

More than Books

Tax Forms “R” Us

Don't let April 15 creep up on you! You can find most of the more common federal and Illinois state tax forms at the library now through April 30, when we call it an end to the tax season.

Not only can you find paper copies of these tax forms on the second floor of the library, library staff is also available to assist with printing forms from the U.S. IRS and the Illinois Department of Revenue websites from one of our many public computers.

Please remember that, while staff members are happy to help you find the form you are looking for, they cannot give you any advice about which one you need, or how it should be filled out. This is a no-no, along with our giving out medical or legal advice.

It has been over 20 years now that public libraries have been providing the public with free, tangible copies of tax forms, instructions, and publications through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Forms Outlet Program (TFOP). I have always supported the program as yet another example of how libraries put people in touch with information important to their daily lives. Plus, it is a good way to get people who are not regular library visitors to come in and see what we have to offer.

Initially, both libraries and post offices served as convenient outlets for tax publications; but today libraries are pretty much alone in continuing to offer the service. Although the federal and state governments are becoming increasingly comfortable using the Internet for the distribution of tax forms, I believe we are still providing a valuable service to the public, especially those who have limited or no access to the Internet except at the library.

Library's Lecture Series Continues with a Short History of Collective Bargaining

On Wednesday, February 8, Dr. Andy Dvorak examines “Collective Bargaining Since the Wagner Act/New Deal.” Dr. Dvorak's topic is a timely one in light of the collective bargaining changes for most of Wisconsin's public sector union employees last year — limiting bargaining to cost-of-living salary increases; increasing workers' contributions to their pension and health-care plans; eliminating unions' ability to automatically collect dues from all members; and requiring unions to re-certify each year.

Andrew Kersten, chairman of democracy and justice studies at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, suggests labor unions have galvanized “in a way that I think you haven't seen since the 1930s.” Dr. Dvorak's talk will begin with that era and move forward.

Dr. Dvorak is a history instructor at Highland Community College and a repeat lecturer for the Freeport Public Library's American History Lecture Series. His program begins at 7 p.m. Come early for good seats and great cookies, courtesy of the Freeport Public Library Foundation and Sandy Schubert, proprietor of the library's Gallery Café.

The Series continues through February. It is sponsored by the Freeport Public Library Foundation and the Stephenson County Museum.

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