

June 2021 Report from the Executive Director

ADMINISTRATION

By David Slivken

As the library district is returning to pre-pandemic services, it is a good time for the board and the incoming Executive Director to review and massage the 2019 Master Plan. In January 2021 the Every Library Institute released a new research study “Factors of Success for Libraries on the Ballot.” This study aims to demonstrate what library-level activities and/or community-level characteristics can be correlated to a library ballot question's success or failure. Below are some of the highlights of the report. You may access the entire report at: www.everylibraryinstitute.org/new_report_factors_of_success

Visits Appear to Matter

This is a cause for concern as visits have been down before the current COVID-19 crisis. Post pandemic, no one can predict when visits will improve. Our Communications Team is currently working on an initiative to bring users back into our facilities. More community engagement and communications efforts may result in more visits to the library while also improving the awareness of the library and understanding of the library's staff among the community. For whatever the reason, personal visits may work to validate a voter's understanding of the library's current situation and, therefore, the question's legitimacy on the ballot. If research about voter behavior is correct, staff-driven relationships should translate to more success at the polls.

Demographics Do Not Matter

Every Library's findings corroborate the findings from OCLC in their “From Awareness to Funding” reports. In 2008 and again in 2018 (in conjunction with ALA), OCLC found that voter demographics did not drive voter support. This is a significant shift from some earlier studies.

Community Wealth and Library Income are Negative Factors

The 2008 OCLC “From Awareness to Funding” report found income to be a non-factor for library funding support. The 2018 OCLC report reiterated the finding that income was a non-factor even among the "super supporter" group. A group that is likely to be made up of homeowners and have more education, both hallmarks of higher-income households. This evolution of higher-income groups, from increased support in the '90s to non-factor in the '00s and seemingly decreasing support in the '10s, is concerning.

Kids May Not Win at the Ballot Box

It's a feel-good opportunity for communities—and elected officials—to support their libraries at the polls, linking investments in kids, education, and reading. But that may not be true. Every Library data found that when children's programming increased, the odds of a campaign passing decreased. Other variables related to kids, such as percent of households with children, circulation of children's materials, and total audiences at children's programming, did not have an impact one way or another on the odds of a campaign passing or failing. Given the lack of

impact of other kid-related variables, it's hard to draw any conclusions about whether focusing on kids' offerings is good for a campaign.

Existing Tax Rates Do Not Pre-determine Success or Failure

The overall tax rate in a community does not appear to have any measurable influence on the odds of success or failure of a library ballot measure. This finding is important because it dispels the conventional wisdom that voters will not differentiate the library from other taxing bodies like schools, public safety, infrastructure, and recreation, while also dispelling the notion that voters believe they are over-taxed. If the current local tax rate does not appear to influence voter behavior in any way, then it is important for library leaders to question the conventional wisdom that communities with higher taxes are disinclined to vote for more taxes. Likewise, it is important to dispel uninformed opinions about voter attitudes toward the library related to other taxes. Instead of these common assumptions, it is vitally important that library leaders ask specific questions of their own community and voters about their interest in the library and their tolerance for new taxes.

COMMUNICATIONS

By Katie Auman

June Highlights:

- Awarded the TourWest grant (\$2,125) to help fund the 2021 Fort Collins Book Fest (October 22-24). The grant is made possible by the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) and the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF). 
- Earned media coverage: *The Silver Lining*: article highlighting library resources for Pride/LGBTQ+ Month.
- Posted the job opening for a Digital Communications Assistant who will focus on creating content and developing marketing campaigns across a variety of media and digital platforms.
- Helped launch the new staff intranet, Staff Cache, and will continue to manage the SharePoint site along with the SA team.
- Began transitioning to in-person work with a new hybrid schedule allow for both in-person and remote work.

Ongoing Activities:

- Building a library programming plan, including staff input, best practices, evaluation options, and more.
- Summer reading marketing materials and promotions.
- Planning for 2021 Fort Collins Book Fest, happening October 22-24. Visit FoCoBookFest.org for news and updates.
- Assisting Community Outreach with planning the 2021 Día de Muertos community celebration. Visit NoCoDiaDeMuertos.org for news and updates.
- 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 OUTREACH SERVICES

By Ken Draves

Programs:

In-person (outdoor) Storytimes:

- In-person Storytime at Poudre Valley Mobile Homes, Hickory Village, Village on Horsetooth, Alpha Best Camp, Camp Sol @ Beattie and Linton Elementary Schools, Landings Park, Boys and Girls Club of Larimer County, and numerous other locations.

In-person programs:

- 6/4: ArtReach (with PSD & TWP at Old Town mural alley)
- 6/5: SRC Kick-off Caravan
- 6/13: Rent Assistance Clinic (with Fuerza Latina)

Virtual programs:

- 6/1: Taller de Alebrijes Mexicanos
- 6/3: SRC virtual crafts
- 6/5: Panes del Mundo Croissants
- 6/9: IMAGINANTES X: Get prepped to get hired!
- 6/10: SRC virtual crafts
- 6/15: Evasaurio con Memo Plastilina
- 6/17: SRC virtual crafts
- 6/24: SRC virtual crafts
- 6/29: Taller de Arte Huichol

Other Community Engagement activities:

Meetings (Africa Garcia):

- LCN Steering Committee
- Community Meeting
- Larimer County Digital Inclusion Design Team
- Día de Muertos (Fort Collins Museum of Discovery)
- Planning with Animal Friends Alliance for 7/13 program
- Homebound & ILL
- LC Emergency Rent Assistance
- The Family Center
- Día de Muertos Planning
- Adult Programs Planning
- Library meeting with June Garcia

Other Activities (Reported by Ludy Rueda):

- Mexican Alebrijes virtual workshop
- Clay virtual workshop and Storytime

- Native indigenous art workshop
- In-person ArtReach program in partnership with PSD and Trees, Water & People
- Panes del Mundo: Croissants virtual class
- SRC kick-off caravan
- Virtual Storytime and Phone-A-Story in Spanish and French

IMAGINANTES X: Get prepped to get hired!

In partnership with Larimer County Economic & Workforce Development’s CareerRise Team, we offered this virtual workshop for teens 14-18 in order to provide tools needed to be successful in job search process, from where to find opportunities, to how to highlight early experiences in a way employers will notice.

Story Stroll / Paseo Literario:

A new Story Stroll was placed at The Family Center

Informal Lending Library:

Weeded Children and Teen Books were distributed at Hickory Village and Poudre Valley Mobile Homes.

Others:

Ludy was able to coordinate a donation of 20 laptops from HP. These laptops have been given to Housing Catalyst Villages and to Latinx families from Hickory Village, Poudre Valley Mobile Homes and Harmony Village. The goal of this effort is to help bridging the digital divide in vulnerable communities. Outreach and other staff are working with Larimer County and neighboring public libraries to improve and expand digital inclusion and access throughout the county.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

By Currie Meyer

Summer Reading Program “Tails and Tales” started June 1: 1,158 people visited Council Tree on this day, setting a visitation record for 2021!



Storytime on a Blanket at Harmony Park Mondays at 10:00am. Staff presented interactive storytimes about Bees, Trees, Bugs, and all things Tales and Tails. Staff have adjusted well to outdoor storytimes by using on-site signage, a portable speaker system and weighted visuals.

Front Range Village Summer Sidewalk Celebration June 5. Children’s Services Librarian Amy Holzworth, Teen Services Librarian Jenny Thurman, Library Assistant Erin Walters, and volunteer Shannon provided several interactive activities for families including bubbles and bean-bag-toss while promoting the summer reading challenge at Front Range Village’s new outdoor promotional event.



Circulation Supervisor Xochil Arellano reported June was a busy month of transitioning to her new position with “Managing within the Law” **training**; training her staff on the new scheduling format, “When to Work” and continued job training with colleagues, Sabrina and Currie.

The continued closure of Harmony Library resulted in a high rate of visitation (762 people per day at CTL on average in June), new-to-CTL customers needing directions to the hold shelf, hold shelf capacity almost doubled (using seven book carts), 23 incoming crates of hold items per day on average in June and 20 hours per week on average of Harmony Library staff working at CTL to help during the closure.



Xochil **hired two new Customer Experience Representatives** (hourly shelvers / material handlers) in June to replace hours lost to staff turnover.

Bike to Work Day, June 23. Library Assistant Jillian Harrison, members of the Green Team, retail partners Happy Luck Tea, Charles Schwab, La Vida Massage, FC Bike Co-Op and I greeted 141 eager bikers of all ages. The Library crew set up the Book Bike, give-away books, snacks and Library swag at 6:00 am; the event ended at 9:30 am.

Pride Month displays in June: CTL staff created two book displays in recognition of Pride Month. The displays, in the teen and adult areas, featured books and materials about the LGBTQ experience.



HARMONY LIBRARY

By Ken Draves

Harmony Library building upgrades including upgraded HVAC, carpet, and painting are on schedule and nearly completed. We reopen to the public on July 6. In the following couple of weeks, the new HVAC system will be calibrated by the contractor.

Business Services (Matt West, Business Services Librarian)

- Seattle Public Library Meeting (scope of services)
- Training for C&S Supply
- Women Owned Business certification help for client
- SRC Caravan
- Proquest Trial w/ Molly Thompson for Statistical Abstract of the United States
- Pro quest statistical abstract trial with Molly Thompson
- Weeding 600s per Kim Doran at Harmony during closure
- Foreign Glass Manufacturers and Research for Distillery
- Research and consultation for SCORE clients
- General business reference questions forwarded by library staff
- QR codes for Money Matters

OLD TOWN LIBRARY

By Eileen McCluskey

- The Monday Outdoor Series is back! Programs included Fale Fort Collins, African Drum and Dance, Percussion in the Park/Drum Circle, and Beth Epley.
- Three new OTL storytellers have started presenting storytimes this month with consistent attendance between 20-65.
- The storytime room at OTL has been activated with Retro Tech/Collaborative Coloring exploration centers. We have provided a record player, boom box, CD/cassette players for a hands-on, old-fashioned listening experience. Also, everyone can add color to the HUGE coloring pages!
- OTL storytellers, Meg, Angela, and Deidre have been out and about with the Book Bike visiting day camps, natural areas and schools. Our partnership with City of FC Natural Areas allows us to provide three sessions of Toddler Tracks with the Book Bike over the summer. We also have partnered with Camp Funquest to bring storytime and literacy building activities to day camp kids at Northside Aztlan Center.
- Meg hosted Know Your City with Fort Collins Natural Areas at Sugar Beet Park and has been organizing the Bookfest while continuing to secure authors.
- The library's internal Sharepoint project, called Staff Cache, was launched.
- OTL Supers (Eileen, Kristen, Holly, Ian, and Karla) participated in the Bike Parade to kick off SRC.

- OTL's wireless stats are trending upward. From May to June, OTL saw a 282% increase in the number of page hits to the login screen from inside the branch. That said, in comparing May-June in 2019 to May-June 2021, page hits to the login screen are down significantly, by 73%.
- Selected Workspace Innovations for furniture package for OTL refresh. OTL Supers met to select finishes and finalize the furniture package. We are waiting for the final pricing. Based on rough shipping estimates, we are backward planning construction from a mid-November furniture delivery.
- Engaged with the City of Collins purchasing department to find a General Contractor using their Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) for Facilities On-Call contract. Eileen is working with two potential contractors to obtain a quote.
- Eileen and Karla brought the Book Bike to a Library Park city engagement event. Neighborhood Services, FCPS, Transit, and Outreach Fort Collins were available to meet with neighbors and answer questions regarding Library Park neighborhood issues.
- Holly and Tova continue with improvement plans for the OTL collection, including stack reductions to improve flow and feel of OTL spaces.
- Welcomed and trained Anne Million, OTL's Mentoring Coordinator, to her classified position.
- VITA is back onsite offering weekly, appointment-only tax support. Their sessions have been filled.

Coming up...

- Deidre will begin her Staying Active for Older Adults series in Library Park.
- We will be hosting The Fantastic Zine Machine with local artist Nick Holland on July 17th in Library Park.
- Blues Behind Bars in Library Park on July 31. This is Library Park's first time out, post-COVID, with a large scale, outdoor event by a local non-profit.
- Know Your City- Art in Public Places Walking Tour
- Story Creations with Border Collies, Joey and Kira