

## For immediate release

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### **Gibson Memorial Library receives Dekko Grant to assist with the Summer Reading Program 2021**

Creston, IA – Gibson Memorial Library is committed to increasing the number of hours of developmentally aligned summer programming that occurs at the public library and to increase the number of youth participating in our summer reading programs. Through community partnerships and collaborations we are hoping to fulfill that promise in 2021.

The Library's 2021 Summer Reading Program will begin Monday, June 7, 2021 and go until Friday, July 30, 2021. All age groups are encouraged to participate in the Summer Reading Program and it is free to participate, there will be programs geared toward: infants and toddlers, children, teens and adults.

Gibson Memorial Library applied for a Dekko Foundation Responsive Grant in September 2020, and received an award of \$2,500. This funding will help the Library provide educational, cultural and literacy building experiences for youth in Union County.

[The Dekko Foundation](#) is the legacy of Mr. Chester (Chet) E. Dekko. Mr. Dekko's experiences forged in him a dedication to family and a certainty that education, hard work and self-reliance were the keys to a life of independence and choice.

In 1952, Mr. Dekko and a partner (Mr. Lyall Morrill) took on the significant personal and financial risk of starting a manufacturing business. Their risks paid off as their business grew to be one of the largest privately held operations in northeast Indiana, south-central Iowa and other states.

In 1981, Mr. Dekko used his proceeds from that business venture to start the Dekko Foundation. Mr. Dekko chose for his foundation the mission of fostering economic freedom through education.

“Libraries continue to foster lifelong learning in environments that are accessible to everyone,” Director Aric Bishop said. “We provide opportunities to help, “foster economic freedom through education,” as Dekko would put it. That is why receiving grant funding like the award from Dekko is so important - it will help us achieve that goal

for our community and our youth.”

Gibson Memorial Library would like to thank the Dekko Foundation, the faithful Friends of the Library, volunteers, Library staff, members of the community and our local community partners.

Through partnerships with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Union County, and the Southwest Iowa STEM Region and Iowa Stem Scale-Up Programs, the Library is hoping to introduce more young people to STEM/STEAM and literacy building programs.

“These partnership opportunities will help the Library tremendously this summer.” said Bishop. “It allows us to continue offering what we have in the past, but also extend beyond what we have achieved before. We are looking forward to increasing and strengthening our partnerships in the coming year. We also want to help the community realize the relevance of library programming, libraries and how the services of our library extend beyond our four walls.”

In the past, funding for the entire Summer Reading Program at the Library has been supported by the Friends of the Library through their annual book sale and Valentine Bouquet sales. The Summer Reading Programming in the past has typically cost \$4,600 annually. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Friends of the Library not having their annual book sale in Fall of 2020, the loyal Friends may not have been able to support the entire summer reading program costs for our library. The Friends were quick to respond in September 2020 to begin planning their annual Valentine’s Day Cookie Bouquets for February 2021 with all the proceeds going to help with the Summer Reading Program.

“I firmly believe that the Summer Reading Program can, and does, change lives,” Director Bishop said, “I am a firm believer in our community and our youth are the future. If we can create a positive environment where they can grow, learn, and become who they are meant to be, then we would have helped them toward economic freedom through education. Library programming, like our summer reading program, has the potential and impact to do this. As I always say, ‘it isn’t just about the books, it is what we do with and for people that matters the most’.”

Again, Gibson Memorial Library would like to thank the Dekko Foundation, the faithful Friends of the Library, volunteers and Library staff, members of the community and our local community partners. Without their support the Library could not do all it is able to do. Thank you!

If you would like to support the Gibson Memorial Library, you may volunteer your time by joining: the Library Board, the Friends of the Library Board, the Capital Campaign or consider making a contribution to the Library online at their website:

<https://www.creston.lib.ia.us/>

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