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Harford County Public Library Unveils New Rolling Reader

New vehicle brings library resources and technology to underserved communities in Harford County.



*Harford County Public Library's CEO Mary Hastler (center left) and the Library's Amber Shrodes (center right) receive a \$10,000 sponsorship from Steve Linkous, president & CEO of Harford Mutual Insurance Group (center), for the new Rolling Reader.
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Harford County Public Library has unveiled its new Rolling Reader, a mobile library offering programs, reading materials, technology and other resources to underserved communities in Harford County.

Introduced in 2001, the original Rolling Reader served the county for more than two decades before retiring in November 2023. Following its retirement, the Library undertook a comprehensive two-year effort to design, order, deliver and outfit a new vehicle that better meets the needs of today's young learners. With updated technology, improved interior space and greater reliability, the new Rolling Reader allows staff to bring more books, hands-on STEM activities, story times and engaging learning experiences directly to children throughout the county.

More than \$30,000 was raised by the Harford County Public Library Foundation for the Rolling Reader's purchase. Funding included proceeds from the 19th Annual Library Gala, a \$10,000 sponsorship donation from Harford Mutual Insurance Group, and a \$5,000 grant from M&T Bank.

"We are absolutely thrilled to welcome the new Rolling Reader," said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. "Many of the young people we serve have transportation barriers, limiting their access to resources that support learning, literacy and exploration. The Rolling Reader bridges this gap by meeting children where they are. The new vehicle offers more space for a wider selection of materials, STEM and hands-on learning and, most importantly, dependability. It is the little engine that could, made possible through the extraordinary support of the Foundation and our generous sponsors."

Staffed by two librarians, the Rolling Reader houses books, materials, several laptops and iPads capable of accessing the Harford County Public Library's catalog, databases and the internet. Families can check out books, science kits and other items and return them when the Rolling Reader visits their community next.

Serving more than 21,000 children each year, the Rolling Reader provides story times for Head Start Centers, Judy Centers, Title One Intervention and APG Child Development Centers and offers STEM programs for elementary and middle school students at the Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA Clubs and APG Youth Centers. During the summer, it also visits county camps to provide books, programming and Summer Reading opportunities to children who may not otherwise have access to the Library.

For more information about the Rolling Reader, visit <https://hcplonline.org/rollingreader.php>.

Harford County Public Library Foundation raises funds and awareness to support the Library's services, resources, capital improvements and access to information anytime, anywhere, for all people living and working in Harford County. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County, offering access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year, the Library interacted with its residents more than 12 million times – borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, using free WiFi and attending classes and events. In 2024 Harford County Public Library received the Maryland Library Association Excellence in Marketing Award for graphic excellence for the second time. [For more information, visit HCPLonline.org](https://HCPLonline.org).