



DOWNTOWN • 610 Quincy St. Rapid City, SD 57701 • (605) 394-6139 or (605) 394-4171  
NORTH • 10 Van Buren St. Rapid City, SD 57701 • (605) 716-4098

**CONTACT:**

**For Immediate Release**

Marsha Ahrenkiel, Publications Librarian  
Rapid City Public Library  
605-394-6139 x212  
mahrenkiel@rcplib.org

**Rapid City Public Library Names New Foundation Members and Officers**

**Rapid City, SD – November 14, 2008** – The Rapid City Public Library has announced the election of three new members to the Library Foundation Board: **Nancy Gowen, Gretchen Keefe-Palmer** and **James Speirs**. The Rapid City Library Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together the resources of the community to enhance the public library. It has supported RCPL since 1996, providing funding for significant construction and space planning projects as well as support of library outreach and programming efforts and staff education. The new board members were elected on October 24, 2008 and installed as officers.

**Nancy Gowen, President**

Gowen is a retired teacher who specialized in early childhood education. She was also an adjunct faculty member in Early Education at Black Hills State University and Western Dakota Technical Institute. Gowen has served on several boards -- regional, state and local – including the Midwestern Association for the Education of Young Children, the South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children and the Black Hills Association for the Education of Young Children; as well as CASA, South Dakota Voices for Children, Catholic Social Services, Black Hills Community Theatre, AAUW and Delta Kappa Gamma, the Mount Rushmore Society and the Mount Rushmore History Association, and the Allied Arts Fund. She and her husband, Dr. Richard Gowen, have five children, eleven grandchildren, and three great-grand children.

**Gretchen Keefe-Palmer, Vice President**

Gretchen Keefe-Palmer has lived in Rapid City since 1989. After growing up in Bridgewater, SD she attended Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, IA and graduated with a degree in Finance and Banking. She moved to Rapid City to start a career in real estate and is an agent with RE/MAX Realty of Rapid City. Gretchen and her husband, Steve, are the proud parents of Katherine Grace, born in June 2007.

---MORE---

**James Speirs, Secretary and Treasurer**

Speirs is a lifelong resident of South Dakota and has lived in Rapid City for 27 years. His community involvements include the Black Hills Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America where he is Vice President of Membership. Speirs is a graduate of the SDSU College of Pharmacy and received an MBA from USD. He is a United States Air Force veteran who served in Vietnam.

Gowen, Keefe-Palmer, and Speirs join continuing Foundation Board member and past President **Eric Abrahamson**. Abrahamson is an institutional and economic historian and author who has researched and written about for-profit and non-profit organizations and communities in the United States and Canada in industries and social sectors including telecommunications, banking, construction, food processing, and legal education. He has also worked on the development of museums for communities, tribes, and business organizations. Abrahamson received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 2003. He is past chairman of the South Dakota State Library Board and has served on the Rapid City Board of Education from 2005-2008. He is the vice chairman of the Black Hills Area Community Foundation.

The Library Foundation Board also includes **Greta Chapman**, who has been Director of the Rapid City Public Library since 1998 and **Sandra McNeely** who serves as the Foundation Board's Liaison from the Library Board of Trustees. McNeely is owner of the Abbey Group, Ltd, a consulting firm offering services in management, resource development, strategic planning, and board development. She is presently Vice President of the Rapid City Public Library Board of Trustees. She is also President of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Black Hills Board of Directors, and volunteers for the Custer County Courthouse Museum and her sons' school.

The Rapid City Public Library thanks its three departing Foundation members: Vice President **Patricia Lawlor**, Treasurer **Kim Schaefer**, and Foundation Board member **Leigh Tom** for their service to the Rapid City Public Library and the Foundation Board.

For more information on the Rapid City Library Foundation visit the library's website at [www.rapidcitylibrary.org](http://www.rapidcitylibrary.org).

# # #

*The Rapid City Public Library has served the Rapid City area since 1879, and now has two locations, the downtown library at 610 Quincy Street and the north library within General Beadle Elementary School at 10 Van Buren St. Both offer print and electronic resources for adults, young adults and children as well as computers and Internet access and a variety of programs and events. In March 2008, USA Today named the Rapid City Public Library's downtown library as one of the nation's 10 greatest places to "Find a Nook and Read a Book."*

Find video footage of RCPL events at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/rapidcitylibrary>

Find photos of RCPL events at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rcpl/>