

**Lester Public Library of Rome
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lester Public Library of Rome to receive 'Super Awesome Library Award' from SCLS Foundation

Libraries come in all shapes and sizes, and each serves its community in unique ways. Lester Public Library of Rome is the 2017 recipient of the South Central Library System (SCLS) Foundation's "Super Awesome Library Award," which is "For the library that was overall awesome in 2017. Maybe they handled a tough situation with grace. Or took a new approach. Or found a lot of money under a rock and did something really cool with it. Or got a lot of local support and kudos because they play well with others. Or are just plain super awesome every day."

The award will be presented during the annual Cornerstone Award fundraising reception, which will be held from 5-7 p.m. at the 5100 Bar & Grill, 5100 Erling Ave. in McFarland. The annual event is free and open to the public, and will feature light food and cash bar. The awards presentation will take place at 6 p.m.

After about a decade of planning and fundraising, the Lester Public Library of Rome was able to add a 4,025 sq. foot addition to the 2,500 sq. foot library. The fundraising efforts of the Friends of the Library and the Library Foundation were matched by the Town of Rome. "There were volunteers who made themselves available to move shelving, books, cabinets, and other library materials into the new addition in January" said Library Director Lore Ingram. "There was no money for landscaping, so Friends of the Library requested and received a grant from Incourage Foundation to finish some projects. Master Gardeners planted, hauled wheelbarrows of compost and wood chips, and worked hard to get the outside landscaping done in time for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in June. Prairie

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Nursery donated some plants to help finish some of the demonstration garden areas the Master Gardener Volunteers were creating. The cooperation of all of these groups was awesome!" Ingram added that Town of Rome maintenance staff were also instrumental in the waning days of the project to help get the landscaping work completed.

According to Ingram, the staff at the Lester Public Library of Rome has done a "super awesome" job creating expanded programming for patrons of all ages. There is a large children's area that has Lego and train tables for children to play with, as well as an expanded book section. Staff has recruited Town of Rome Police Officers to offer a summer "Book 'em" program for children, and staff created a "Stop, Drop, and Read" program with Fire Department Volunteers. Children even got to sit in a patrol car and examine a Fire Truck during these programs. The Summer Reading Program had 70 children register, and the reading minutes more than doubled during the summer reading challenge. At the end of the program, participating children were able to "pie" the staff.

With the new program room, residents now have a space they can reserve for meetings and events, and Ingram said the Rome Community loves the newly expanded library.

"The SCLS Foundation Board is thrilled to recognize Lester Public Library of Rome with the Super Awesome Library Award," said Janet Pugh, SCLS Foundation Board president. "Libraries serve their communities in many ways, and sometimes it's the little things we do that can have the most meaningful impact. Keep up the good work!"

Also to be presented that evening is the annual Cornerstone Award, which this year goes to Larry J. Martin, the former executive director of the Wisconsin Library Association and someone instrumental in the creation of the SCLS Foundation. Martin currently serves as the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Bar Association.

The award is given annually to an individual or individuals who have had a significant and long-term impact on enhancing public libraries in South Central Wisconsin and represent the values and mission of the South Central Library System Foundation.

For more information, contact Lester Public Library of Rome Director Lore Ingram at 715-325-8990.