



Library Department Head Report

November 27, 2017



Our Summer and Fall have been filled with programs and activities. The Library continues to focus on the goals identified in our strategic plan, and on creating a welcoming place for our community.

Strategic Plan Implementation Update

The Library Board, Library staff and representatives from the Friends of the Library, the Library Foundation and the Library's volunteer Program Committee gathered input from the community and developed a revised strategic plan for 2017-2020..

Service Priority # 1: *Parents will feel supported in preparing their preschoolers for learning success, and primary students will develop a love of reading and learning.*

- **Saturday Story Times** continued through the Summer and Fall, thanks to the generosity of the Library Foundation. This Summer and Fall the attendance ranged from 19-78 each Saturday, split between 2 sessions. We are the only Library in the area that is open on Saturdays during the summer, so we continue to draw families from throughout Itasca County. We also continued a Monday Book Time during the summer, before resuming the regularly scheduled 2 Story Times each Monday during the school year.
- We have seen many **class visits** already this fall and a few more are scheduled before the end of the year. October is generally a very popular time for class visits. Several Southwest and Murphy 3rd and 4th grade classes have been walking or taking the bus to the Library regularly, and we have had many visits from area preschools, Head Start classes and kindergarten classes.
- Our Winter Reading program, ***Read with a Friend***, will kick off on Saturday, December 16 with a creative program.
- Our Summer Reading Program ***Reading By Design*** kicked off on May 20th with an opportunity to create a summer idea journal. 864 children signed up throughout the summer and picked up a book log to record their reading or reading-related activities
- Lego Club continued more frequently through the summer, attracting between 30 and 98 participants each session. We are continuing our monthly Lego Club on Tuesdays after school through the school year. Young designers create a small or large item based on a theme (or not) and leave them on display in the children's section during the month.
- We continue to offer additional after-school programming thanks to the Library Foundation. Each month we have an art program and a STEAM program. These programs continued through the summer, and we added additional regular summer programs, including Down by the River –outdoor Nature-based programs, and Frieda's Comets –activities based on a biography.
- Summer programming for kids also included programs funded by the Arrowhead Library System and programs funded by the Arts and Culture fund
- We brought a Story Stroll to the Open Streets celebration in June to encourage families to walk and read.
- Over the course of the summer, 1716 kids and families attended 56 programs



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Service Priority # 2: Individuals will be supported in their personal search for knowledge and development of skills and careers.

- Our **summer and fall programming** for adults has included such programs as: *Radon in Your Home*, *Hiking the Appalachian Trail*, and *WWII Aircraft, Water Wisely*
- We continued an afternoon series called *Get Your Ducks in a Row* which covered a variety of life topics such as estate planning and Medicare overviews. The programs attracted anywhere from 20 -70 people each session.

Service Priority #3: Individuals will have access to online resources that connect them to their community and the world

- Our public computers continue to be used often by people taking **online classes**, those doing homework for local classes, those taking exams for professional licensure, as well as those with daily needs such as email access and a myriad of other communication and printing needs.
- Our public **wireless** network is in constant use by people bringing their own devices for work, study or communication.
- We replaced our laptops used for training, and this fall we resumed offering a series of classes devoted to basic internet and email tools.

Service Priority #4: Individuals will enjoy varied options that enrich their leisure time, broaden their world view, and inspire their creativity.

- **Legacy-Funded Programs:** We have hosted several programs arranged by Arrowhead Regional Library System including: author *Lorna Landvik*, *Music from Down Under* (digeridoo)
- **Inspiring Creativity:** We hosted a watercolor painting workshop, and author William Durbin talking about writing historical fiction.
- **Alternate Formats are very popular:** Circulation of downloadable ebooks and audio books is high. Our patrons downloaded a total of 23,712 during the past year. There are more than 9700 audiobook titles and 12000 ebook titles available to all holders of an ALS library card. All of these are available through our web site.
- For teens, summer break provides a window of opportunity to enjoy reading for pleasure. 37 teens participated in the summer reading challenge. The **Teen Read Week** took place during October. We also repeated our photography contest for teens.
- The **teen Anime Club** continues, bringing teens together monthly to watch an anime movie and talk about anime and manga.



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Service Priority #5: Individuals and organizations will experience a comfortable, safe, quiet and welcoming place.

- Our meeting room is heavily utilized by organizations large and small – an average of 50/month.
- Our quiet study rooms are used by individuals seeking a quiet space to work or study or a space for 2 people to meet and work.
- We always have a jigsaw puzzle laid out on a table with an open invitation to sit and relax.
- We will continue to take advantage of the space around the library by using it for children's and adult programs. This summer we had a series of programs for kids outside and hosted Copper Street Brass for a riverside concert and a day of river-focused art and activities. We also had outdoor yoga programs in July and August
- Our tables and study rooms provide spaces for working on group projects, popular with high school and college students and people meeting for work or organization related purposes.

Building, and grounds repairs and upgrades

- We replaced the siding on 3 sides of the building, repainted the trim, gutters and downspouts, and caulked wherever wood abutted metal.
- We just received notification that we will be awarded a matching Library Construction and Accessibility Grant from the MN Dept of Education to make modifications that will improve accessibility in the building. We will replace the interior doors with larger doors to accommodate larger wheelchairs and mobility devices, and create a small meeting space that is easily accessible for participants in wheelchairs.

Passports

Our passport service continues, but at a slower pace than we saw last winter. We still anticipate a total of around 1000 applications for the year. People have commented on the convenient hours and location, parking, and the "family friendly" atmosphere.

Staff

- Children's librarian, Darla Kirwin retired effective June 9.
- Tracy Kampa, Children's Library Public Services Clerk, replaced Darla.
- Dion Holcomb-Card replaced Tracy as Children's Library Public Services Clerk.
- Will Richter, Reference Librarian, (and GFRD firefighter) has responded to 52 fire calls so far this year during his shifts at the Library, with a total time spent of 46 hours.
- Amy Dettmer, Assistant Director continues to provide staff support for the Arts and Culture Commission

The Library continues to be very busy, with many people attending programs, borrowing materials, using computers, asking for information, or just hanging out!