

# Union Library Opening Was 2019 Highlight

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One year ago Scenic Regional Library's new Union branch was still under construction.

This past summer's opening of the building was one of the largest events in Union in 2019.

The library officially opened its doors Aug. 21. Visitors on the first day got to see the new facility up close.

The branch, located at 251 Union Plaza Drive near Pasta House and off Independence Drive, was described by Scenic Regional Library Director Steve Campbell as "massive" compared to the previous branch. The new building is approximately 23,000 square feet — 17,200 square feet for the Union branch and 5,800 square feet for the administrative

offices and bookmobile.

The old Union library was just 7,000 square feet. It closed Aug. 9 to facilitate the move.

The facility has three meeting rooms — triple the space of the old library. Each room has a number of features like projection screens and outlets.

The rooms are split by dividers meaning the three rooms can become two or one with ease. Campbell said the way the building is set up, the actual building and administration offices can be locked down at night, but the meeting rooms can be made accessible.

The meeting rooms are named after the previous library directors Lucy Lomax, Sallie Hancox and Ken Rohrbach.

Just outside the meeting room is a children's area featuring

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## Teamwork at the Library

Walker and Andrea Margherio worked on a project together at the Scenic Regional Library Union branch Monday, Dec. 30. The library's children's area was full on the cold Monday morning. When the new library opened this year, Scenic Regional Director Steve Campbell said he hoped the children's area would be a place where families could go when they can't play outside.

Missourian Photo/Joe Barker.

# LIBRARY

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games and activities for kids. Campbell said the idea was to give young kids a free place to play indoors. The area has a giant touch-screen tablet, LEGO tables, magnet walls and other activities.

Near the children's area is the teen section. Campbell said the colors of the section, red and black, are meant to invoke Union High School. The area features books geared for teens, laptop tables and comfortable seating.

In the back of the library is the adult lounge. The area has a fireplace, seating and a coffee machine. For \$1 patrons can purchase a cup, Campbell said.

Seating is spread throughout the library. Some areas are "pods" meant to provide privacy for people working. Others are meant to relax.

Each seat has a power hook-up nearby so people can charge their devices. Campbell said the front desk has phone chargers available to check out.

Additionally, the facility has three outdoor patios with seating, drive-up book drop, three study rooms and other amenities.

Total costs were estimated between \$6 million to \$6.5 million. The project was made possible by the library's first-ever voter-approved tax increase in 2014.

Construction on the library started in the summer of 2018. A formal groundbreaking was held in May 2018.

The facility celebrated the opening with a grand opening Sept. 14.

"I can't describe how excited we are to be able to provide this new state-of-the-art facility to the residents of Union and outlying areas," Campbell said at the event.

Campbell also thanked the contractor, Wright Construction, and architect, JEMA, for their work.

Franklin County Presiding Commissioner Tim Brinker also spoke at the ceremony. Brinker talked about how fitting it

was that the library opened during the county's bicentennial. He said this year has been about reflecting how far the county has come and the new library is a shining symbol of progress.

Missouri State Librarian Robin Westphal also addressed the crowd. She praised the new facility and talked about the many ways it can be used. Westphal encouraged everyone to get their library card and use the facility regularly.

The final speaker was Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft. His office oversees the state libraries.

Ashcroft also said he was impressed by the new facility. He said the library is a place that brings the community together. He called it the new town square for the city.

Since opening, Campbell reported an increase in attendance. Preschool story time, which is held on Wednesdays and Saturdays, reported a sharp spike in attendance.

# Union Library Hosting Events in January

Scenic Regional Library's Union branch is kicking off the new year with a full slate of events in January.

Most events require registration, which can be done by calling 636-583-3224, or stopping by the branch, or by visiting scenicregional.org.

## Adult Programs

The first program of the new year will be Kindness is Cool. The event will take place in one of the library's meeting rooms.

At the event, guest will knit or crochet a warm scarf that will be left at the library anonymously for those in need during the upcoming cold weather. Lessons in how to knit or crochet will be offered.

Guests are encouraged to bring their own knitting needles and crochet hook. The library will provide the yarn.

The next program for adults will be Thursday, Jan. 9, at 6 p.m. Every month the library hosts book bingo where guests play multiple rounds of bingo.

The winner of each round receives a free book. In January, the event is moving to the evenings.

The Hooked on Books book club will have its monthly meeting Thursday, Jan. 16, at 6 p.m. This month the group will discuss "The House Girl" by Tara Conklin.

## Kid and Teen Programs

Preschool story time will continue throughout the month of January. The sessions will be held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. The story

time will repeat on Saturdays, also at 10 a.m. The event features stories, songs and crafts for the youngest library patrons.

Also in January, the library will continue hosting Dungeons and Dragons events. The session is for anyone interested in learning how to play D&D or for anyone looking for another game and wanting to meet new players.

All are welcome to join. Sessions will be the first and third Tuesdays of the month starting at 5 p.m.

A snowy movie night will be Tuesday, Jan. 14, starting at 4 p.m. The event is for the whole family.

Guests are encouraged to bring a blanket and pillow for extra coziness.

Reading to Rover also is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 23. The event will give young readers a chance to practice their skills by reading to service dogs. The event starts at 5 p.m.

The month will close

out with book bingo for kids Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 4 p.m. Like the adult version, guests will play games of bingo to win free books.

## Computer Programs

The Union branch also will offer three computer classes in January. Registration is required for all computer classes.

Microsoft Word: A Tour will be offered Friday, Jan. 17, from 10 to 11 a.m. Students will learn how Word is organized with a focus on the ribbon.

The next class will be offered Thursday, Jan. 23, from 2 to 3 p.m. The class will be about the cloud library.

Students will learn how to use and access electronic books and audiobooks from the cloud library.

The final computer class of the month will be Wednesday, Jan. 29, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The session of the Take a Ticket technology tutor will allow students to bring their own devices and have one-on-one help for a 30-minute session.

## Library Story Time

Preschool story time will continue at the new Union branch of the Scenic Regional Library. The sessions will be Wednesdays at 10 a.m. The story time will repeat Saturdays, also at 10 a.m.