



Headlines



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The Smartest Card In Your Wallet Is @ Your Library®: Get it, Use it at the Rock Island Public Library

Some forms of plastic in your wallet can get you into hot water. But during September, the Rock Island Public Library would like to remind you that a library card is the smartest card in your wallet. September is National Library Card Sign-up Month, and the library's three locations are ready to sign area residents for their own "Smartest Card."

The Rock Island Public Library is joining the Public Library Association (PLA) in promoting "The Smartest Card @ your library," a campaign to make the library card the most valued and used card in every wallet. The campaign also reminds the public that public libraries are partners for vibrant and educated communities, essential for a free people, and places of opportunity. One of the campaign's points is "why buy when you can borrow?" and library staff note that it's hard to argue against the value of a free card that provides access to books and materials that can cost up to \$30 elsewhere.

"Your library card is your ticket to opportunity," said **Ava Ketter**, library director. "What other card in your wallet gives you free access to books and CDs, magazines and movies and all sorts of other resources that can change your life - or simply enhance it with fun and entertainment?"

The timing is especially appropriate with children returning to school. "A library card is probably the best back-to-school supply you can pick up, for both you and your child," adds **Amy Penry**, assistant library director. "Studies show that success in school starts with reading. Children who are read to in the home and who use the library perform better in school and are more likely to continue to use the library as a source of lifetime learning."

With more than 200,000 materials on hand for free or low-cost borrowing, Penry adds that the card provides multiple opportunities for free family entertainment and education. Among other strengths, the Rock Island Public Library offers one of the area's largest collections of unabridged audio and large print books, African-American literature, books on food and cooking, and CDs in the jazz and blues categories. Through its three locations, the library is also a community center where people gather for exhibits, lectures, and musical performances. Pre-school story times at the 30/31 and Southwest Branches help introduce young children to the joy of reading, while Young Adult and "Teen Read Week" programs help keep older children reading. The library's summer reading clubs have also been shown to be an important factor in avoiding the decrease in reading skills that educators refer to as "summer learning loss."



Among other events to promote card applications, the library will sponsor a Teen Pizza and Movie party night at 5 p.m. on September 23 at the Main Library. The “Get a Library Card, Get a Life” event is free to Rock Island cardholders and to those who apply for a card that night. Guests will view "Uptown Girls," a 2003 comedy featuring Brittany Murphy, Dakota Fanning, Austin Pendleton and Heather Locklear. As an additional incentive, all new library card applications received during September will be entered into a prize drawing.

The Rock Island Public Card is free to residents of Rock Island and the Milan/Blackhawk Library District, which includes residents of some outlying areas. To check on whether an address is in the library’s service area, please call (309) 732-READ (7323.) To apply or renew a card, visit the Circulation Desk at the Main Library, 30/31 or Southwest Branches, with ID and proof of address. Residents may also register online for a new library card by going to www.rbls.lib.il.us/rip and clicking on “pre-register.”