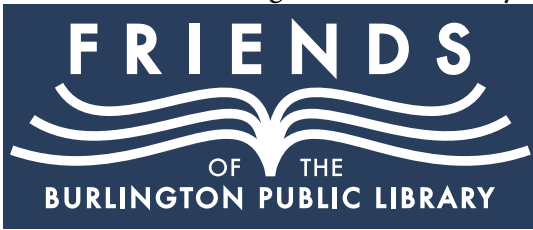
significant, with 97 libraries losing their levies as a direct result of HF 718.

While operational costs continue to rise, the state has effectively cut one of our sources of funding, leaving our trustees, director, and city working together to find viable solutions to preserve our operating budget. You may have seen our trustees at city council meetings and may hear from them in the coming days and weeks providing education and awareness on what we can do to continue to support our library during these tough budgetary times.

This should serve as an important reminder to all of us that elections – city, state, and federal – impact us here in Burlington, and our engagement with our legislators is more important now than ever. As always, the most important way you can support our library is to use it, and to help us tell our story in the community.

Advocacy Committee - Board of Trustees

Mailed to you by:  
Friends of the Burlington Public Library



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[www.burlington.lib.ia.us](http://www.burlington.lib.ia.us)

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# FROST FAIR

JANUARY 31st  
9 AM - 5 PM



at BURLINGTON  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

