



106 Washington Avenue, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901-4985

For information:
Lisa Voss
(920) 236-5211

Local woman leaves \$1.1 million to Oshkosh Public Library

Dec. 16, 2011 – An Oshkosh woman who was an avid reader throughout her life and made a habit of sharing the books she read has made a \$1.1 million bequest to the Oshkosh Public Library.

The Library Board voted on Dec. 15 to establish a memorial trust fund with the bequest from the estate of Marjorie M. Drexler of Oshkosh. Mrs. Drexler died Aug. 16, 2010, at the age of 87.

Mrs. Drexler was the daughter of an Oshkosh teacher who grew up on Bowen Street and later lived on that same street with her husband, Norbert. She was hired as a switchboard operator at Oshkosh Truck Corporation in the 1940s and worked there for 38 years. A close friend described her as a private person whose primary interests were reading and animals. She bought her books – mostly biographies and romances – and passed them along to friends after she read them.

“Mrs. Drexler was just an average citizen who obviously saw value in the work that is done at the public library,” said Victoria Vandenberg, assistant director at the Oshkosh Public Library. “We are extremely grateful for her generosity.”

The library has numerous trust funds that have been established over the years with donations from local residents. “Bequests like these, and smaller annual gifts from generous area residents, help to elevate our organization from a good library to an excellent library,” explained Jeff Gilderson-Duwe, library director. “Although the majority of our operations are funded by tax dollars, donations and bequests help the library to better meet the needs of the community with a wide variety of collections, services and creative initiatives.

“And donors like Mrs. Drexler are leaving a legacy that will touch many lives for years to come,” Gilderson-Duwe said.

The Library Board allocates trust fund income for library projects and services annually and will decide at a later date how to use earnings from the Drexler fund. In the past, the board has used trust funds to purchase best-selling books; collect and publish digital photos and community information that preserve Oshkosh history; establish the OurSpace teen area, teen reading collections and programs; and develop outstanding genealogy resources and expert research assistance.

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