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MARY J BARNETT MEMORIAL LIBRARY RECEIVES NATIONAL GRANT FOR SMALL AND RURAL LIBRARIES
\$10,000 Grant Will Help the Library Work with Residents with Disabilities to make access to the library easier with automatic door opener on interior door and to increase audiobooks and large print material collection.

GUTHRIE CENTER — MARY J BARNETT MEMORIAL LIBRARY has been selected as one of 240 libraries to participate in Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities, an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that provides community engagement and accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities.

The competitive award comes with a \$10,000 grant that will help the library by installing a new Horton automatic door operator and adding wireless buttons for both door openers to be placed in better and more accessible areas. We also envision a community conversation taking place in our Taylor Meeting room with a primary audience to identify what materials they wish to see added to better serve (e.g., people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, etc.).

“We are so proud to be chosen for this amazing opportunity,” said Library Director Jerri Hawkins. “This grant will allow our library to get to know our residents with disabilities better. It will help us improve our services to ensure this population feels welcome and comfortable in our space.”

As part of the grant, MARY J BARNETT MEMORIAL LIBRARY staff will take an online course in how to lead conversations, a skill vital to library work today. Staff will then host a community conversation with residents about Materials and Services and use the grant funds to provide material to best support the needs of our community.

The library welcomes participation in the community conversation. Input can help make the library more accessible and more easily utilized by all patrons.

If you are interested in getting involved or taking part in the conversation, please contact Jerri Hawkins at 641-747-8110 / mjblib@guthriecenter.lib.ia.us, or visit www.guthriecenter.lib.ia.us for more information.

Since 2014, ALA’s Libraries Transforming Communities initiative has re-imagined the role libraries play in supporting communities. Libraries of all types have utilized free dialogue and deliberation training and resources to lead community and campus forums; take part in anti-violence activities; provide a space for residents to come together and discuss challenging topics; and have productive conversations with civic leaders, library trustees and staff.



“Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL).”

The Mary J Barnett Memorial Library's mission is to provide all residents with impartial and inclusive access to a wide range of information resources, programs, equipment, and services in order to encourage literacy and lifelong learning and to support educational, cultural, and recreational activities. The Library's vision statement is to be the welcoming heart of our community where all come to learn, discover, create, and connect.

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