



McIntosh Memorial Library Mobile Demonstration Kitchen

Final Report - Ideas to Action 2024

By Trina Erickson, McIntosh Memorial Library, September 2025

Receiving the Ideas to Action award has been an amazing experience which is opening several doors for us regarding programming and educational opportunities. We're excited to be able to say yes to culinary events because we finally have the equipment to support such activities.

The first part of the award led us to working with an Amish cabinet maker to design and build the Mobile Demonstration Kitchen for us. We met Johnny in his shop on a cloudy day which made it challenging because the Amish don't have electricity. When it came time to choose the handles for our cabinet Johnny brought out a big flashlight to show us all the examples he had. What an adventure!

The making of the kitchen took more time than anticipated to complete as Johnny is a very busy cabinet maker. We absolutely know it was worth the wait as the cabinet Johnny built is exceptional. Everything we asked for was included and all supporting materials including cooking vessels, a tent to be under during the demonstrations, and the camera equipment to showcase the chef were able to be purchased while we waited for the cabinet to be built.

Since receiving the mobile demonstration kitchen we've already started putting it to use. In the pictures you will see a salad making class we hosted with youth during the Summer Reading program. All produce was harvested from the library garden. Attendees then gathered around the demonstration kitchen to watch how all the individual ingredients were able to be assembled for a delicious salad.

We have two culinary arts programs coming up where we will use the demonstration kitchen. First, we are making mooncakes during a Vietnamese Culture Celebration on September 24. A mooncake is a Chinese bakery product traditionally eaten during the Mid-Autumn Festival. Mooncakes are offered between friends or at family gatherings while celebrating the festival. This program is geared towards families.

In early December we have an adult cooking class scheduled where the focus will be on sourdough.

Being our demonstration kitchen couldn't be built in the exact timeframe requested we haven't been able to utilize it as much as we hoped in 2025. As we begin working on plans for 2026 the kitchen will be a focal point, especially in partnership with our Chamber of Commerce and the Viroqua Farmers Market.

Project product(s):

