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The magic of books

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CROWN POINT | "The Magic Book" is not your ordinary library show. Just ask those who attended the Crown Point Community Library event last month in celebration of the library's 100th anniversary.

"He really speaks from the heart about his childhood experience at the library," said one patron after Kevin Heller's performance at the Marian Education Center on the St. Anthony campus.

"The Magic Book" was a blend of magic and comedy - as well as an unabashed testimonial for libraries. Throughout the program, Heller's talent and charm shined through as he made a pitch for books and the magical world they reveal.

He told the story of his grandmother, his first audience as a magician and the first person who took him to the library, "where the real magic began," said Heller. "My unique brand of magic was first inspired by the magic books I discovered on my first trip to the library when I was 5 years old."

As he worked the room, selecting young and old to assist him with tricks, you couldn't help but notice the magical energy created by the 110 people that attended the performance, said Laura Clemons, communications specialist for the library.

He closed his show with a last trick inspired by a moment with his son. Inviting the children in the audience to gather around him, Heller pulled a chair into the middle of the group and began unfolding the story while folding a plain white piece of paper.

Heller said that he and his son went outside on a snowy Indiana day. Tearing chunks from the folded paper and tossing them into his audience, Heller told how his son began playing in the

snow.

Suddenly, he unfolded the piece of paper to show his audience a snowflake, which drew an audible response. Yet Heller began folding the snowflake up until became so small it



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couldn't be seen in his hand.

Telling how his son called to him, "Look Daddy, I can do magic," as the boy extended his arms toward the sky with snowflakes falling all around him, Heller held up his own hand and, with the help of a red Chinese fan, he began to make it snow. The once plain piece of paper, torn and formed into a snowflake, was somehow transformed into hundreds of tiny bits of paper - like snowflakes falling onto his audience as they tried to catch them.

"I was sitting with the audience taking pictures and all I could hear was gasping from the adults, and I even saw a couple tears," said Clemons. "The ending was truly a magical moment for everyone."

- For The Times

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