

Angela Zimmermann, Executive Director Report

February 2021

Pandemic Response

Beginning March 1st, we will be aligning our curbside pickup service, Internet access appointments, and call center appointments to all coincide. Looking at it from a patron perspective, I imagine this is potentially a bit confusing trying to understand when which service is available. Discussing with the Department Heads and looking at the data, we'll be conducting all services between the hours of 9-6 Mondays – Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays 10-4. The data of what we were doing for both curbside pickup and reference calls between 6 and 8 does not justify remaining open for those services. This does not require Board approval as I'm not proposing the actual hours change (when we return to normal, we'll revert back to M-Th 9-8, Fridays and Saturdays 11-4) but rather I'm adjusting our service hours during COVID-19.

I also continue to be in contact with the City Health Department as to a potential phased reopening approach (governed by the City Ordinance) and vaccines for employees.

During normal times and frigid weather, RPL would have been a warming site. Due to the City Ordinance we could not open our doors at all, so our response was to become a drop-off site for winter clothes, blankets, sleeping bags, etc. We'll be delivering these items to HALO and the Hospitality Center for those in need.

Lakeshores Library System

I've been spending a bit of time understanding the Racine County Funding Plan and providing input on the draft document. To provide a bit of background: in Racine County, the plan of library service is currently on a three-year cycle. Every three years, the idea is that an updated plan will be submitted to keep things current. The most recent full rewrite should have taken place during the summer of 2019, but the Library System Director, Steve Ohs, was on paternity leave, and the draft county plan was not taken back up until now. Thus, the system and the Racine county libraries have essentially been working on "freshening-up" the existing plan so that dates reflect the current timeframe. The ultimate goal is to defer any large changes until the plan that will take effect in January of 2023. The working draft also incorporates services provided during COVID-19.

SHARE Consortium and Lakeshores meeting are every two weeks and the previous two meetings have provided reports from the various task forces, State Annual Report discussions, Library Legislative Day plans, and cross-county marketing initiatives.

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library met last on February 9th. I provided a quick update of what's going on at the library and several upcoming initiatives. I did not have any specific requests for funding from the Friends this month but will be bringing a few requests to the March meeting. I have also allowed a few of the Friends of the Library to return to the building on Wednesday mornings so they may plow through the immense amount of items (books, DVDs, audiobooks) that have built since the beginning of the pandemic, so they may start organizing them for whenever their book sale may resume.

Racine Public Library Foundation

The Foundation meets on Thursday, February 11th. This will be my first RPL Foundation meeting and I'm bringing a couple of requests for technology-related items that would be put in and utilized in a future RPL MakerSpace/Lab.

State Annual Report

This is on the agenda to discuss at the Board meeting. While I filled in what I could without having been the year at RPL, I leaned heavily on the input from Bob, Dan, and Darcy and very much appreciate their assistance.

Meetings

We had an all staff meeting on January 29th. I've started to frame the staff meetings as a chance to provide more cross-departmental information, meaning Department Heads and Leads shared what was going on in their areas. Weekly leadership meetings are held every Wednesday.

I do have a very open-door policy which means I've spent a lot of time talking to each of the individual staff members, hearing their thoughts, ideas, and input.

Other meetings / organizations I've connected with in the past several weeks include but are not limited to: SC Johnson, the Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club (I presented virtually before them), City Hall and various departments of City Hall, Hospitality Center, resource library directors in WI, Opening our Hearts and Minds to End Racism, and Ascension Hospital.

Website

As mentioned at the January meeting, it's a focus right away of mine to get our current website up-to-date, far more user-friendly, inclusive, accessible, and modern. This has taken up a decent portion of my time in the past month as this will have to be outsourced, so preparing the Statement of Work, as well as the various meetings the Tech Team and I have had with potential vendors. I hope to be able to bring a recommendation to the Board in March as to how to go forward with this project and possible funding.

Darcy Mohr, Head of Adult and Youth Services Report

Programming

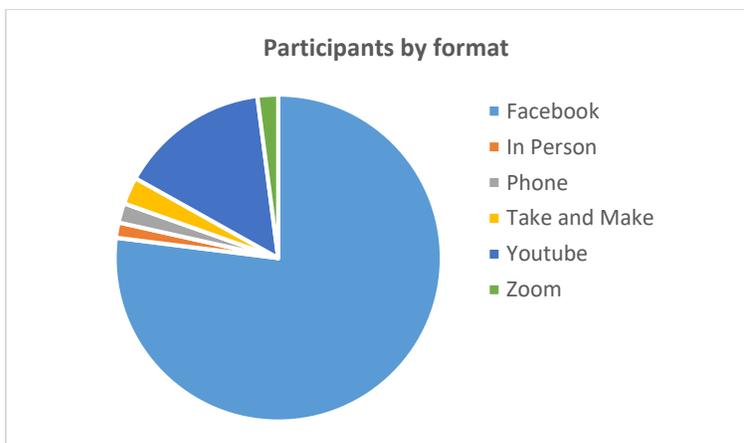
Library staff are continually looking for new and creative ways to present programs during COVID. Some programs are presented live via Facebook or Zoom. Others are recorded and then

posted to the library’s YouTube channel. Facebook Live is by far the most popular way for patrons to participate in virtual programs.

Storytimes, 1st Chapter Friday, and Take and Make craft projects are geared to our youngest patrons. Families are invited to join us for movies held in the library’s parking lot, which have been popular despite the cold weather. Hosting book club and genealogy club via Zoom is a way to provide continuity for these monthly groups.

In January the library presented 20 programs which had a total participation of 980 people. Because the recorded programs can be viewed at any time, those participation numbers are fluid and will go up over time.

January 2021 Programming			
Program	# of Programs	Participants	Format
1st Chapter Friday	3	28	YouTube
3D Prints	1	14	Take and Make
Book Group	1	7	Zoom
Craft	1	11	Take and Make
Genealogy Club	1	12	Zoom
Genealogy Club recording	1	22	YouTube
Outdoor Movie	1	14	In Person
Phone a Story	1	18	Phone
Storytime	6	88	YouTube
Storytime	4	716	Facebook
Totals	20	930	



Patron Services

We continue to offer reference services via phone and chat. Types of questions answered include help placing items on hold, curbside hours and other general library information, in-depth reference and research, referrals to local, state, and federal resources, and reader's advisory. Staff answered 1789 calls and 106 chats in January.

Total # of phone calls	1789
Avg. # of calls per day	77
Avg. # of calls per hour	8.4
Total talk time	6829 minutes
Avg. call length	3 min. 49 sec.
Total chats	106
Avg. # of chats per day	5.6
Total chat messages	840
Avg. # of messages per chat	7.9

The library is providing limited computer access in the northwest corner of the 2nd floor. Patrons can make appointments to use a computer, make copies, and scan documents.

Computer users	91
Black and white prints	713
Color prints	10

Staff activities

The Adult and Youth Services staff are doing a combination of working in the building and working remotely. Work being done from home includes participating in continuing education, selecting materials, preparing for programs, staffing the remote reference service, and attending virtual meetings. Activities in the building include staffing the computer center, weeding the collection, assisting other staff with technology, and filming virtual programs. Adult and Youth Services staff members participated in a combined total of 45 hours of continuing education in January. This includes webinars, online classes, workshops, and podcasts.

Staying connected with the community

Staying connected with patrons, and the Racine community at large, is especially important while the building remains closed. Library services are promoted on social media, on the library's website, and through an email newsletter. Keiko Skow, along with other community volunteers, made a video for 4K students to prepare them for kindergarten. This was done with the support of the superintendent of RUSD. Keiko sent the video to Tessa Schmidt at the Department of Public Instruction, who will be sharing it with other libraries in the state.

Staff have also been keeping in touch with patrons on a more personal level. These are just a couple of examples of the ways staff have been doing that:

Melissa Olson, an Adult Services librarian, has been calling patrons who are over the age of 65 and haven't used their library card since prior to the pandemic. Since January 1st, she has made 246 calls and has had conversations with 72 patrons. Most of the patrons are not aware of the services we are providing. Many appreciate having someone to talk with for a few minutes. Melissa is also finding many phone numbers that have been disconnected. Unfortunately, she has found several of these names in the obituaries. Whether due to COVID or other causes, it's always sad to lose a patron.

On a happier note, Youth Services Librarian Keiko Skow contacted some of the Youth Services patrons to ask how they were doing. These calls have been very well received. One student sent her a video of his online piano recital.

Bob Margis, Head of Circulation Services Report

Bookmobile

The Bookmobile spent the majority of the January month out of service because the heater was not working. It went back into service on January 29 after repairs were made. They are still experiencing some heating issues with the heater cutting out, but not enough to stop services. While closed, hold items were made available for pickup at the main library and staff were used at the main library maintaining the bookmobile collections, filling holds, sorting materials, and at curbside pickup. As of February 1st, the bookmobile has been at all of its regular scheduled stops.

Circulation

Use of the curbside pickup has been steady with Main circulating 23,691 items and Bookmobile 1,364. Approximately 13,286 holds were placed and filled. 5,993 items loaned to other libraries. 296 library cards issued. Approximately 84,000 items were sorted and boxed for the Share consortium.

Shelving and shelf order maintenance activities have continued. All Circulation and Bookmobile staff have been cross-trained to perform all circulation activities.

Technical Services

Ordering and processing:

In January after a successful fiscal cycle rollover we started our material acquisitions for the year by ordering 1,400 new items and receiving 659 previously ordered items.

Adding new documents and donated material to the catalog continues to remain low but is expected to increase during the year.

TSD Projects:

Things TSD has been working on, during this shutdown, that hopefully improve shelving, searching for and just overall esthetics of some of the collections.

Relabeled the children's picture books to include the 3 letter author on the spine along with the "E". And there is no longer a "multicultural" section in the YSD. They have been relabeled and put in with the picture books.

Added a red "BB" label to the children's board books.

Currently working on adult non-fiction spine labels. We started having them processed by Brodart a couple of years ago to have the 3 letters of the author instead of the long cutter number. Along with Amber and Christopher, we have already changed the 900's and are currently working in the 800's & 700's. So if you see big sections gone from the shelves, they are probably by my desk awaiting labels.

Relabeled the spine of the YSD series paperbacks to include the series that it is in. Gone is the little orange dot.

Relabeled the spine of the Little Golden Book circulating collection.

Call Numbers have also been changed for the ASD Equipment collections to read ALOT "Adult Library of Things" in the system and on the package/bag. Ex. ALOT ATARI for the Atari game system.

Next will tackle the YSD DVD collection to be labeled like the ASD with the 3 letters on the spine of the title.