

## November/December 2021 Report from the Executive Director

### ADMINISTRATION

*By Ken Draves*

During the interim period following David Slivken's retirement and prior to Diane Lapierre's arrival, District staff have been hard at work providing services and planning for 2022. Programming staff are already planning next Summer's reading program, branch and Answer Center staff have been busy providing continuity of service to the public, and our Community Outreach department is planning for a soon-to-start new department manager. We've had continuing improvements to our physical facilities with an improvement project at Old Town library and a new roof and painting at Harmony. We are mapping out project timelines for numerous capital improvements funded in the 2022 budget, and planning to go to bid for a new Outreach book van. With recent retirements and other vacancies, we are also busy interviewing and hiring new staff.

COVID-19 continues to present challenges to resumption of all of our normal services. Managers and other staff are working to provide the very best service possible under challenging circumstances, with the safety of public and staff a top priority.

I want to provide a brief update on the town of Timnath regarding a recent resident survey the town conducted. In recent months, the town surveyed Timnath residents about a number of topics, including a question about a possible library branch in Timnath. A majority of residents expressed an interest in response, and the town indicated in a report to the community that it would hold conversations with the Library District about a possible Timnath library presence.

At this point, the District has not been contacted by Timnath staff, and no conversations have commenced or been requested. We anticipate we may hear from Timnath staff in 2022, and will keep the Board apprised of any requests for discussions regarding a potential Library District presence in Timnath. Our Master Plan does not include a facility in Timnath, but rather a larger facility in the southeast region of the District in addition to a community hub facility and eventually a northeast branch library.

On a related note, it may be useful to provide the Board with a presentation at an upcoming meeting on tax increment financing (TIF) and urban renewal authorities (URAs), and explain what they are, when, why and how local URAs were formed, their terms/expiration, their financial impact on the District, and similar matters.

### COMMUNICATIONS

*By Katie Auman*

#### November Highlights

##### **"Next Chapter" Campaign Update**

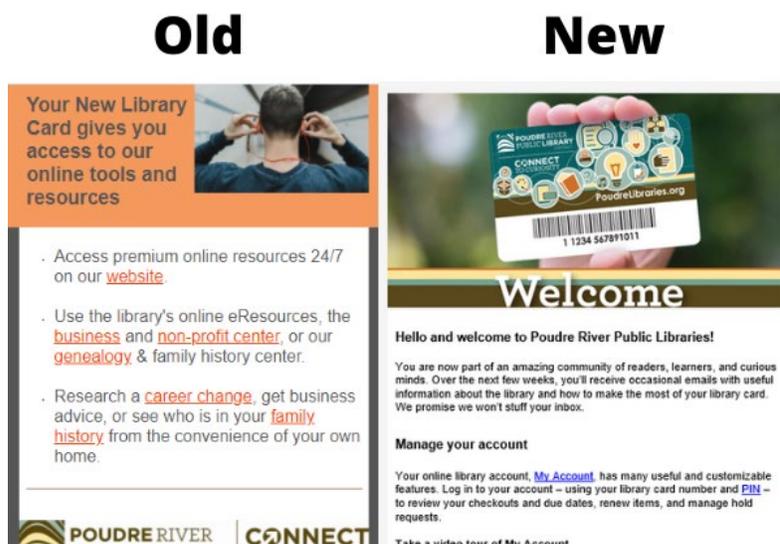
The "Next Chapter" direct mail campaign effectively wrapped up this month. So far, nearly 5,900 cardholders re-engaged with the library after receiving the direct mail piece. This is a 76% conversion rate. OrangeBoy will share a final report on the campaign in early December.

The email phase of “Next Chapter” campaign began this month with the first of two emails, based on the printed direct mail pieces, going out to 36,000+ cardholders. This targeted email was sent to “occasional” or “inactive” users who have not used their library card in the past 3 months – 3 years. The second email will go out to a similar segment in early December.

The campaign will continue into 2022 with social media outreach to the general community.

### November Highlights:

- Refreshed the New Cardholder email series, a set of six emails that welcome new users to the library and highlight the many resources, programs, and services available to them. The goal of the revised email series is to create a positive customer experience and build their library routine.



- Created an email series for the Library Trust to support their 2021 Colorado Gives campaign – this includes two donor appeal emails and a thank you response for donors. We will track how well this performs to improve for next year and possible expand.
- Earned media coverage in November included:
  - “A Reading List to Celebrate Native American Heritage Month” – *The Silver Lining Magazine*
  - “Loveland Library Director to Take Job as Head of Poudre River Library District” – *Reporter Herald* (<https://www.reporterherald.com/2021/11/15/loveland-library-director-to-take-job-as-head-of-poudre-river-library-district/>)
  - “Poudre Libraries Executive Director Announced” – *North Forty News* (<https://northfortynews.com/category/news/new-poudre-libraries-executive-director-announced/>)

### Team Member Reports

*Laura Carter, graphic designer:*

- Supported OTL with construction signage and website graphics
- Supported EDI survey with web graphics and signage

- Collaborated with the communications team on a special December library resource newsletter insert and related social media campaign
- Participated in 3 days of Adobe software training around new product enhancements to work faster and more efficiently, photography retouching and manipulation, adobe file sharing capabilities, and internal marketing team best practices.

*Annie Crumpton, digital communications assistant:*

- Implemented a digital mini-campaign to highlight library services
- Executed two smaller digital mini-campaigns centered around the Answer Center's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and staff gratitude which both performed very well
- Applied more data analytics in our digital media strategy which prompted a shift in both post timing and content to better align with our online audience
- Reviewing new digital media planning platform fit for the Library's needs and requirements; our previous platform had issues posting links which is a vital piece of driving people directly to our resources, services, and collection

*Angela Kettle, programming and events coordinator:*

- Supported the Community Outreach team in planning and facilitating the Día de Muertos Community Celebration.
- Participated in the National Summer Learning Association conference in Washington, D.C., and learned how libraries and other out-of-school-time providers all over the country create and sustain impactful summer learning programs
- Launched planning efforts for the 2022 Summer Reading Challenge. The theme will be “Oceans of Possibilities.”
- Finalized agreements for community-led programs in 2022, including Multicultural Business Center drop-in hours with the City of Fort Collins, Antarctic Lecture Series with CSU School of Global Environmental Sustainability, International Night with Fort Collins International Center, One-on-One Genealogy Assistance with Larimer County Genealogical Society, and genealogy classes with Larimer County Genealogical Society.

### **December Highlights**

- Held a day-long communications team retreat to get started planning activities and projects for 2022: identified strategic tasks for the new year, brainstormed ways to streamline our processes, and discussed opportunities to reach new customers/audiences through marketing and communications.
- Supported new executive director transition process.
- Earned media coverage in December included:
  - “Family Fun and Making Merry this Season with the Library” – *The Silver Lining Magazine*

### **Team Member Reports**

*Laura Carter, graphic designer:*

- Created promotional packages for several new series beginning in January (Kevin Cook, Cafe de Olla, Rekindle the Classics)
- Began building out the Summer Reading art suite; conducted additional research on aquatic environments in order to begin building poster art and supporting illustration pieces, and participated in committees around prizes and bingo game
- Continued work around building signage, both for stacks signs and one-off needs

*Annie Crumpton, digital communications assistant:*

- Ran diagnostics and testing for Poudre Libraries blog - adding image optimization to the blog as a result of diagnostics and looking at ways to reformat the blog for better readability, access, and enjoyment
- Produced and scheduled the Making Merry campaign in tandem with the communications team
- Produced the Library Fun Fact mini-campaign

*Angela Kettle, programming and events coordinator:*

- Continued planning process and support for 2022 SRC
- Worked with various organizations on the MLK Day Community Celebration to be held January. 17, 2022.
  - The theme is “The March is Far from Over.” Various library staff will participate in the day’s activities and march; other library activities include book displays, Phone-a-Story themes storytimes, and social media. More info is available online at <https://lsc.colostate.edu/involvement/campus-activities/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-march-celebration/>

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES**

*By Ken Draves*

*Community Outreach Librarian (Adults)--- Africa Garcia’s report:*

### **Programs & Events:**

- Advance Directives 11/2
- Northside Aztlan Altars 10/21 - 11/3
- Citizenship Info Night 11/8
- Know Your Rights Clinic 11/14
- Book Club for Mortals 11/17
- Café de Olla Book Club 11/18
- Citizenship Workshop 11/20

### **Committees, Teams, and Meetings:**

- EDI Meeting w/ Think Again
- SRC
- Adult Programming
- FRCC Diversity Committee
- Dementia Together Advisory Board
- Housing Catalyst (met to discuss potential programming for 2022)
- Digital Roots of Larimer County

### **Professional Development:**

- Sierra workshop

### **Working on:**

- Homebound: in November I updated all HB documents, policies, and procedures and created new forms for all participants. I also met with all HB volunteers for training and created a delivery/shopping schedule. I communicated with all 3 branches’ circ supervisors to make sure HB

procedures were clear and library staff were ready to welcome volunteers back. December will be the first month where we'll be using HB volunteers again.

**Other:**

- CIO maintenance
- RingCentral
- Immediate Needs Grant: researched, wrote, and submitted for Chromebook/Hotspot kits
- Basement & shelving clean-up and organizing
- Materials for Dreamcatcher program

*Community Outreach Librarian (Children and Teens)-- Ludy Rueda's report.*

**Spearheaded the Día de Muertos community celebration**



With the support of the Communications team, multiple staff members across the District, Gardens on Spring Creek and Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, we provided an event that highlighted the rich culture of the Latinx community. The Día de Muertos celebration took place on November 6 at the Gardens on Spring Creek which partnered with our District offering the entire venue free of charge. This was one of a kind event at this venue, and for many of the nearly the nearly 500 attendees was their very first time visiting the Gardens. The place was decorated with costume-made papel picado that featured the library logo and the words in English and Spanish “We Are Fort Collins”. The library, community members and organizations crafted and exhibited beautiful altars honoring students victims of suicide, immigrants and our very dear former co-worker Sylvia García.

The celebration was enhanced by showcasing authentic Mexican music, mariachi, folk dancers, Catrinas and Catrines runway, facepainting, poetry, food, crafts and storytime. We are grateful for our partners, sponsors and 50+ volunteers that made the event run smoothly. Pictures courtesy of William La Mont Photography <https://clients.wmlamont.photography/ddm-fortcollins-211106/>



### **Dream Catchers virtual makerspace**

Kids learned how to make a dreamcatcher, its origin, symbolism and its journey to Mexico where they are representative of various Indigenous groups. Materials were distributed ahead of time.

### **Regular Programs:**

- Phone-A-Story in Spanish and French
- Storytimes and crafts at:
  - Stove Prairie Elementary
  - Livermore Elementary
  - Irish Elementary
  - Harris Bilingual Elementary
  - North Aztlan Center
  - Boys and Girls Club of Larimer County
- Winter Take and Make:
  - Cache La Poudre Elementary
  - Stove Prairie Elementary
  - Livermore Elementary
  - Irish Elementary
  - Harris Bilingual Elementary
  - North Aztlan Center
- Teen Council Meetings

### **Translations:**

- Social Media
- Tales Kits
- Self-guided Storytime

National/International recognition for our Imaginantes program:

- IMAGINANTES article was featured in the IFLA Newsletter December 2021: <https://www.ifla.org/news/newsletter-december-2021-libraries-for-children-and-young-adults/>

## Empowering Youth Through Art and Heritage

The Poudre River Public Library District's bilingual art workshop IMAGINANTES offers an opportunity for Latinx youth to connect to their heritage, their community, and their future.



- Selected as a participant for the American Library Association's "Ask, Listen, Empower" Virtual Book Club!

## COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

*By Currie Meyer*

### November

**Community meeting room re-opened for drop in study.** CTL's community meeting room has been closed to public use since spring, 2020. The room provided storage space for furniture removed from the floor to encourage expedited use during our "Grab-and-Go" service period of 2020 and 2021, and to provide additional space for social distancing. Some of the furniture has been permanently removed or moved to storage. Most pieces have been returned to the Library floor. The meeting room contains eight mobile tables and 16 chairs. It is heavily used by customers for quiet work.

**Teen Services Librarian Jenny Thurman attended the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) Conference** with colleague Miranda West in Reno, NV November 5-7. Notable programs included:

- Be a Beacon of Light: Serving Teens in Poverty with Empathy (preconference)
- Pleasure Reading for English Language Learners
- Morris Panel (panel of debut authors moderated by a previous Morris Finalist)
- Close the Book on the Diversity Gap (collection development)

Jenny picked up several signed books to give away at the Teen Writers program. They won the silent auction bid for a virtual visit with YA author Marieke Nijkamp, and a set of her books!



**Children's Services Librarian Amy Holzworth attended several online trainings** this month including the National Association of the Education of the Young Child (NAEYC) conference; PLA Family Engagement, Cohort 3, "Reinforcing Family Actions to Support Learning: The Early Years & School-Age Children" by Denver Public Library; University of Colorado Children's Book Fest -

including Yuyi Morales, Julie Parker Rhodes, Varian Johnson, and Karla Arena Valenti – Amy has since read many of the titles and will share them with co-workers and customers.



**Picture book bin clean-out and shift, November 7**, before opening time, Amy, Circulation Supervisor Xochil Arellano and Customer Experience Representative Paula Barker freshened up all 48 of our picture book bins by vacuuming / cleaning the interior surfaces and reorganizing the collection for improved navigation and browsing.

**Circulation Supervisor Xochil Arellano completed the Managing at the City course** and annual hourly staff performance reviews in November. She and her staff are busy training three new CERs for front desk customer service roles. Circulation staff also completed collection inventory of the picture books, beginning reader books, picture books in Spanish, and beginning reader books in Spanish.

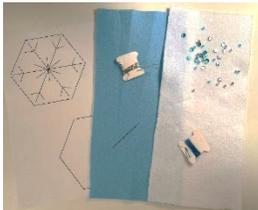
## December

### **Council Tree Library Director's Report December, 2021**

**Harry Potter Yule Ball** for teens, December 18: Over 20 middle-and high-schoolers enjoyed the after-hours event at CTL, planned and implemented by the Teen Council with Teen Services Librarians' Jenny Thurman and Miranda West's guidance. Teens made wands, house-themed buttons, and butter 'beer' to taste. They danced, tested wits in the escape room, searched for beetles, posed at the photo 'booth' and ate yule log cake.



**Fossil Ridge High School art club painted our Teen area windows** again this year, featuring winter scenes, December 10.



**Take and Make activity kits for teens**, featuring a sparkling felt snowflake craft and a light-up star craft were scooped up during the month. Library Assistants Drew Gaede and Ashley Byars along with library volunteers helped to plan and assemble hundreds of these engaging kits.



### **Storytime and a Walk at CSU's Environmental Learning Center, Sunday,**



December 5. The weather was perfect to explore the effect of wind on pinwheels and bubbles and listen to a triangle instrument!

**Take and Make Activity kits for children** – At each library and through Community Outreach, more than 400 Take and Make kits, created by partner Larimer County Alternative Sentencing, were made available to young visitors during the month. All of the winter-themed kits were claimed within weeks! In response to the demand, CTL Children's Services Librarian Amy Holzworth coordinated an additional kit: an upcycled magnetic snowperson craft.



**Jingle Mingle** event at Front Range Village December 18, by invitation from our partners in the Front Range Village Business office, Amy presented an outdoor storytime in the common plaza. She kept things moving at this very chilly event with fingerplays, books, and big movement! 20 children and caregivers participated.



**Interactive art: Winter Weave-Along** in partnership with Elizabeth Morisette, Art Education Coordinator at FCMOD. Visitors of any age could weave, knot, or tie designs with yarn, ribbon and specialized hoops made from upcycled materials.

**Upcycled ‘blankies for babies’:** Amy made dozens of 8 x 6 inch blankies for our youngest visitors to take home. She made them from the 10(ish) square yards of fleece used to pad the temporary wall that surrounded the Play and Learn earlier this year (a Covid measure).



**Candy Cane Scavenger Hunt:** All library locations invited children to participate in this seasonal favorite during the latter part of the month. CTL rewarded children who completed the 14-item, in-library activity with scratch and sniff peppermint bookmarks or winter-themed pencils.

**Circulation Supervisor Xochil Arellano reports** that she and her team of 15 staff are working on completing collection inventories, managing collection loads with updated, collaborative redistribution plans, planning a new configuration for the AMH (“Otto”) and work room to increase efficiency, training newer staff for desk service, expanding scheduling system When to Work across District circ departments, and coordinating a Winter Wonderland Secret Gift Exchange for staff.

## HARMONY LIBRARY

*By Ken Draves*

### November/December

#### **Harmony Library Refresh**

FRCC had completed Harmony’s new roof replacement. The College has also been completing interior painting work. Our current refresh will be completed later this Winter/Spring with replacement of carpeting in areas where it was not replaced in 2021.

*Circulation---Kim Doran, Harmony Circulation Supervisor*

Circulation Supervisors have been working on year end evaluations for hourly staff as well as completing an inventory of the Children's collection in all three buildings.

There are three ACSs, one from each building, working on revising the desk training for hourly staff; the new training will include the digital literacy competency of helping patrons with copying and printing and digital flex cards.

Although we are not technically short staffed, we have had to deal with a number of staff being out on quarantine at the same time, sometimes leaving us temporarily short on staff and other times business is so slow we are sending staff home. It is a fine balance!

### *Business support services---Matt West*

Most of my time is spent with business research and help with business plans for SBDC and SCORE clients. December is the slowest month of the year for business growth as retail is focused on holiday spending and Black Friday events and new businesses typically wait to start in the new year. The SBDC and SCORE works on their federal annual reports and consultations are decreased in December. I completed desk training with new subs and Elaine does the tour and general information training with subs.

Some clients are now getting referred to me from word of mouth and the City of Fort Collins Business Office. J

Presentation for Rocky Mountain High School business students and teachers including a tour of the FRCC campus.

Meetings with City and County business partners.

CSU Masterminds: helped local businesses with research in tandem with CSU business outreach programs (Pivot, Jumpstart, Mastermind).

DECA districts were held at CSU Lory Student Center Ballroom and I participated as a community judge for events. Many high school students that have interest in business are aware of the district's business services and resources.

## **OLD TOWN LIBRARY**

*By Eileen McCluskey*

The OTL refresh made significant progress, despite supply chain issues and worker shortages. The fin wall has been installed, the new service desks arrive, the painting is completed, and electrical/data is in the process of being completed. The furniture will be delivered starting on January 10. Signage will be installed by the first week of February in order to give the walls time to cure. We've placed some plants along the fin wall and look forward to bringing in more plants throughout the library. The project is taking longer than the four-week estimate but the team from Saunders has been great to work with, demonstrating care throughout the process. The Facilities team of Mark, Rob and Matt have been super helpful chipping in where needed to ensure the project progresses towards completion. Our PM from the City, Mark McLean has been an excellent resource and advocate for the library.

OTL's book display team of Angela, Deidre, Rebekah and Rita created well-received displays on Season's Eatings, Hygge, Mysteries and Food, Christmas Novellas, Winter Fun and Celebrations, Answer Center Staff Picks, and Binge Watch sets. The Take & Makes for all ages were a huge hit, and the picture books that feature authors with last name beginning with the letter "R" is moving that collection.

OTL's Party and Entertainment Planning (PEP) team, which includes Meg, Deidre, Angela, and Alex, pulled off an Old Town Solstice Self-Care Party for staff which was fun to plan and many seemed to enjoy. Setting the tone of self-care seemed to resonate with staff. As the leader of PEP team, Meg did an amazing job of organizing it, ordering food and shopping for items to create a truly thoughtful and unique celebration. Mystery Orbs will hopefully become a tradition!

DIY storytimes continue to provide a welcoming space for caregivers and their children' to explore literacy-based activities while story times are cancelled.

OTL provided Job Assistance, Outreach Fort Collins services, One-on-One Genealogy services, in-person computer classes, the very popular virtual Old Town Book Club, a virtual legal clinic, Kevin Cook's final program of 2021, and much more while navigating staff quarantines, construction workers, painters, a lack of security officers on some days, and people refusing to wear masks.

Circulation staff have been nimble and flexible, navigating around the construction and keeping materials moving. They were able to shelve New books in their new location on the freestanding Opto shelves. They removed materials from the hold shelf and the Mystery section so that the shelving could be removed and the walls painted. The circulation team is really looking forward to working in the updated space at the new desks and seeing the lobby all come together. Staff are working hard to get all the redistribution process and shelved each week as in an ongoing attempt to balance the collection in each building.

Eileen met with a representative from the Bohemian Foundation to discuss tax preparation help for non-English speakers. She also selected the wood for the lobby benches, conducted PIC training, managed issues that came up with the construction project, and gave a presentation about library resources at the Murphy Center. She prepared for the hiring process for the Mentoring Assistant position and is scheduling interviews in early January.

Kristen worked with Think Again and the EDI team on a "charter" for the EDI team moving forward. She worked with Karla and Rita to host Spanish Computer Classes at OTL in March. Kristen also worked with stakeholders on completing the HR and Leadership sites for Staff Cache. She is also updating staff Digital Competencies to be ready for Q1.