

Librarian's Shelf – Karen Connell

Library Building Project Donation

We are pleased to announce the Marvin and Virginia Schmid Foundation has pledged \$1,000,000 to name the Children's Room in the new Columbus Public Library. The Columbus Community Building project underway in Downtown Columbus includes the Columbus Public Library, Arts Council Gallery, and community room as well as leased space for the Columbus Area Children's Museum and a coffee shop. City Hall offices will also be located in this new building, which is planned for completion in 2023.

This Founder level gift brings the project's private funding total to \$6,000,000. Another \$2,000,000 is needed to meet the project budget. While the City Hall portion of the project is funded separately, the library/cultural portion is funded through donations, grants, and a ½% sales tax that was passed in 2017 exclusively for constructing new public safety facilities and a new library/cultural center. A public vote in November 2020 allowing the city to issue up to \$10,000,000 in bonds to fund the project passed with a high margin of victory.

Placing a high value on education, the Marvin and Virginia Schmid Foundation is known for supporting capital projects for quality libraries, including the University of Nebraska's Law Library. They also funded a new clinic building for UNL's College of Law and continue to generously support several scholarships for law students.

Marvin Schmid and his brother Ivan were born in Colfax County and both graduated from Columbus's Kramer High School. Following Marvin's graduation from the University of Nebraska's College of Law, he established a law firm in Columbus with Otto F. Walter & Robert D. Flory. Virginia Chain, also a graduate of the University of Nebraska, was on the faculty of Kramer High School as a high school English teacher when she and Marvin met. Married in 1941, Marvin and Virginia spent a few months in Columbus before Marvin began to serve in the United States Army. During his service, Marvin was transferred to the legal department of the Army and was stationed in Omaha before his discharge in 1946 as a major. Still in Omaha, Marvin formed the law firm Schmid and Snow, while also partnering with Taylor H. Snow and Adrian L. Faasse to form the Snow Corporation, which manufactured and distributed agricultural equipment. (Curry, M. (1950). *The History of Platte County, Nebraska*. Murray & Gee.)

Financial support for the library building project has been strong since the Library Foundation began fundraising in 2015. Donations from the Sherwood Foundation, the Raimondo family, and an anonymous local donor created a pool for 50% matching donations to help the Quality of Life Centers Committee projects reach their fundraising goals.

While naming rights have been claimed for community spaces such as conference and meeting rooms, there are still naming rights available at a variety of giving levels including a community living room, makerspace, meeting and conference rooms, art instruction room, outdoor lounge spaces, and more. If you or your organization are interested in contributing financially to the new library at any giving level, please contact the Columbus Library Foundation or myself at karen.connell@columbusne.us or 402-562-4204.

While the Columbus Public Library serves the public from our temporary building at 2419 14th Street, we are looking forward to our new library in the Columbus Community Building, which will have additional space for library collections, interactive programs, and public collaboration.