

Decorah Public Library



Annual Report

- January 2021 -

Kristin Torresdal, Director

Board of Trustees:

Andrea Beckendorf, Ed Brooks, Bob Felde, Scott Fjelstul, Andrew Hageman, Shannon Horton
Elliott Johnson, Cheryl Pellett, & Shanna Putnam Dibble

LIBRARY UPDATES

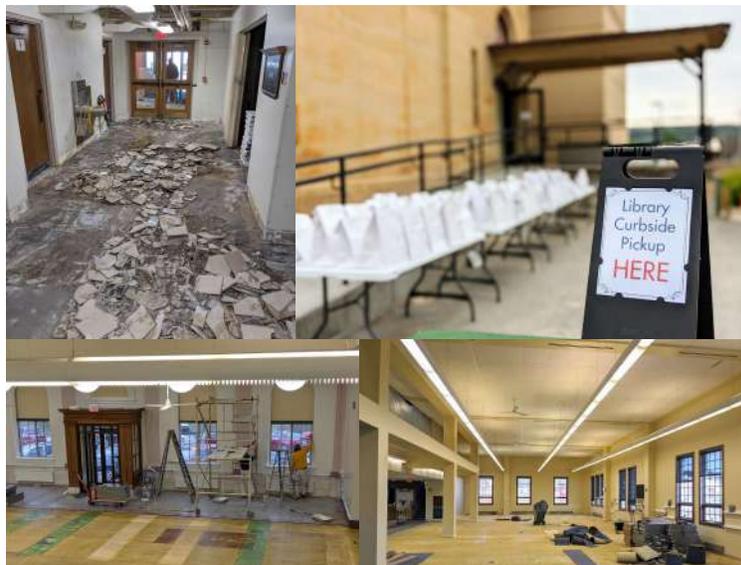
Staff changes: Succession planning and transition for Large Print coordinators; filled vacant Administrative Coordinator position.

Building: Completed interior renovations including ceiling repairs; paint and flooring throughout the building; replacing aging/damaged skylight panels; rebuilding the loading dock canopy; and repurposing several spaces into program/meeting and office space.

Programs: Educational, fun, and literacy-focused programs for all ages were presented in person for the first part of the year, and then digitally beginning in March 2020. We anticipate doing more hybrid programming in the future given the success of digital initiatives in reaching broader audiences.

Technology: We boosted high speed internet access at the start of the pandemic so that it's more accessible from the exterior of the building.

Other: Staff successfully pivoted to meet the needs of the community in entirely new ways at the start of the pandemic. Curbside book pickup, book bundles (selections hand-picked for individuals and families by staff members), Take-and-Make craft projects, digital programming for all ages, and online tech assistance proved very popular.



Note - all statistics are from our official state reporting period, July 2019–June 2020.



466 programs serving 10,044 attendees (up from 409 programs serving 8,508 attendees last year, despite being closed to the public mid-March 2020 through the end of the fiscal year in June)

Library Staff & Population Served

- 12 library staff
- 1 RSVP Director and 1 RSVP Volunteer Coordinator
- 6,533 registered patrons
(30% are rural Winneshiek County residents and 70% are City of Decorah residents. Winneshiek County provides 14% of Library funding and the City provides 80%)

Circulation

- 103,573 total checkouts

The Collection

- 131,172 items for check-out
(43,473 physical items and 87,699 digital items)

Interlibrary Loan

- 19,142 items lent to IA libraries
- 529 items borrowed from IA libraries

Vera Harris Large Print Collection

- 9,698 books in the Large Print collection
- Used by 120+ public libraries in Iowa
- 18,185 checkouts

Programming & Outreach

- Outreach to 3 nursing homes and 2 assisted living facilities (until they closed to visitors)
- 43 Adult programs/595 attendees
- 72 Tech Help sessions/238 attendees (migrated online in March)
- 8 Family programs/1,273 attendees
- 15 Young Adult programs/95 attendees
- 237 Children's programs/5,776 attendees (migrated online in March)
- 91 Outreach programs to classrooms /1,634 attendees (put on hold in March)

Technology Services

- Twice-weekly drop-in Tech Help sessions (July 2019-March 2020; virtual assistance March onward)
- BRIDGES free e-books/audio downloading continues to grow in popularity- 27,043 checkouts (up from 21,190) by a monthly average of 449 users this year (up from 362)!
- Kanopy free film-streaming (added April 2020)

Technology

- 10 public access computers
- 10 Launchpad educational tablets for youth
- 25,798 internet sessions (8,016 wired sessions + 17,782 wireless sessions)

Community Services

- NEIA Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) sponsor - RSVP has grown from 400 to 451 volunteers in the past year. Volunteers serve at 70 nonprofit stations in a 3 county area; the majority are located in Winneshiek County.
- Certified Notary Public services used 2-4 times per month (pre-pandemic)
- Long Distance Learning test proctoring offered throughout the year (pre-pandemic)
- Public meeting rooms- used by 3,914 people (July 2019–mid March 2020)
- DPL volunteers- 50; more than 1,500 hours of service
- Local Public Access TV- assisting local governments, schools, and nonprofits with publicizing local events and broadcasting programming (i.e. local church services and City Council meetings)

Funding

- City of Decorah
- Winneshiek County
- State of Iowa
- Friends of Decorah Public Library
- Federal CNCS Grant (RSVP)
- State ICVS Grant (RSVP)
- Marion E. Jerome Foundation
- Joey Headington Memorial
- First United Methodist Church Trust



UPDATES FROM THE CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT DEPARTMENT

Before the pandemic, we...

- Put on 64+ programs in the first two months of the year, including storytimes, outreach to public schools, Dog Tales, preschool parties, Curious Kids, and more!
- Hosted our first African American Read-In
- Started a Baby Time program
- Hosted three story times at Luther College's Ethnic Arts Fair
- Created a Winter Reading Bingo board



Pandemic Innovations: Since March 2020, we...

- Created almost 90 youtube videos...including storytimes, sing-alongs, booktalks, babytime videos, STEAM activities!
- Sponsored almost 40 weekly yoga videos for kids and families
- Sent out 34 weekly newsletters
- Put together almost 300 custom book bundles for children and families
- Collaborated with the Sugar Bowl on a Summer Reading Challenge
- Bagged up 1,810 Take-and-Make Monday projects for children and families
- Co-sponsored The Pumpkin Project
- Created Early Literacy packets
- Collaborated with the Decorah home school program on a Zoom Book club
- Collaborated with Decorah Parks and Recreation and Decorah Public Schools to host Decorah's first Book Walk
- Created Hygge at Home packs for almost 200 people during December
- Collaborated with Inspire(d) and Impact on a Celebrate Reading Winter Checklist

During the pandemic, it has warmed our hearts and kept our spirits up to receive our patrons' book bundle requests, emails, and Take-and-Make photos. Although it's been difficult to be closed to the public, we're uplifted by the ways we've continued to be able to connect and impressed by the resilience and ingenuity we see in this community. **Thank you for your support of the library and of library programs.**