



DECORAH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Annual Report

- January 2022 -

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

Staffing: DPL staff were hard at work this year finding new and inventive ways to meet community needs in an ever-shifting environment. The library filled several vacant staff positions that are key to helping the organization better serve the community.

Programs: Our 2021 programs took us outdoors, indoors, online, and a mix of all the above as library staff responded to the ebbs and flows of the pandemic and direct feedback from library users. Library staff offered weekly take-and-make activities for kids and their caregivers, in-person, online, and hybrid book discussion groups for adults, and ongoing drop-in programs for children and families.

Building: We were able to reopen the building to the public this year after being closed for interior renovations and the pandemic. Library users have commented repeatedly about how good the building looks after the renovations. The library also began replacing all signage in the building to align with updated branding guidelines.

Technology: Thanks to a grant through the State Library, staff were able to install a videoconferencing platform in the library's public meeting room that allows groups to participate in virtual and hybrid meetings.

Other: Library staff created a new marketing plan and rebranding effort to attract new and inactive library users.

UPDATE FROM THE CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT DEPARTMENT

This year we collaborated with Decorah Public Schools, Winneshiek County Conservation, Decorah Parks and Recreation, Root to Rise Community Wellness, ArtHaus, HSAP, the Decorah Volunteer Firefighters, Crave Dance Studio, Brittany Todd Photography, Vesterheim, Absolute Science, the Mississippi River Museum, the International Owl Center, and others to offer distanced and in-person programs indoors, outdoors, and at home.

Some highlights include

- Creating Take-and-Make projects for over 3,000 registered participants (that's over twice as many as we did in 2020!)
- Curating 3 Book Walks around Decorah with Parks and Recreation and Decorah Public Schools
- Hosting over 150 Decorah middle schoolers on field trips to the library this spring
- Field Trips on Foot in June and Biking Field trips this fall
- Outdoor parties, storytimes and yoga at Phelps park, the Decorah Middle School playground, and the Decorah prairie's butterfly garden
- Reintroducing Dog Tales and welcoming a pack of Papillon puppies into the Dog Tales crew
- Having a firetruck visit the library parking lot
- Costume making at ArtHaus
- Seeing over 300 of you at the Absolute Science Bubble Stations this fall
- Co-hosting book clubs with the Decorah Home School Program and Decorah High School
- Outreach storytimes at John Cline, Carrie Lee, Sunflower, and St. Ben's
- Seeing so many kids and grown-ups petting a corn snake during the Mississippi River Museum's visit
- Crafting after school on Thursdays throughout November & December

We couldn't have done any of this without your interest, ideas, energy, curiosity, and enthusiasm. Our library community amazes and inspires us. Thank you for being part of it!



STATISTICS

Library Staff and Population Served:

- Library staff: 12 (10.48 FTE)
- RSVP staff: 2 (1.4 FTE)
- Library users: 6,778 (up 3.7% from last year)

Circulation:

- 91,618 (total checkouts of all items, both physical and digital) (down just 11.5%, despite being closed to the public July-February and offering curbside only)

Interlibrary Loan:

- We lent 731 items to other libraries and borrowed 859 items for our patrons

Large Print Collection:

- 9,395 items were checked out 16,124 times to local patrons, care facilities, and over 120 libraries across the state.

Programming and Outreach:

- 264 programs with 6,592 attendances (in person, hybrid, virtual, inside/outside/distanced) despite being closed to the public until late February, 2021.

Technology:

- 981 wired internet sessions and 5455 wireless internet sessions
- Usage of BRIDGES (free digital audio books and e-books) increased 15% over the year prior- on average 496 library users checked out nearly 2600 items per month

note: all statistics are from our official state reporting period, July 2020–June 2021





Community Services:

- The Northeast Iowa Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) for which DPL serves as host and fiscal agent has grown from 451 to more than 500 volunteers; these volunteers meet critical community needs at 70 nonprofit stations in a 3-county area (the majority in Winn. Co.). Volunteers served over 23,000 hours this year.
- Certified Notary Public services available free of charge (Mon-Fri 8-5, by appointment)
- Long Distance Learning test proctoring available free of charge
- Local Public Access TV- the library runs the TV channel which assists local municipalities, schools, and nonprofits with publicizing local events and broadcasting programming (i.e. City Council meetings and local church services)

Funding:

- City of Decorah
- Winneshiek County
- Friends of Decorah Public Library
- State Library of Iowa
- Marion E. Jerome Foundation
- Joey Headington Memorial
- First United Methodist Church Trust
- Individual donors

Looking Ahead

In 2022, Decorah Public Library is renewing its accreditation with the State Library of Iowa, launching a new strategic plan, rolling out new children's and adult programs, and continuing to find new and innovative ways to serve library users.