

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BikeSmart to return for its second season on May 15

May 4, 2016 (Canton, Ohio) – Stark County’s free bike sharing program, BikeSmart, is back for its second season on May 15. The collaborative program of Stark County District Library, Stark Parks, and Canton Parks and Recreation, is once again being offered for free to Library card holders at six locations throughout Stark County.

BikeSmart launched in June of 2015 as the area’s first bike lending program, featuring 36 bikes at six hubs throughout the county. In the program’s first season 999 people signed up for the program and 3,000 trips were taken on the 36 bicycles. Based on the popularity of the program in its inaugural year, it is expected that the program will once again be highly used for a variety of reasons. Even in its second year the program is still in a pilot stage, and the Library is continuing to improve the program to best serve users and maximize the number of riders and the trips that they will take on the bikes this year.

Jean McFarren, Deputy Director at Stark County District Library, helped to plan and implement the program in 2015 and has been preparing for this year’s re-launch. “We were thrilled with the popularity of BikeSmart in its first year, and we’re excited to offer it to the community again. BikeSmart is one of the many ways that the Library is collaborating with other organizations and offering something new and unique to our patrons,” said McFarren.

The bikes will once again be housed at six different hubs throughout Stark County. The hubs are positioned strategically in areas where paths or bike lanes are nearby, including the Main Library, Jackson Township Library, Perry Sippo Exploration Gateway, Canton Garden Center, Schneider Park/Middle Branch Trail and the Edward “Peel” Coleman Southeast Community Center.

To celebrate the second season of BikeSmart, the Main Library is hosting a BikeSmart party on Friday, June 3 from 3-6pm. The event will be part of First Friday and will include refreshments, children’s activities, and sign-ups for BikeSmart. The Main Library is located at 715 Market Avenue North, Canton, OH 44702.

To sign up for the bike share program, community members can visit any Stark County District Library location where a staff member will provide them with a one-time code to access BikeSmart for free. After the initial set-up, users can visit any bike hub and unlock a bike within a matter of minutes. Bikes

can be checked out for up to six hours. Individuals may also use the system for a fee without their Library card.

More information is available at www.starklibrary.org/bikesmart or by calling 330-452-0665.

ABOUT THE LIBRARY

One of the 8 largest library systems in Ohio – and the county’s oldest library -- Stark County District Library serves the community through 10 locations, six mobile libraries, and a 24/7 digital branch.

A 2009 winner of the prestigious National Medal for library service, the Library serves over 100,000 active cardholders, annually circulating 3.5 million items from its 1.2 million item collection and providing access to an additional 66 million items from lending networks throughout Ohio. Each year the library presents nearly 8,000 programs for 170,000 attendees and provides 280,000 computer sessions on the publicly available computers found in each branch.

Today, as it reimagines itself as The Smart Store, where everything is free®, the Library is emerging as a national thought-leader with innovations such as its “no overdue fines” policy, the recently launched BikeSmart bike sharing network, and the Start Smart School Partnership.

For more information, call 330.452.0665 or visit <http://www.starklibrary.org>.

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