

Angela Zimmermann, Executive Director Report

January 2022

Pandemic Update

The Library building remains open and all safety procedures are in place but per the email I sent to the Board on January 5th, I've pulled all programs to virtual through the end of February.

After discussions with the City Health Administrator, I figured this was the best route to go to mitigate groups from gathering. We will still continue to host United Way's VITA tax assistance program, an upcoming blood drive, an upcoming job fair in conjunction with Foxconn and the Department of Workforce Development, and vaccination clinics though.

I have also purchased separately and worked with the Fire Department to secure either N95 or KN95 masks for the staff.

The City Health Department will continue to guide the individual departments on the best way forward. If discussions would ever come to completely shutting down and reverting solely to curbside, I would advocate that we can safely remain open. We are not busy at all in the library and at the most, we see between 30-40 people in the building. Considering we're also offering resources, services, and a warm space to potentially the most vulnerable within our community, I'd advocate for safely keeping the building open for all.

See below under Personnel/Operations in relation to staff out sick.

Personnel / Operations

Everything was forecasted out in the December packet concerning upcoming retirements, promotions, and various positions we're currently hiring for.

Based on the Finance & Personnel recommendation from this meeting in relation to the Business Manager position, I will be posting that immediately as Dan Schultz's last day with RPL will be Thursday, February 24th. I hope to have at least a few days of crossover between the new hire and Dan.

Deputy Director, Nick Demske and I continue to meet formally at least once a week to acclimate him further in the position. Many time-consuming (and random) HR issues have come up in the past month or so.

We have had quite a few people out due to sickness (not all COVID-related) and nothing, as of yet, which has disrupted the continuity of services. Incredible kudos to everyone from all departments for offering a helping hand when needed when any department was short-handed and needed assistance.

Finances/Trust Funds

After the December Board meeting and approval, Business Manager Dan Schultz and myself worked with Johnson Bank to get both the library trust funds and the Foundation funds transferred to Johnson from BMO. For now, everything has been put in my name (it was all in

Dan's) until I hire a new Business Manager. We'll transfer all of the accounts then to the new Business Manager.

American Rescue Act Plans – ARPA Federal Infrastructure Funding

All of this information was thoroughly laid out in my monthly report to the Board in December. In relation to the ARPA funds received for the City Library Collective initiative, Racine Public Library will act as the fiscal agent. I am currently working with the City's Finance Director to set this account up properly with the Department of Public Instruction for us to receive the funds. The ARPA Funding and project which is in collaboration with the WI Humanities Council is currently working on formulating the job description which will be used to find the full-time paid local Community Powered Coordinators. The next step is for RPL to have a meeting with the WI Humanities Council to review the job description and for them to meet the mentor on the library's end.

Lakeshores Library System / SHARE Updates

The contract has been signed by Lakeshores for the BC mobile app for the SHARE consortium, meaning an app for our catalog to improve patrons' experience will be coming. Next steps are individual customization for each library within the app and working on various other set-up questions (third party providers within the app, i.e. databases, social media URLs, RSS feeds, patron self-service features, etc.)

The delivery van will be installing a graphic design wrap referring to the SHARE consortium and how to get a library card.

Other talk centered around the 2022 Summer Reading Program and individual performers for each library and logistics of what this summer will look like (in-person, virtual, hybrid, etc.).

2nd Floor Renovation

Navigating this project has taken a decent chunk of my time in the last couple of weeks. We have received all of the front-end specification documents, as well as the 100% bid documents and the preliminary architectural specifications from the architects. DPW has also received a copy, reviewed, and responded with questions to the architects.

We had a final meeting with the architects on the 12th where we made the final decisions on furnishings, materials, and color. We also have met with Hallett movers in relation to the shelving which needs to be removed yet and the books which need to be shifted prior to renovation. Hallett is returning to the library on January 18th to conduct further measuring. EnvisionWare has been involved in relation to the new gates which we will need for the west end access to the building via Lake Avenue.

Final meetings also included discussions on electrical, HVAC, millwork, and layout of various smaller collections (records, myriad of literature racks, some reference materials, etc.).

Next steps – the project will have to be publicly bid so depending on what further information DPW would need, the hopes are that this will be publicly bid in the coming weeks. This would

bring it back to the City’s Public Works & Services Committee within mid-February to go before Common Council in March. All of this is to be determined yet and will likely change a bit.

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library did not meet this past month due to some members who were unable to make the meeting. I did supply the Friends though with a very thorough wish list to hopefully guide their goals for the year and assist in making targeted decisions as to where their funding could go. The wish list covered all areas within the building (Youth, Teen, Innovation Lab, Adult, Other Services, and Social Services).

Various Projects

The December Board packet again included a very detailed report of a variety of individuals projects (website, book bikes, community engagement platform, forthcoming community needs assessment, etc.) Nothing has incredibly changed from that report which needs to be called out.

*In regards to all of the year-end statistics mentioned subsequently, the Board will see all of these figures laid out in the State Annual Report (which will come before the Board in February).

Nick Demske, Deputy Director

Programming

The Library presented 12 programs in December, which had a total participation of 83 people. In-person programs had an average attendance of 8 people per program. Virtual programs had an average of 4 people per program.

December Programming Statistics

Programs	# of Program	Participants	Format
3D Printed ornament	1	10	Live, Virtual
Book Club	1	11	In person
Girls Who Code	5	40	In person, outreach
Girls Who Code	2	2	Live, Virtual
Hour of Code	1	2	In person
Maker Mondays	1	8	In person

Outreach Craft @ Marian	1	10	In person, outreach
Totals	12	83	

Patron Services

Staff answered 827 questions via phone and chat and 2880 in person. A total of 3707 questions were answered across all methods of communication. 78% of the reference questions were asked in person, while 22% were received over the phone or via chat. This continues the downward trend we have been seeing in the number of phone calls received.

October Reference and Computer Use Statistics

Total # of phone calls	789
Total # of questions via call center	808
Avg. # of calls per day	35.8
Avg. # of calls per hour	3.72
Total talk time	2807 minutes 34 seconds
Avg. call length	3 minutes 33 seconds
Total chats	19
Total chat messages	132
Avg. # of messages per chat	6.94
Total phone and chat questions	827
In-person reference questions	2880
Total # of reference questions answered	3707
Computer usage - total logins	643
Computer usage - total time	526 hours 41 seconds
Computer usage - avg. time per login	49.146
Faxes	398
Scans	615

Social Worker

Agencies met with:

- LGBT Center
- Racine Collaborative for Children's Mental Health
- VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is a national program staffed by local volunteers to provide **free** preparation and electronic filing of tax returns)
- Hospitality Center
- Racine County (Kerry Milkie, Here to Help Program)
- Attended Alliance Meeting
- Spoke at Julian Thomas Elementary School about my job as a social worker.

Patron Interactions (drop-in or by appointment): 19

Need/Concerns: Emotional support (1), Housing (2), Employment (4), Mental Health (2), Applying for Benefits/Financial Support (6), General Concerns (4)

Sensory Room Updates:

- Met with the Youth Services Department to discuss the Policies and Procedures of the Sensory, as well as opening date and other details concerning the room.
- Organization and placement of equipment in the room; built bigger items, checked inventory and continuously making sure things in the room are functional.
- Continued to research peer-reviewed articles on sensory-related issues, along with benefits of having a Sensory Space.
- Temporary website page- discussed with Shay King, RPL's Head of Business Dvlpmnt.

Misc.:

- Hosted first event: NAMI's In Our Own Voice presentation
- Revamping and discussing best documentation practices for a library social worker
- Created rough draft of Library Staff Needs Assessment
- Completed Field Evaluation for Naomi's internship thus far

Circulation

RPL circulated a total of 30,341 in December of 2021. 28,064 items from Main and 2,277 items from the Bookmobile. November 2021 circulation was 34,371. Approximately 7,283 holds were placed and filled. 4,399 items loaned from our collection to other libraries, and 3,648 received for RPL patrons. 185 new library cards were issued during the month of December. 1,626 items were loaned out to patrons via our Home Delivery Service in the month of November.

In December circulation staff inducted 68,225 items through the automated material handler (AMH).

o 2021 total for materials inducted is 961,671.

Part time Circulation Clerk position was filled with the selection of Kenneth Michur. Kenneth began work on January 10th.

Public Services Assistant, Karen Weber was contacted by the librarian from West Ridge Elementary School inquiring about library cards for the students (approximately 300 students). Library card registration forms (both English and Spanish language) were sent to the school.

Technical Services

Ordering and processing:

In December TSD staff placed orders for 177 items and received 1,212 previously ordered items.

A total of 1,640 items were added to the catalog.

- In preparation for the fiscal cycle roll over all ordering was halted on December 13th
- A total of 16,090 items were added to the catalog in 2021.

Current Project Updates:

- Adult nonfiction call number updating is nearing completion.
- Stephanie is continuing spine label updates to adult audiobooks.
- Beyond Books Collection is being re-categorized to be better presented in the catalog and on the shelves.
- TSD staff is continuing to assist librarians with the current large scale weeding project in the Adult Department.
 - Total collection counts including both main and bookmobile have been reduced by 12.25% in 2021

Melissa Donaldson, Head of Digital Services and Innovation

Programming

The Digital Services and Innovation staff hosted 11 programs and outreaches in December. Below are some highlights.

In December, we were allowed to go into some more of the schools for Girls Who Code. We were excited to bring our Dash and Dot robots to help the young ladies learn to code. Our goal is to have the girls program their robots to run through some obstacle courses for the projects this year at Starbuck and Real School. We are still meeting virtually with Walden III and the groups will be creating their project using Scratch. Please note that we have paused Girls Who Code until the outbreak of the Omicron Variant calms down. We will be meeting with our Tech Integrators at the end of the month.

This month, we are headed back to Racine Montessori School to work with their 7th and 8th Graders. We are going to do a lesson with Scratch, Cubelets, and Dash and Dot.

One-on-one Tech Help

Digital Services and Innovation staff were able to help 28 individuals with their tech questions. That's about 14 hours dedicated to this specific task.

Staff Tech Support

The DSI Staff handled 12 help desk tickets submitted by staff. Some of the things we worked on were setting up new accounts for newly hired employees, printer issues, computers not booting etc.

Continuing Education

- Matt Jerke attended a 5G / Cradlepoint Webinar.
- Brianna has attended Libby/Overdrive webinars, such as "Libby Training for patrons: and "Mythbusing with OverDrive. She is also reading articles that can help her with future classes.

Partnerships

- The City has ordered the laptops and the computers concerning our partnership with MIS and Parks & Rec. Once we receive them we will reach out to Parks staff at each Community Center (Bryant and Chavez) to find out when we can start computer classes.

Shay King, Head of Business Development

Inside the Library

12 Days of Desserts

The outreach and marketing coordinator worked with library staff to create a [cookbook](#) and [12-day video series](#) of historical recipes. Recipes came from books in the library's history archive, and each was accompanied by historical facts about the group that made it and a video tutorial for making the recipe. The most popular was the [rice pudding video](#), at 279 views.

125th Anniversary

After initial talks of moving the Winterfest to a virtual format, the anniversary team has officially planned to hold the Winterfest outdoors in the library circle. The updated time will be Feb. 26, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. While storytelling, crafts and other activities will be held in the outdoor format, the Trivia portion of the Winterfest will be broken out into its own fundraiser event on March 26, 7 to 9.

Outside the Library

\$47,358 has been pledged towards our goal of \$55,000 to fill the interior of the upcoming Techmobile. This includes a collective total of \$730 from two different Noodles & Co. fundraisers, and three gifts of \$1,000 from Paul Holley, Jennifer & John Von Eiff in honor of Jean Eade, and Don & Monica Putning.

Press Highlights

Since the Dec. 16 report, the library has been referenced in the media [at least 25 times](#). Placements are down 34% from the previous report due to inactivity over the winter break. As we issue press releases in the coming weeks about Winterfest, the sensory room's opening in early February, the hire of the deputy director and the library's renovation, we expect to see a burst of media attention.

Highlighted article: [December's episode of Racine & Me](#)

Owned Media Highlights

Website

The majority of website development time over the last few weeks has gone to double checking our website partner's work and providing extra documentation around display and performance issues. Most of the initial round of identified issues have been resolved, and the remainder should be resolved within another week or two.

Template designs for the website's most commonly used in-page elements are now set up, streamlining content development by reducing the time it takes to format each individual page.

Social Media

Instagram followers increased by 1.3% to a total of 925. While Instagram reach dropped over the winter break, our **Facebook reach increased by 6.6%**, thanks to a spike in activity the day after the [boxcar race craft program](#) was posted. This post alone was incredibly popular in comparison to our other posts, **reaching 6.8k people** and receiving dozens of comments and shares. Its counterpart on Instagram was also our highest performing Instagram post.