

Will Eisner Graphic Novel Growth Grant

**Will Eisner Memorial Comic Book
Convention**

Submitted to: American Library Association
Graphic Novels & Comics Round Table

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Ryan LaFerney, MLS
Avon-Washington Township Public Library
498 N. Avon Avenue
Avon, IN. 46123
317-272- 4369 ext. 234



Title of Program: Will Eisner Memorial Comic Book Convention**Brief Summary:**

The Avon-Washington Township Public Library seeks to grow and relocate our small adult graphic novel collection to include more diverse, iconic and classic graphic works. We will raise public awareness regarding the rise and importance of graphic literature, sequential art, and comics as a literary medium through a one-day comic book convention in honor of Will Eisner. The Will Eisner Memorial Comic Book Convention will feature displays on the history of graphic novels, the educational benefits of the medium, children's activities, lectures, an illustrator alley and a sequential art workshop taught by Jackie Crofts (illustrator of the comic Nutmeg).

Project Narrative**A. Organizational Background**

The Avon-Washington Township Public Library in Avon, Indiana strives to provide open access to resources, services and professional expertise to over 44,000 patrons. Our library provides resources and services for education and personal development as well as recreation and leisure.

B. Statement of Need

Our community here in the town of Avon is young and diverse. Within Avon there are over 72 spoken languages and the median age of an Avon resident is 35 years.¹ This is the average age of many of today's comic book readers², although the reading of sequential narratives is still intergenerational. This is evident within our community. We have received many requests from adult patrons for our library to create an adult graphic novel collection.

We have a medium-sized young adult graphic novel collection which is adequate for its population, but the few adult graphic novels we do have are cataloged in the graphic arts section of the Dewey Decimal System. By not having a robust and visible adult graphic novel collection, we are failing to provide a crucial service for many of our patrons, especially millennials and members of Generation Z (defined as the generation reaching adulthood in the second decade of the 21st century). This generation is the most diverse American generation ever, and is one which possesses unique reading habits, as Generation Z tends to read 65% fiction, preferring titles which reflect ethnic

¹ Avon, Indiana Population 2019. (n.d). Retrieved from <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/avon-in-population/>.

² Rogers, V. (2017, February 2). Is the Average Age of Comic Books Readers Increasing? Retailers Talk State of the Business 2017. *Newsarama*. Retrieved October 28, 2019, from <https://www.newsarama.com/33006-is-the-average-age-of-comic-book-readers-increasing-retailers-talk-state-of-the-business-2017.html>.

diversity and gender diversity.³ It is not surprising that Generation Z and millennials were responsible in 2017 for over 57 percent of comics and graphic novel purchases alone.⁴

Our small collection of adult graphic novels could be significantly enhanced by more titles to reach the patrons in these two generations. If the Avon Public Library strives to be a vital community institution, which emphasizes strong customer service delivery, then the library must include a noticeable adult graphic novel collection. This collection must reflect the diversity of our readership and their reading habits. We also must endeavor to create intergenerational programs, such as the Will Eisner Memorial Comic Book Convention, to give our patrons opportunities for social engagement, education, and recreation.

C. Goals

There are four specific goals to this project:

- Grow (and relocate) our adult graphic novel and comic collection to include a myriad of iconic and classic graphic works with a specific focus on themes of diversity for our readership while increasing the collection's visibility.
- Advocate for the importance of graphic literature, sequential art, and comics as a literary medium through a series of displays and a one-day family friendly comic book convention in honor of Will Eisner.
- Provide educators and parents with information on the educational value of graphic novels through displays and an informational booklet purchased from the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund.
- Offer a safe space for our patrons and the larger community of Hendricks County to celebrate their love of pop culture and graphic literature.

D. Objectives

By the end of the calendar year, we will have relocated our small adult graphic novel collection to a new designated area for easy patron access. All graphic novels will be re-cataloged as Adult Graphic. We will grow our collection to include diverse titles from Alison Bechdel, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Octavia Butler, Genogram Tagame; and classics from Emil Erris, Joe Hill, Kieron Gillen, Jeff Lemire, and others. Given the popularity of

³ Vercelletto, C. (2019, August 30). Gen-Z Readers: The New Traditionalists: Generational Reading Survey. *Library Journal*. Retrieved October 28, 2019, from <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Gen-Z-Readers-New-Traditionalists-Generational-Reading-Survey>.

⁴ Comics and Graphic Novels One of Highest Growth Categories in Publishing. (2017, October 6). Retrieved October 28, 2019 from <https://www.npd.com/wps/portal/npd/us/news/press-releases/2017/comics-and-graphic-novels-one-of-highest-growth-categories-in-publishing-reports-npd/>.

manga we also will collect some of the more popular series within this genre. The success of this collection will be measured by reviewing circulation statistics annually.

We plan to execute our Will Eisner Memorial Comic Book Convention on Saturday November 7th, 2020. We will establish a committee by May 2020, with clear roles and responsibilities in order to ensure the success of the event. The con will be advertised through many outlets including social media, flyers, and our website. To quantify our achievement, we will collect statistics on attendance, as well as the gender and age of attendees. We will also compile and evaluate survey responses from our attendees regarding what activities they enjoyed and what they've learned.

Programming Budget

Avon-Washington Township Public Library –
 Will Eisner Memorial Comic Book Convention
 Grant / Budget Period: 2020
 Requested Amount: \$1,000

Costs

Expense Categories	Amount Requested	Total Expenses
Jackie Crofts presentation fee	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
Mark Harper presentation fee	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Raising a Reader! How Comics and Graphic Novels Can Help Your Kids Love To Read! Book (bundle of 100) x 3	3 bundles = \$ 90.00	\$ 90.00
Strathmore 370-9 300 Series Tracing Paper X 3 for John Davis program	\$ 5.68 x 3 = \$ 17.04	\$17.04
Shipping and Handling for free comics from Titan Comics (box of 200 comics)	\$ 16.00	\$16.00
A Contract with God (door raffle prize) -adult	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
Looney Labs Marvel Fluxx Specialty Edition Card Game (door raffle prize) - adult	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
Bone by Jeff Smith (door raffle prize)- child	\$ 32.00	\$ 32.00
Spider-Man: Into The Spider Verse (Blu-ray/DVD) trivia prize	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
TOTAL		\$ 970.04

Timeline

Activity/Benchmark	Persons Responsible	Month/Day
First Comic Con Committee meeting	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	1 st week in March 2020
Library Director and Board approval for vendors and food trucks	Ryan LaFerney and Jennifer Worley	March 2020
Start research for the history of graphic novels display	Ryan LaFerney, Susan Traux	March 2020
Compile list of potential children/teen crafts and activities	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	March 2020
Compile list of all potential Comic Con activities	Ryan LaFerney	March 2020
Send formal invitations to presenters Mark Harper and Jackie Crofts	Ryan LaFerney and John Davis	April 2020
Send formal invitations to potential vendors	Ryan LaFerney and John Davis	April 2020
Send formal invitation to food truck vendors	Ryan LaFerney	April 2020
Second Comic Con Committee Meeting	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	May 2020
Create tentative schedule for the convention	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	June 2020
Create map/layout of convention floor	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	July 2020
Grant Recognition Ceremony	Ryan LaFerney, Laurel Sester- Director	July 2020
Start working on informational pdf for library	Ryan LaFerney, Beverly Rigger	July 2020, August 2020

Finalize schedule for the convention	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	August 2020
Finish informational pdf for website	Ryan LaFerney, <i>Beverly Rikken</i>	August 2020
Create promotional flyers - print and electronic	Ryan LaFerney	August 2020
Create Facebook Event page	Ryan LaFerney, Catherine Myers	August 2020
Purchase Raising a Reader! How Comics and Graphic Novels Can Help Your Kids Love To Read! Book (bundle of 100) x 3 from the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund	Ryan LaFerney	August 2020
continue research for the history of graphic novels display	Ryan LaFerney, Susan Traux	August 2020
Third Comic Con Committee meeting	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	September 2020
Send reminders to all vendors & presenters	Ryan LaFerney	September 2020
Send all adult graphic novels in 740s to tech services to be re-cataloged as Adult Graphic	Ryan LaFerney, Sylvia Woods	September 2020
Shift all non-fiction to create Adult Graphic Novel section	Ryan LaFerney, Bill Reed	September/October 2020
Finish research on the history of graphic novels	Ryan LaFerney, Susan Traux	September 2020
Put up Graphic Novel history display	Ryan LaFerney, Susan Traux	October 2020
Print convention maps	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley	October 2020
Send reminders to all vendors and presenters about parking	Ryan LaFerney	October 2020
Compile presentations for event – “Will Eisner: Grandfather of Graphic Novels” & “Librarian Graphic Novel Recommendations”	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley	October 2020
Final committee meeting	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley, John Davis, Joanna Lauck	First week of October 2020
Print checks for presenters	AWTPL Human Resources Dept.	First week of October 2020
Set up Meeting Room A for presentations	Ryan LaFerney,	Friday November 6

	John Davis	
Set up tables for Artist Alley	Ryan LaFerney, John Davis	Friday November 6th
Set up table for surveys in meeting Room and library entrance	Ryan LaFerney, John Davis	Friday November 6th
Day of event greet presenters, vendors, and artists	Ryan LaFerney, Jennifer Worley	9:00am-10: 00 am Saturday November 7th
Clean-up after event	All staff	3:30pm-4 pm November 7th
Send thank you letters to all participants	Ryan Laferney	Week of November 9th
Submit follow-up report with final budget	Ryan LaFerney	January 2021
Presentation at ALA Midwinter Indianapolis	Ryan LaFerney	January 22-26, 2021

Will Eisner Memorial Comic Con Panels and Schedule

Welcome Introduction & the Legacy of Will Eisner

10:00-10:15 am, Meeting Room A

Librarian and comic book enthusiast, Ryan LaFerney, discusses the importance of Will Eisner. Will Eisner is best known for being the creator of The Spirit comic, for developing comics for education and training, and for writing the first modern graphic novel.

Great Graphic Novels for Kids, Teens, and Adults

10:15 am – 10:30 am, Meeting Room A

Librarians (Jennifer Worley and Ryan LaFerney) shine a spotlight on their favorite graphic novels, comics, and manga for kids, teens, and adults.

Character Creation (with Jackie Crofts)

10:30 am -11:30 am, Children's Programming Room A

Now only will you get tips, tricks, and advice on creating a fun and memorable original comic book character – but you'll get to create your very own!

Passive Crafts:

All day- Children's Room

Superhero coloring stations – color an image of your favorite superhero and take it home!

501st Legion Photo Ops- Star Wars Character Meet & Greet

12:00-3:00pm; Lobby

Meet some famous characters from the Star Wars saga and take photos with them.

Face Painting

Get your face painted to look like a superhero, fairy, cartoon character, or pretty much anything else you can imagine.

10:00 am -12:00 pm & 2:00-3:30 pm; Lobby

Geek Trivia

12:00 – 12:30 pm; Meeting Room A (please register in advance for this program)

Put your geeky knowledge to the test. Prizes go to the winning team.

Anatomy of Comic Book Character Design with John Davis

1:00 pm – 2:00pm

The History of Superheroes in Comics with Professor Mark Harper

2:00 - 2:45 pm, Meeting Room A

Kids & Adult Cosplay Pageant Procession

3:00pm – 3:30pm, Meeting Room A

Cosplay costumes can be inspired by any character or show. Show off your creativity and fan spirit with your best costume as an individual or part of a group. All participants will receive a free comic book for participating. To show off your costume, please line up outside of Meeting Room A at 2:35 pm.

Food Trucks

11am – 3 pm, parking lot

Dice and Meeples: Open Play Board Games

10am – 4 pm, Meeting Room C

Door Raffle

10 am – 4 pm, Lobby

One adult will win Will Eisner's *A Contract with God* and a copy of Looney Lab's Marvel Fluxx. One child will win a copy of the *Bone: The Complete Cartoon Epic in One Volume* by Jeff Smith.