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Mid-Continent Public Library Hosts Legacy Luncheon

Annual Reception Features Awards, State of the Library Address, and Acclaimed Author

Independence, MO – Mid-Continent Public Library hosted its third annual Legacy Luncheon on Friday, July 7 at the Hartman Heritage Conference Center at the Hilton Garden Inn in Independence during which attendees celebrated the impact of libraries and librarians on the community. A central theme of the reception was the Library’s especially bright future, made brighter by the passage of Proposition L last fall.

“Because our voters placed their trust and confidence in the Library system, I get to stand here today, and not just talk about what we have been doing as a Library system, but also about all the incredible things we now have the opportunity to do moving forward,” said MCPL Director and CEO Steven V. Potter. “All of us at Mid-Continent Public Library take the endorsement through Proposition L very seriously.”

During the Luncheon, the John Ferguson Legacy Award for Outstanding Library Service was bestowed upon Carrie Mayle, Access Specialist at MCPL’s Colbern Road Branch; and Vote Yes for MyMCPL, an independent committee that campaigned on behalf of Prop L before the November election, was given the Victor Gragg Library Champion Award.

Prior to the awards, Potter took the stage to give a State of the Library address to an audience of 210 Library retirees, sponsors, and supporters in which he took a look back on noteworthy moments throughout the previous year and outlined the Library’s plans for the future including the expansion of branch hours this fall (specific to each community’s desires), the development of a new website and mobile app, the renovation of aging facilities, the purchase of the complete Kansas City Star archive, and participation in special programs like The Big Read.

Potter also spoke about a memoir that the Library will soon publish through its imprint, the Woodneath Press, in conjunction with the Jackson County Historical Society, about a local man who is credited with igniting the rural comedy movement in America. The First Beverly Hillbilly, written by the late Ruth Henning, will be released on September 26 in honor of the 55th anniversary of the debut of The Beverly Hillbillies.

In his commentary on the past year, Potter reflected on some of the Library’s accomplishments including the launch of an enhanced online catalog, the expansion of the Library-By-Mail program for homebound customers, the creation of a local authors collection called ReadLOCAL, and the transition of the Library’s annual Summer Reading Program to a more holistic Summer Learning Program.
The Legacy Luncheon also included a feature presentation by Candice Millard, New York Times bestselling nonfiction author of *Hero of the Empire, Destiny of the Republic,* and *The River of Doubt.* During her speech, Millard spoke on the important role that libraries have played throughout her life and the comfort that books have brought her during life’s challenges.

The 2017 Legacy Luncheon was sponsored by Sapp Design Associates Architects, Helix Architecture + Design, Ameritas Investment Corp., Central Bank of the Midwest, and John and Brenda Laney.

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Mid-Continent Public Library is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 31 branches and four Library-To-Go locations and serving nearly 800,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. The Library strives to enrich our citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. MCPL is a 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winner. Connect with the Library on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.