

June 2020 Report from the Executive Director

ADMINISTRATION

By David Slivken

Libraries Re-opening for Grab-and-Go Service on July 13th

It's important to note there is no blueprint for providing Library services during a pandemic. As I have heard several people in the library industry say, "we are building the plane while we are flying it," and that certainly rings true. We are a heavily used library district, with nearly 3 million items circulated each year, tens of thousands of patrons and over 150 full and part-time employees to consider and care for. As such, we are setting high standards for all stages of our reopening planning. Patron and staff safety and equitable service delivery are being prioritized at every step.

While planning for reopening, we've also been busy transforming many of our in-person programs into virtual programs, such our Summer to Imagine reading program, developing new programs that serve important community needs, such as one-on-one help for non-profit and small businesses.

Library Research Service

Library Research Service (LRS) is the unit of the Colorado State Library that provides library professionals, educators, public officials, and the media with research and statistics about libraries. LRS reports and analyzes statistics on [school](#), [public](#), and [academic](#) libraries, and conducts studies on major library issues that are reported in the [Fast Facts](#) and [Closer Look](#) series. Find library research news on the [LRS News page](#).

LRS also hosts and supports the popular [Library Jobline](#) job resource and [DART](#) reference tracker tool. <https://www.lrs.org/public/data/basic/>

Stacey Abrams on Libraries

Stacey Abrams—author, Georgia gubernatorial candidate, and founder of the organization Fair Fight (for voting rights) and Fair Count (for census participation) spoke at this year's virtual American Library Association Conference. A librarian's daughter, Abrams responded directly to a question about what the profession itself can and should do regarding equity and inclusion. "We need libraries to help us tell the truth about who we are," she said— "a nation that promises opportunity but has struggled to make that promise real." To tell that truth effectively, she called on libraries to change organizational culture. "The people at the library have to be willing to see and accept everyone who calls on us." Because of what she called libraries' "moral neutrality," librarians are "trusted voices" who can "knit us back together," but to do that, "they have to sound like America and the people need to look like America—be seen as a microcosm of America and to be in community with the people who need them most."

To do that, she said, "we need to be intentional. Diversity doesn't just happen." You have to remove barriers to entry, she said, suggesting libraries first must assess what those barriers are—education, awareness, pay—and then call them out and make a strategy to overcome them. Which, she suggested, starts with presenting the impact and complexity of what it means to be a librarian as a career to kids starting in elementary school, and continue through providing college scholarships and supporting those already in the field.

She said librarians should not close themselves off to divisive opinions but should amplify the messages that are unifying. "Use the platform not to have a partisan position but to have a people position," she said. "If you want to participate in your society, this is where it starts."

COLLECTIONS

By Tova Aragon

A few collections have been changed to prepare for the reopening of the libraries. The changes are to help facilitate quicker browsing and a ‘grab and go’ collection.

- During our closure, items in the *Here and Now* and *Lucky Day* collections were changed to circulate to fulfill holds. Starting July 1st, new items will be added to those collections and they will not allow holds.
- The current issue of magazines and ‘library use only’ magazines have been changed to circulate.
- Newspapers, newsletters and public review items have been removed from the buildings.
- Online resources have been added to replace ‘library use only’ items such as, Valueline and ConsumerReports.org

Collections and Circulation staff have resumed the weeding process. David is working with the Friends of the Library to safely sort and receive weeded materials at Webster House. The shelves will look overfull while we ramp up weeding and evaluate use as the buildings reopen.

The state Prospector courier has resumed operation. This has allowed staff to process returns – both incoming and outgoing materials. Borrowing through Prospector or Interlibrary Loan will not start until July 13th. Borrowing will be limited because the majority of libraries have not reopened.

COMMUNICATIONS

By Katie Auman

In June, the Communications team won three PR Xchange Awards from the American Library Association for their 2019 projects: (1) Library District Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022, Reimagine the Future, (2) 2019 Summer Reading Challenge: Universe of Stories video promotion, and (3) Dia de los Muertos blog for special events/exhibitions.

Activities:

- Working with ELT, LLT, and planning teams on a phased reopening of library services and facilities including a Communications plan for reopening, Library signage plan, and staff communications
- Keeping customers updated about library reopening plans via email, website, and social media
- Working with local media to share news about the Library District
- Promoting “virtual” 2020 Summer Reading Challenge – “Summer to Imagine”; Continuing SRC advertising efforts online, in print, and on the screen
- Managing new staff-only SharePoint site, created by SA, to support staff at-home access to library news, key health and safety documents and videos
- Continuing with social media promotions and platforms including “The River’s Mouth” blog
- Planning and promoting community events
 - Fort Collins Comic Con virtual event (August 29-30)
 - Fort Collins Book Fest virtual event – created new responsive website (www.FoCoBookFest.org)

COMMUNITY SERVICES

By Johanna Girón Ulloa

Collaborative-Innovate and Inclusive

June was filled with community lead programming. We hosted a Latinx panel related to School Resources Officers. Students from different public schools presented their experiences, views, and specific legislation asks in an open panel in Spanish.

In partnership with Fuerza Latina, we hosted a digital informational panel with dreamers after the resolution from the Supreme Court was known regarding DACA. A panel of different dreamers and Kim Medina, immigration lawyer, shared information and provided the opportunity for community members to weigh in.

In partnership with the City of Fort Collins and the Health Department we hosted a virtual information forum with Dr. Urbina. Dr. Urbina has been in charge on the response to COVID-19 in Larimer County and provided in Spanish information in relation to COVID-19.

In partnership with the BIPOC alliance, we hosted a panel for Juneteenth. The panel exposed the experiences of black and African-American community members. We had over 75 attendees and received positive feedback from numerous people.

¡Café de Olla is expanding! Thanks to the interest of our community on a Spanish book club, Community Services will facilitate two groups starting this August with the help of Africa Garcia.

In close collaboration with Leah Weatherman, I've been producing tutorials to make the virtual Summer Reading Challenge registration process more accessible to our Spanish speaking community. Also, we've created an informative video to promote The Lunch Lab, a new service by The Food Bank that brings hot meals to kids in our community.

Virtual Storytime in Spanish on the library's YouTube channel has been well received.



¿Qué es The Lunch Lab?
Comida para niños durante el verano - Lunch Lab / Banco...
38 views • 1 week ago

Virtual Storytime: "El gato que no bajaba del sillón y el..."
260 views • 1 month ago

Summer Storytime: La Increíblemente alucinante...
82 views • 3 days ago

Tutorial Programa de Lectura de Verano 2020 - Español
45 views • 6 days ago

Leah Weatherman's Highlight this month was making the Virtual Summer Reading Challenge registration process more accessible to the community. A phone line has been set up by Library's IT department to assist with registration and answer questions for Spanish-speaking patrons.

Reconnecting with families that the library serves has been a delight. She has also been working with Ludy Rueda on a series of tutorials for the libraries YouTube channel in order to help patrons adapt to the virtual format, which is new for many in the district.

Jose Luis Ramos became a certified consultant with the Larimer Small Business Association. His services in high demand.

Africa Garcia and José Luis Ramos created informational videos in Spanish, following the feedback from businesses, community, and organizations. Videos about how to create an LLC step by step, ITIN numbers, unemployment application, business loans CARES application, and how to avoid being victims of fraud.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

By Currie Meyer



Bag O Books Pilot Started June 3: A customer suggestion to provide young readers and their caregivers a staff-selected “bag of picture books” inspired the project. Librarian Amy Holzworth, Circulation Supervisor Angela James and I proposed “Bag O Books” to LLT about a week after we received the customer suggestion. Caregivers fill out an online form to request up to two bags of picture books, board books or beginning reader books. CTL staff fill the requests within two days and deliver curbside. During June, we filled 482 requests for 862 Bags. One parent said, “We are loving the bag ‘o books! We can’t get enough!” The pilot will end July 3 as the Library plans for limited re-opening.

Curbside service ramps up in June: CTL staff provided over 6,000 curbside deliveries in June, for an average of 200 per day. Limited phone and staff capacity challenged circulation staff to keep pace with demands, so Library Assistant staff provided help. Overall, customer reception of the service has been positive, while we found some customers to be confused or frustrated. Angela reached out to several frustrated customers to listen and offer suggestions.



Building use planning: Angela and I created plans for safe and efficient use of the Library’s public and staff areas in late June. We asked Facilities to move all free-standing furniture to temporary storage (our meeting room), and to re-arrange display boulders to accommodate socially-distanced browsing. We also planned for the placement of directional floor labels to encourage distancing. Systems Administration staff moved public PCs, PACs and express-check-out equipment to storage and alternative spaces. We re-located some staff work areas to study rooms to accommodate curbside printing services and general distancing.

Paint and repairs: This month, Library Facilities staff Rob and Matt painted walls in the storytime room, quiet study room, small study room and touched-up many other public areas. Rob covered chipped paint on the entryway stair risers with durable trim.

Children’s Librarian Amy Holzworth reported the following programs and development in June:

- June 2 - Amy attended the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County where discussion was focused on Self-Care in the Time of COVID-19, and Legislative and State budget updates.

- June 8 - planned fun and interactive submission for The Gnome Zone Weeklong Challenge along with Library Assistant, Linda Justice. Our them was “Alphabet Antics” and can be found in the River’s Blog.
- June and 10 - Presented the chapter book title *Merci Suárez Changes Gears* by Meg Medina for this week’s Lunch Bunch Live and appreciated the tech support of Library Assistant, Jillian Harrison.
- June 25 - Learned during an amazing webinar sponsored The Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) and through the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development.
<https://www.iecmhc.org/>.

Teen Services Librarian Jenny Thurman reported her work on the weekly series Tween Zone:



Tween Zone is a weekly, interactive, digital video program delivered via Zoom by Teen Services staff. In June, Jenny coordinated Tween Zones featuring origami demonstrations, creative sidewalk chalk ideas, and pancake making. All TZ activities provide participants Summer Reading Challenge STREAM badges and use materials most families already have at home.

OLD TOWN LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

By Eileen McCluskey

The Old Town Library team developed and implemented plans to re-tool Old Town Library for the hybrid service model, with support from the Facilities and Systems Admin crew to remove technology and furniture. New schedules were created that incorporate Greeter and Cleaner service points. Old Town Library employees provided coverage for OTL’s curbside service, in addition to coverage for the Answer Center and CTL’s ACS position. We are evaluating our staffing and scheduling for the coming months to provide flexible, adaptive coverage where it’s needed, throughout the Library District.

From Kristen:

- Supervised the remote printing service and worked with Ken and Currie to expand the service district-wide with the help of OTL’s lab monitors who will now work hours at CTL and HL.
- Worked with Kindra and Sara to present the district-wide file sharing training so that staff develop their skills in working in the cloud with OneDrive, Sharepoint and Teams.
- Worked with team to develop and propose a hybrid service model for Level 4, which continues curbside service while opening the branches for limited browsing.

From Karla:

- [Virtual Toddler Tracks with the Book Bike](#) aired June 17, Partnership with FC Natural Areas:
- The Youth Services team continues to work on virtual programming, including Spanish and bilingual, yoga, and Phone a stories.

- Establishing a virtual programming Partnership with Boys and Girls club at Lincoln Middle School location. We have invited them to participate in our school age programs: Gnome Zone challenge and Lunch Bunch LIVE. They are also participating in our SRC program
- Working to develop a viable, safe plan for SRC book prize pickup

From Nicole:

- Created the STREAM Tween Zone Challenge on Sundials
- Fantastical Flash Fiction contest for Tweens and Teens is underway and submissions are being evaluated by judges from CSU's English department

From Ian:

- Digitization project – OTL's employees have scanned 58 microfilm reels and edited twelve. Some LA's will be trained on a new editing process which will significantly reduce the time processing takes. The first reel has been added into the History Connection website with more on the way. Check out the July Newsletter for an article about the project.
- The ABC's of LGBT is scheduled for July 15th with Marv Allen of One Colorado. It will cover an overview of topics related to the LGBTQ+ community as well as training on pronoun use, gender identity, and sexual/romantic orientation.

From Eileen:

- With Ian, met with Susan Davids from the United Way to share ideas around information governance.
- Attended Designing for Libraries webinar, post COVID-19. Contacted VFLA designer regarding OTL's lobby project in light of our new reality
- Worked with City Forestry department to select new tree for Library Plaza
- Worked through Level 4 reopening plans, new service schedules, reupholstery selection for damaged chairs with Nicole, provided oversight for branch safety, worked with Katie on signage, worked with G4S on security officer schedule, requested guidance on cash payments for Level 4.