

Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS)

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For Immediate Release

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Library enthusiasts across the state will soon have an opportunity to show their support for libraries.

The Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS) announces it is now accepting advance applications for a new specialty license plate celebrating libraries in Massachusetts.

Proceeds will benefit public, academic, special and school libraries across the state that belong to a Regional Library System. Equitable shares of the proceeds will be made available to qualifying libraries through an open grant process. Funds will not be used to supplant library budgets.

The idea for the plate emerged during a 'promote libraries' brainstorming activity at a CMRLS Executive board workshop. After a joint meeting with RMV officials in April and consultations with other library organizations, CMRLS decided to launch the drive to gather the required prepaid applications to produce the specialty plate.

The plate design process was a collaborative effort. Representatives from library boards across Massachusetts as well as library patrons were invited to offer design suggestions. The Library License Plate Task Force subcommittee formed by CMRLS included representatives from: Friends of Libraries; Library Trustee Association; School Library Association; each of the six Regional Library Systems; MA Library Association; and the MA Board of Library Commissioners.

Once the concept was agreed upon, local Illustrator David Desforges volunteered to turn the concept into reality.

The plate features a design logo of a silhouette of people above an open book displaying a globe all atop a keyboard. The website mass.gov/libraries appears at the bottom. The letters M and L stands for Massachusetts Libraries.

Understanding how beneficial this endeavor will be to the statewide library community, well-known Massachusetts authors Lois Lowry and Gregory Maguire have teamed up with CMRLS to help promote the plate and expedite sales. Applicants who submit their prepaid applications to CMRLS by Nov. 30 will be entered into a drawing. The winners will be given the opportunity to communicate with Lois Lowry or Gregory Maguire, and to be named as a character in a work-in-progress by one of them or to help invent a name that suits the story. Two names will be selected.

Lois Lowry is best known as the author of the Newbery Medal winners *THE GIVER* and *NUMBER THE STARS*, and Gregory Maguire is best known as the author of *WICKED*, inspiration for the hit Broadway musical of the same name. Mr. Maguire states, "There can be few places that serve as both a temple and marketplace of ideas, or as both a respite for and a challenge to the mind and the spirit. The public library is all this, and more."

CMRLS must collect at least 3,000 applications each with a \$40 check made payable to the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) before the RMV will begin production of the plate.

The initial cost of the plate is \$40 (\$28 goes to the Library Grant Fund; \$12 to the RMV for manufacturing costs). There is an additional \$20 swap fee when the actual plate is picked up from the RMV. Renewals are \$81 every two years (\$41 RMV registration fee and \$40 for the specialty plate fee that continues to go to the Library Grant Fund). An application can be downloaded at www.CMRLS.org. For more information contact CMRLS Headquarters at 508-757-4110.

Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS), the lead organization of this statewide endeavor, promotes and supports resource sharing, professional development, collaboration, and innovation among all types of libraries in Central Massachusetts. Its seventy-two communities include 244 academic, public, school and special libraries. It is funded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.