

# BUILDING MERRILL TOGETHER PROGRAM SERIES

The Building Merrill Together initiative, co-supported by T.B. Scott Free Library, the Interactivity Foundation (IF), and the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy & Service (WIPPS), aims to stir government, business, and the general public to positively change Merrill through information and discussion, and by creating an open and transparent environment for change.

(Please note: series programs are in development, so check with local media and the library at 715.536.7191 or [www.tbscottlibrary.org](http://www.tbscottlibrary.org) for the latest details)

## **February 19, 2017 (Sunday), 1:00 p.m.: Merrill's Future: Getting To a Shared Vision**

Listen and exchange views with community leaders presenting plans already made about how to make Merrill a better place.

## **March 19, 2017 (Sunday), 1:00 p.m.:**

### **Built or Blight: Revitalizing & Developing Merrill's Buildings & Housing**

City and community development representatives will explain how the physical condition of commercial and residential buildings is evaluated and why some meet the wrecking ball. Private citizens and developers will explain how they're saving Merrill's important buildings, and the public will have the opportunity for frank discussions.

## **April 10, 2017 (Mon.), 6:30 p.m.: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Merrill: Change vs. the Same in Small-Town America**

This deliberative forum, employing the "Future of Rural Communities" outline, will delve into an issue that Merrill shares with communities everywhere: how to remain relevant and growing, yet preserve the small town way of life so many of us cherish.

## **April 29, 2017 (Saturday), 1:30 p.m.: Learning Civil Discourse: Skills for Leading Discussions**

Discover secrets of making a difference! Learn about three approaches—leading "small-group dialogue" or "community discussions," "action planning" and "deliberative forums"—and then focusing on the dialogue/community discussion approach.

## **May 6, 2017 (Saturday), 1:00 p.m.: Learning Civil Discourse: Skills for Leading Discussions**

Discover more secrets of making a difference! In this session, the focus is on leading group meetings for "action planning"—using discussion for specific problem-solving and action/implementation—then a wrapup of three approaches to civil discourse.

## **May 8, 2017 (Monday), 6:30 p.m.: Merrill Open for Business: Growing Entrepreneurs & Jobs**

An expert panel and citizens will discuss how to bring new business and quality jobs to Merrill.

## **August 7, 2017 (Monday), 6:30 p.m.: Outside the School Walls: Exploring MAPS' Potential**

MAPS (Merrill Area Public Schools) fulfills a critical community role by educating its children. School officials meet the public to brainstorm the full potential of MAPS' role in the Merrill community.

## **September 19, 2017 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.: New Blood...Bringing Young Professionals to Merrill**

Young professionals infuse a community with energy and ideas—experts and citizens meet in a discussion of how to ensure more of them work and live in Merrill.

## **October 3, 2017 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.:**

### **Mental Health Among Us: At Work, in School, in our Community**

Dealing with mental health head-on is critical to our schools, workplaces, and society, but difficult to talk about. Talk here.

## **October 10, 2017 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.:**

### **Mental Illness in America: How Do We Address A Growing Problem?**

Following up on the library's October 3 exploration of mental health, this National Issues Forum deliberation takes a structured approach towards addressing this significant societal issue. Call 536-7191 to reserve a seat and make a difference.

## **November 14, 2017 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.:**

### **Pitching in for Merrill: Growing Leaders and Citizen Involvement**

A vibrant city has plenty of leaders and citizens ready to make a difference. Experts and citizens explore how Merrill can have more of both.

## **January 16, 2018 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.: Got a Touch of Gray: Merrill's Aging Population**

Demographers say that Merrill, like much of the rest of Wisconsin, is becoming older. Experts and citizens will discuss what that means for our society, our tax base, and our lifestyle.

## **February 6, 2018 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.: Harder Working Merrill: Making Everyone Employable**

How can Merrill help make everyone employable and otherwise optimize its labor force to attract employers and stimulate its economy? Experts and citizens meet in a frank discussion.

## **March 6, 2018 (Tuesday), 6:30 p.m.: Open Forum: Hot Topics & Your Topics**

The year-long Building Merrill Together program series wraps up with an open discussion, moderated by John Greenwood from WIPPS, and a final opportunity to voice and exchange your ideas.