

February 2021 Report from the Executive Director

ADMINISTRATION

By David Slivken

LJ Winter Summit

Library Journal held their virtual LJ Winter Summit this past February 23rd. Topics covered included the following:

- What's Next for Collection Strategy and Readers Advisory
- Planning for equity in the workplace,
- Fighting COVID-19 misinformation in your community, and
- The Long Haul: How COVID Is Changing Libraries

In the “Long Haul” session, presenter Nicolle Davies, Colorado State Librarian, shared that due to the events of 2020, public libraries need to re-establish ourselves as the teachers and the purveyors of information literacy. According to Ms. Davies, this is a place we can lay claim that we are information professionals, we can help people navigate to find accurate information and truthful information, and it's in the spirit of what we do. Libraries already have the reputation capital; people already trust us and know what is expected of us. This is something public libraries should really embrace and own again at a society level. Between the pandemic, the election and everything else in 2020, reclaiming that space as being trusted purveyors of accurate information is imperative because we do it better than anyone else.

“Designing for the Future — The Post-Pandemic Library”, by David Vinjamuri and Joseph Huberty

I wanted to share highlights of this recent publication on how public libraries can move forward post-pandemic.

Pathways — One-way pathways may continue to feel safer for patrons even after health restrictions subside. Design library zones to allow for one-way pathways. Add design cues for one-way travel such as canting displays towards patrons traveling in the preferred direction.

Seating — Seating should ideally be flexible, allowing patrons to define a safe distance. Where space is a significant constraint, barriers, partitions or angled seating can be used to ameliorate patron concerns.

Tables — Four and six person tables may see minimal usage outside of child and teen areas. Consider flexible table arrangements or two-person table sections that can be combined for more efficient space usage.

Event Space — Consider limiting event size until you can determine patron comfort level with proximity. Add gaps in seating to allow patrons to self-select. Consider hybrid approaches allowing live events to be simulcast as webinars.

Drive-thru/Curbside-- the pandemic has disrupted traditional library practices by causing patrons to eschew the self-check in favor of curbside pickup. I won't sugar-coat the logistical challenges: offering this service on an ongoing basis will be difficult. Seniors, vulnerable populations, persons with disabilities, rushed commuters, harried parents and many others see a real benefit from curbside pickup and related external services.

The Adaptable Library-- An overarching lesson of the pandemic was the need for adaptability. This need will only grow as patrons return. There is no guarantee that the same mix of patrons who left the library in 2020 will return in 2021 or 2022. Even if they do, it is foreseeable that their needs will have changed, and that some of those needs won't be evident until they are already in the space.

COMMUNICATIONS

By Katie Auman

February may be the shortest month of the year, but it kept the Communications team as busy as ever. One of the key activities we accomplished was in hiring a new Programming and Events Coordinator. We are excited to welcome Angela Kettle to our library team in March and are looking forward to working with her on strategic planning and development of library programs and community events and sponsorships.

February Highlights:

- Supported Start Up FoCo 2021, a virtual event aimed at local entrepreneurs, creatives, and startups. This year, the event includes around 60 on-demand learning sessions being released over February and March.
- Earned media coverage:
 - Collegian TV (CTV 11) interview: “The newest addition to the Old Town Library that's helping bridge the digital divide” (<https://youtu.be/FvHlpUlwHyY>)
 - North Forty News article: “Story Stroll: Reading a Book One Window at a Time.”
 - Rocky Mountain Collegian article: “Poudre Library District Earns First Star Library Designation.”
- Wrapped up the first-ever District Winter Reading Challenge. Currently gathering survey data from participants to inform future winter reading challenges.
- Revised the District’s Social Media Policy for Board review.
- Continued efforts related to social media, email communications, newsletters, video development and other key activities to keep the community updated on Library services and news.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

By Ken Draves

From Africa Garcia---

Programs:

- Poudre High School Virtual Tour of the Library (LR & AG)
- Voces del pasado y del presente: Afrolatinos identidad e historia (LR & AG)
- IMAGINANTES X: Henna around the world (LR & AG)
- Book Club for Mortals
- Resource night with PRPLD – presentation of library resources for PSD + creating library cards for participants
- Memo Plastilina Clay Workshop (including deliveries) (LR & AG)
- The packets for the March Citizenship Class have been prepared and mailed.

Summer Reading Program:

- Started reaching out to partners from previous years. Have been meeting with all of them (more meetings to come) to talk about SRP. We are mostly trying to get an idea of what their summer plans and needs are. We are also being clear about our situation and not making promises.
- We have also started visiting sites to check their outdoors space. If we can offer in-person programs in the summer, we want to make sure that the sites have an outdoor space suitable for our programs.
- We have started a tentative hybrid schedule for programs.

PSD:

- Besides the 2 presentations of library resources and services, we have also delivered ILL books and Winter Reading Program prizes.

From Ludy Rueda—

Recording of Spanish Virtual Storytime (VST)

These stories highlight African American authors/illustrator

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l81uxGbdjyU&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SU2pBhRN9Qs&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2zdfUCZbbit99s0rf2Syp41hWqxs4jiW1P8XrNxKppFdBkYKBmNhfW8js>

Recording of Spanish Phone-A-Story (PAS)

Celebration of Black History Month with 2 stories highlighting Celia Cruz and Pele's life.

Coordination of French Phone-A-Story (PAS)

4 French stories provided this month with the support of our CSU partners from the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

Spanish Clay Workshop

“Enamórate de la plastilina con Memo Plastilina” 2/27/2021 35 participants

IMAGINANTES X

Henna Around the World Workshop 2/20/21 20 teens

Black History Month presentation

Voces del Pasado y del Presente: Afrolatinos, identidad e historia 2/18/21 21 participants

Virtual Tour for Poudre High School

16 Monolingual students from the ESL class participated in this tour where we provided important resources accessible via the library’s website.

Various

Coordinated Informal Lending Libraries (ILL) for Early Head Starts and Fort Collins Book Mobile

Distributed Winter Reading Challenge prizes

Coordinated Adult Learning series in partnership with FRCC & PSD

Attended City of Fort Collins’ feedback sessions about the creation of the new Equity & Inclusion Office

SRC planning and translations

Spanish Website revision



About the Clay Workshop

“Gracias por ofrecer el taller de plastilina esta mañana- estuvo super divertido!!! Todos los talleres que ofrecen están buenísimos!! Nos sentimos muy afortunados de los servicios que provee la biblioteca!”

About Informal Lending Libraries (ILL)

“Our enrollment group is going to start vision and hearing screenings again, and they give each child a book at their screening. They told me they are in need of books, and the mentors would welcome more. I don’t know how many books you have to give away, but I think we could use up to 10 bags. Thanks for your generosity!”

“Thanks for the books and prizes, Ludy. The mentors are thrilled with the books; such wonderful titles too! If you have more, we will find homes for them.”

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

By Currie Meyer

Black History Month displays in Children’s area: CTL Children’s Librarian Amy Holzworth planned, updated and set up two displays for Black History Month. The first, a display of historic and contemporary Black leaders of culture, government, the arts, science and more attracted curious customers of all ages. The second added black-centric items from the children’s collection including biographies, fiction, beginning readers, and nonfiction.



Meet and Collaborate #3, Create opportunities for intergenerational experiences to share knowledge and stories. #4, Serve as a center for civic information, discussion, and engagement. Learn and Discover #1, Connect individuals with opportunities to explore, create, and spark curiosity. Support k-12 learning.



February Take and Make a ROAR-ing success: Library Assistant Ashley Byers planned and co-coordinated (with Amy) “Feb-ROAR-ary,” a dinosaur-themed Take and Make kit for children that featured four fun crafts. The popular kits were ‘extinct’ within the first week of the month, with over 160 taken home to families! Quick to respond to this attack, Amy and Ashley assembled their back-up plan, dino-themed paper-bag puppets and coloring sheets. More than 300 of these activity kits were taken home during the remainder of the month. *Learn and Discover #1, Connect individuals with opportunities to explore, create, and spark curiosity. Support K-12*

learning.

Professional Development: Amy attended The Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) webinars, “Culture, Identity, and History as Sources of Strength and Resilience for Tribal Communities”, “Culture, Identity, and History as Sources of Strength and Resilience for African American Children and Families” and School Library Journal’s learning series, “Equity in Action: Fostering an Antiracist Library Culture”. Currie attended Library Journal’s winter summit “Building the Next Normal”. *Reimagine the Future #3, Invest in staff development. Prioritize Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.*

Chromebooks ready for check out! CTL Circulation Supervisor Angela prepared spaces, staff and protocols for three Chromebook mini-laptops paired with wi-fi hotspot devices for check

out. Two have checked out so far. *Community recovery; Equity Diversity and Inclusion; Reimagine the Future #4, Develop more agile, responsive, and effective services.*

Virtual Trivia Night for Teens and adults a glowing success: Teen Services Librarian Jenny Thurman, with her counterparts Nicole and Miranda, coordinated a fandom-themed (with neon light-design) trivia night on February 18. More than 20 teens and adults enjoyed the live game. The Teen team is planning additional trivia events this spring.

OLD TOWN LIBRARY

By Eileen McCluskey

The OTL team continues to provide a variety of services and programs that have a positive impact on our community. Our building is welcoming customers to the computer lab, the children's area, and some limited table spaces, in addition to providing curbside services, reference services, and print/copier services. The amazing OTL circulation team supported a 12% increase in all transactions at the branch from January to February 2021 (Checkouts + renewals, checkouts, holds placed, holds filled, check-ins).

The ESL Mentoring program has eight active learning pairs, and the service will be publicized soon. We begin recruiting additional mentors and learners in the coming weeks. Anne and Xochil are supporting the learning pairs and preparing for the next mentor training. We celebrate all the positive feels with this service and its participants.

Deidre hosted "Staying Active for Older Adults," a program that brought movements from Tai Chi and Qigong to virtual attendees who were able to participate from their homes. Ian has begun recruiting volunteers for the digitization project where they will be able to process and organize the newspapers from home. He is working with Mark and Audrey to ramp up the project. Staff have been trained on how to help patrons sign up for vaccines. Eileen and Ian are reviewing the impacts on staffing to some community-led programs that are now supported by staffing in a virtual format. As we transition to in-person storytime, prepare for SRC, and transition to the eventuality of being open more hours to the public, we are trying to understand where staffing shifts need to happen and how to support some of these new endeavors with creative scheduling.

Erin Lucero presented another Virtual Makerspace activity on called Catapult Construction! Deidre presented Yoga Storytime, LIVE! on Feb. 20. Both programs were a success with lots of enthusiastic participation!

Karla's first PRPLD Story Stroll wrapped up on Feb. 28. The QR code on the Story Stroll panels was scanned at least 70 times. (this is not a final count). DDA and the library received positive feedback from all stakeholders including downtown businesses. Another downtown Story Stroll is forthcoming in June for SRC kick-off!

OTL created approximately 125 "2020 Time Capsule" kits for families. The kits continue to be very popular.

The BOBs requests have slowed down a bit this month due to families being able to access the libraries again. We are happy to have it available for those who continue to use it or in case we need to "level down" again.

Sara N. and Kindra presented a Leave Me Alone digital literacy class to 28 people. Erin attended Steve Spangler's STEM training for storytelling.

An internal library team continues to make progress on developing an internal Sharepoint site, with the goal of providing employees with one source for internal organizational knowledge storage and access. Kristen, Kindra and Eileen are working with Mark, Katie and Becky on this project. The OTL renovation

project is progressing with a contract expected to be signed soon for design and architectural services, including FF&E. In the meantime, OTL is undergoing a minor staff restroom renovation to provide ADA compliant toilets. We also had the main staircase treads and risers replaced this month.

HARMONY LIBRARY

By Ken Draves

Library District/FRCC-Larimer Campus updates

Staff is working with FRCC Facilities staff to prepare for a 6–7-week closure to the public early/mid-May-late June, for updating mechanical and HVAC systems, re-carpeting sections of the library, upgrading doors, and painting. Staff will be able to continue working in the building and we plan to continue to have staff working in building during most mornings, to continue shelving returned materials and paging holds. Once we have a firm closure date, probably next week, we will begin communicating with the public. We may be able to continue some outdoor programming such as storytimes during the closure as well. The current project has taken a number of years to secure State funding and is a welcome upgrade, as most or all mechanical systems are original to the building which opened in 1998.

Library District and FRCC staff gathered in February to discuss ESL and career skill-building efforts and explore ways we can support and build on our current partnerships to serve our communities of service better together.