



The Great North Star Read Together

Saturday,
September 20
11am-1pm



Toolkit for Planning Your Event

Purpose of the Event

On September 20th 11:00-1:00 PM we're inviting residents of Minnesota to gather at specific libraries to show support for all libraries. This is a non-political event celebrating libraries and all they do for the community.

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Funding

This event is designed to be no or low cost. If you need funding for anything, consider asking your Friends group or local businesses or service clubs.

Planning

- Who is the lead person for the event? Who is the back-up person(s)?
- Will you recruit volunteers to assist with the event? Possible duties could include:
 - People to write letters to the editor or write op eds for local media
 - People to be interviewed about the event
 - Photographers for the day of
 - Media escorts for day of
 - Set up crew if needed
 - Ushers to direct people on the day

- Tear Down/Clean up crew
- Exchange cell phone numbers with key players
- Start encouraging people to Save the Date!
- Solicit partners that will help promote event: service clubs like Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions; City Council; County Commissioners, local businesses (bookstore or similar?); scout troops; churches; Chamber of Commerce;
- Create an itinerary of the day, noting when volunteers should arrive, when VIPs and media should arrive, schedule time at the start of the event for a short welcome speech and when VIPs share remarks (if any). If multiple VIPs are in attendance, work with leadership on the appropriate order of speeches and tell VIPs ahead of time when they will be giving remarks and how much time they are allotted.

Volunteers

Know your library's volunteer policy. Does policy require all volunteers to go through orientation or can you have new volunteers for a one-off event?

Equipment

Depending on your event, you may not need much equipment but you may want to consider the following:

- Microphone and speakers for and VIPs that attend (elected officials, local authors, literacy advocates in your community, your library director)
- Extra seating
- Hand sanitizer
- Masks
- Extra waste baskets and trash bags
- Directional signage for event location, restrooms, water fountains
- Clicker or tally sheet to record attendees
- Cell phone, tablet, or camera to capture photos of the event
- Signage announcing your library's photo policy
- Extra books
- Tent if the location is outdoors

Location Considerations

- It can be at the local library or at another location in town where groups assemble for whatever events. Town square, park, school, fairgrounds, or other gathering spot. All are possibilities.
- Make your venue choice based on your best estimate of attendance.
- Is the venue accessible to people who use mobility devices?
- Is there handicapped parking or an area that can be reserved for handicapped parking?
- If the local group home, senior living or other congregate living sites want to bring a bus, where will the buses drop off, park, and pick up?
- Is there an easy to reach alternate site in case of bad weather?

- If there are speeches, is there a platform or other area where the speakers can stand? Do you need amplification equipment?
- Is there a noise ordinance for the area?
- If the location is external, do you need insurance? Is this something your organizational insurance will cover? If not, can you obtain insurance? If not, consider an alternate location.

Logistics for your location

Once you have chosen your location, whether it is outside or inside your organization, you will need to be sure you have all the pieces in place

Do you need a permit from the local government?

- What does the permit allow or prohibit? Read it carefully and ask questions of the permit issuer if there is any doubt.
- Are signs permitted? Restrictions on locations, size, number, mounted on sticks or not...
- What about sidewalk chalk? Or other 'art work' created at the event?
- Do you need outdoor portable toilets and/or hand wash stations?
- Food? Invite food trucks or other local outlets.

Will there be seating? If not, advise attendees to bring appropriate seating (blankets, camp chairs, etc).

Make sure signage is clearly visible so attendees know where to go.

Parking considerations

- Is there adequate parking near the venue?
- Do you need to include instructions on where to park in your announcements?
- Will you need parking attendants?
- Encourage use of local transportation, carpooling, walking, or other appropriate methods.

Security Considerations

- What does your permit say—do you need to hire law enforcement or security? How many?
- Will volunteer marshalls be allowed?
- Have you notified city government and law enforcement about the event?

Safety Considerations

- Check the weather forecast before the event and day of and encourage participants to be prepared with water and clothing appropriate for the weather.
- This event is not political but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be prepared. Organizers should keep their heads on a swivel and have a plan to act through deescalation or calling for help.
- Communicate "if you see something, say something to staff/volunteers and attendees" and have a plan of action.

- What is your library policy for situations? Does your area have a crisis response team? Know policy on trespasses and asking folks to leave and make sure staff working that day know it too.

Finding Attendees and Promoting Your Event

Invite the Community

- **Invite all the local VIPs**
 - Mayor, City Council, County Commissioners, township officials
 - Local authors and illustrators
 - The local 'Princesses'--Princess Kay, Pork Queen, whatever and whoever your community celebrates. Encourage them to wear their regalia for a photo opportunity.
 - Fire Department & Police Dept | County Sheriff
 - State and federal representatives
 - Library Board
 - Friends of the Library
 - Consider other city or county departments
- **Invite the media--newspaper, radio, TV, online sources**
 - Be sure they know the purpose of the event
 - Be sure they know the VIPs that have accepted
 - Set up interviews/photo ops
 - Offer them an escort to find the VIPs or regular attendees for interviews and photo ops

'Old School' Ways to Promote your Event

- Posters for local bulletin boards, businesses, schools,
- Postcards
- Bookmarks
- Can you do an e-mail blast?
- Presentations at local service clubs, scout troops, churches, and other groups
- Add to any community calendars

Social Media

- Use hashtags **# and #**
- Facebook Posts/Facebook Event with or without RSVPs
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Local websites/networks (Nextdoor or similar)
- Downloadable graphics for all of these to post on library and individual social media ([See here](#))

Press Kit

- Press Release
- Op-Eds for you to customize
 - [V1-OP-ED Draft Sep 20.docx](#)

- [V2 Op-Ed School Libraries Sep 20.docx](#)
- [V3 Op Ed What if Sep 20](#)
- Letters to the Editor for you to customize [*DRAFT Sept 20 Letters to the Editor.docx](#)
- Graphics to download
- TV, Radio, public access
- Print media

During and After the Event

Day of

- Brief any/all hosts, greeters, volunteers about their event duties and timelines.
- Ensure all volunteers and staff know the plan for parking, accessibility, foul weather plans.
- Ensure walkways and roadways are clear to help maintain a safe environment.
- Wear your library garb and encourage others to wear theirs.
- Have multiple people as designated photographers/videographers.
- Determine photo op and interview opportunities with any presenters and VIPs.
- Find an area VIPs and media can use as a staging area for equipment or other needs. This could be a spare meeting room if you have one or a reserved table (picnic or folding if outside) or a corner of the library.
- Consider having a welcome speech introduced by a member of your staff. VIPs will likely want to say a few words so plan time for that at the start of the event.
- Confirm details with media attendees.
- Thank you announcement at the end of the event.

After the Event

- Have a designated clean up crew to pick up trash and return the venue to its original state or better.
- Have a central location for people to upload their pictures/videos. **(Could this be on the event website?)**
- Follow-up with the media.
- Thank you to those who attended, volunteers, sponsors and VIPs.
- Send photos to media and cooperating groups.