



Agenda: Board of Trustees
March 3, 2022, at 4 pm
Conference Room, Downtown Library

Literacy, Access, & Inclusion

Library Board President – Jade Hart

- A. Call to Order
- B. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - o Minutes: February 3, 2022
 - o Special Event Application
- C. Public Comments and Communications
- D. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
- F. Library Board Committee Reports
 - o Finance Committee – Monica Challenger, Committee Chair
 - o Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
 - State Library of Iowa, Trustees Handbook Discussion: Chapter 8
 - **Action:** Policy Review: 1.06 Statement of Ethics for Library Trustees
 - o Advocacy Committee – Mary Sharp, Committee Chair
 - No Action
 - o Westside Project Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
 - No Action
- G. Library Director's Report
- H. Old Business
- I. New Business
- J. Adjournment

The next Board of Trustees meeting is set for **April 7, 2022 at 4 pm**, in the Conference Room, Downtown Library

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a City program, service, or activity, should contact Jessica Musil, Library Administrative Assistant, at 319.261.7323 or email musilj@crlibrary.org as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the meeting.

DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
February 3, 2022

Board members in attendance: Matt Wilding (in person); Monica Challenger, Hassan Selim, Jeremy Elges, Mary Sharp, and Rafael Jacobo (all via Zoom)

Unable to attend: [President] Jade Hart, [Vice President] Clint Twedt-Ball, Susie McDermott

Staff in attendance: [Library Director] Dara Schmidt and Jessica Musil (in person); Patrick Duggan, Amber McNamara, Jessica Link, Todd Simonson, Trevor Hanel, and Sarah Voels (all via Zoom)

Others: Charity Tyler, Executive Director, Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation; Libby Slappey, President, Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library (via Zoom)

- A. Call to Order
 - Mr. Wilding called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.
- B. Public Comments and Communications
 - There being none, the meeting continued
- C. Foundation Report – Charity Tyler
 - The Foundation has remained busy with donor recognition activities. Ms. Tyler felt they had a successful end of year campaign.
 - Stay Home and Read a Book Ball will take place later this month. Mailings, in an Alice in Wonderland theme, were recently sent. In addition, the Foundation has other upcoming fundraising opportunities including a Mothers' Day campaign and Literary Vines in April as well as a special sale for the 125th anniversary.
 - Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIIL) launched a marketing campaign for enrollment through social media and a commercial. January 2022 was the fifth highest month ever for new enrollments. Coralville and Lisbon recently launched their DPIIL programs; more children are being served across the state.

Mr. Selim and Ms. Challenger joined the meeting at 4:04 pm. Quorum was established.

- D. Consent Agenda – **Action**
 - Minutes: January 6, 2022

Ms. Sharp motioned to accept the consent agenda. Ms. Challenger seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.
- E. Friends of the Library Report – Libby Slappey
 - Friends will host two sales this month including a Saturday sale in the Downtown Commons and the first dollar day sale in the Cherry Building. This special sale, on Saturday, February 12, will sell items for one dollar.
 - Ms. Slappey shared her thanks to *The Gazette*. The Friends were part of a story about donating used books to the libraries. She is hopeful that story will help the public understand which books are suitable for donation.
- F. Library Board Committee Reports
 - Finance Committee – Monica Challenger
 - Ms. Challenger reviewed the December 2021 financials. We are halfway through the fiscal year with 49% of our expenditures spent and 46% of expected revenue received. At the last meeting, trustees approved the Linn County contract for library services. This revenue is not yet reflected but once received it will even out revenues and expenses.

- Personnel and Policy Committee – Susie McDermott, Committee Chair
 - State Library of Iowa, Trustees Handbook Discussion: Chapter 4
 - Ms. Schmidt reported for Ms. McDermott. This chapter pertains to hiring a library director, which is one of the board’s main responsibilities. The City does not have control or power for hire or termination of a director. The chapter is a resource for hiring as is the State Library of Iowa.
 - **Action:** Policy Review. The trustees reviewed the following policies.
 - 1.05 Statement on Labeling. The committee recommends reaffirming this policy. It is our promise not to designate or label materials.
 - 1.05a Labels and Rating Systems. This is a supplement of Policy 1.05, going into detail. No changes were made. Ms. Sharp asked about movie ratings. The rating is clearly visible on the movie case, which is a suggestion from the association body. We don’t modify the DVD cover, same as any book, and allow all materials to stand as published.
 - 4.01 Meeting Rooms. This policy was updated to better reflect current practices. For example, it now specifies users must follow the Behavior Policy, and notes room use is unless otherwise noted. Mr. Wilding asked for a reminder on how prices were set. Every four years, we review rates. It is mostly set to recoup the cost of staff time, and won’t subsidize a private event. Ms. Sharp asked where alcohol use is addressed. This is covered under a separate policy. Alcohol use requires board approval.

The policy changes, as noted in the packet, were approved unanimously.

- Advocacy Committee – Mary Sharp, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Sharp reminded trustees to complete executive interviews. The sign-up sheet and talking points will be emailed again. The interview, which lasts about 30 minutes, is a great chance to provide advocacy. Any questions can be sent to Ms. Schmidt and Ms. McNamara.
- Westside Project Committee – Clint Twedt-Ball, Committee Chair
 - Ms. Schmidt reported. The Library has applied for Linn County APRA funds to aid in this project. We are in a holding pattern while we await the response.

G. Library Director’s Report

- The City is finalizing details on the first budget meeting. They plan to host a very limited hybrid meeting due to COVID and requested that they present the Library budget as part of the overall City budget. Ms. Schmidt agreed instead of doing a separate presentation. The City Council members will receive a general update; however, with this change in process, Ms. Schmidt impressed that it’s important to update council members during advocacy meetings.

H. Old Business

- There being no old business, the meeting continued.

I. New Business

- There being no new business, the meeting continued.

J. **Closed Session:** Iowa Code §20.17(3). Union Contract Discussion

- Mr. Wilding read aloud the Iowa Code pertaining to the reason for going into closed session.

Ms. Challenger motioned to enter closed session. Mr. Selim seconded. The motion was carried with unanimous approval following a roll call.

- The roll call was taken of those present in the closed session: Mary Sharp, Hassan Selim, Rafael Jacobo, Jeremy Elges, Monica Challenger, and Matthew Wilding; Ms. Schmidt and Ms. Musil remained, all others departed. The board went into closed session at 4:31 pm.
- The meeting resumed in open session at 4:57 pm.
- **Action:** Approve Contract with CWA Local 7101

Ms. Challenger motioned to accept the contract with CWA Local 7101 for July 1, 2022-June 30, 2026. Ms. Sharp seconded. The motion carried with unanimous approval.

K. Adjournment

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Thursday, March 3, 2022, at 4 pm in the Conference Room, Downtown Library



Special Event Application

This application must be submitted for special events requiring alcohol at least **60 days** prior to the date of the event. An approved certificate of liability (including additional documentation if required) must be received 30 days prior to the event date. Events requesting alcohol are subject to Board of Trustees approval and guidelines in the Board Policy 3.08 – Special Event Alcohol Use. Board meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 4 p.m.

Please return the completed application to: Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 Fifth Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401; email events@crlibrary.org.

Name of Contact Person: **Charity Tyler**

Name of Organization: **Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation**

Address: **450 5th Ave SE**

Phone: **319-739-0411**

Email: **foundation@crlibrary.org**

Name of Event: **Literary Vines**

Date of Event: **4/29/22**

Location of Event: **Beems Auditorium**

Time of event start: **6p**

End: **8:30**

Setup start: **4p**

Cleanup end: **10:30p**

What type of audience is this intended for: **Foundation Donors**

Number of attendees/participants: **150**


Will there be a fee to attend? **Yes**

Will you serve alcohol at the event? **Yes**

If selling alcohol, who holds the liquor license for your event? **We are not selling alcohol**

Who holds all necessary special event insurance for the event? **City of Cedar Rapids**

Applicants Signature: **ARHM on Behalf of
Charity Tyler**

 Digitally signed by ARHM on Behalf of
Charity Tyler
Date: 2022.02.18 10:16:02 -06'00'

Date: **2/18/2022**

Applicants Printed Name and Title/Organization: **ARHM on behalf of Charity Tyler, CRPLF**

COMMUNITY

Improving access

C.R. Public Library part of national initiative to develop STEM opportunities

By Marissa Payne, The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS — National partners are helping the Cedar Rapids Public Library develop programming that will break barriers for middle school students and expand access to opportunities in STEM fields beginning this summer.

The Cedar Rapids Public Library is one of 22 libraries selected to participate in the Urban Library Council's new Building Equity: Amplify Summer Learning cohort this year.

The initiative aims to support summertime learning opportunities for middle school youth who historically have been excluded from STEM opportunities. Participating libraries will work with the Urban Library Council and its partners to develop and implement STEM summer programming that can be shared with libraries nationwide.

Building Equity: Amplify Summer Learning is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Programming Manager Kevin Delecki said the initiative will allow the library to figure out how to best combine its reading and summer learning programs with STEM practices, and help address the learning loss students have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This programming is "marrying the best of the ways in which the library can teach and support literacy, but then we can also tie that into those 21st-century skills, those STEM skills that are going to be so important for them to know and understand going



The Cedar Rapids Public Library is seen in 2015 in downtown Cedar Rapids. The library is one of 22 selected to participate in the Urban Library Council's new Building Equity: Amplify Summer Learning initiative. (The Gazette)

forward to be able to participate in daily life (and) the workforce," Delecki said.

Participating libraries will work with library leaders around the country and discuss program development, how to build and strengthen partnerships and how to navigate COVID-19 protocols. Each will create programs, pilot them this summer and then work together to "build them into excellence" for summer 2023, Delecki said.

The cohort already is beginning to plan for summer programming and will spend the next five or so months developing these programs and reaching out to establish partnerships, Delecki said. This summer, the cohort will present the programs that middle-schoolers can participate in.

In Cedar Rapids, Delecki said the library will partner with the Cedar Rapids Parks and Recreation Department to present three weeklong middle school STEM camps. These will be held in locations that are near middle schools in some of the city's

underserved neighborhoods. Each camp will serve about 20 students to ensure each has individualized attention.

Registration will first open to students at those middle schools in late spring, Delecki said. Access will then open more broadly through the library's online events calendar and other community outreach efforts. The locations are still being confirmed.

The camps will be offered at no cost. They will be within walking distance of students' homes, which Delecki said will help "level the playing field a little bit by bringing these opportunities out to where these students are."

"There's a lot of really easy access to the STEM opportunities in areas where people have easy access to transportation, they have parents who are home during the summer, they have the finances to attend for-profit camps and activities," Delecki said. "There's a much bigger barrier in those areas that are historically excluded looking at access to transportation,

access to time, access to the resources themselves, finances for things."

In the future, Delecki said the library would like to partner with other organizations with staffing and expertise to expand this programming, and bring the camp into facilities such as Tanager Place or Juvenile Detention and Diversion Services.

Starting in August, the cohort will look across the 22 libraries to assess the programs. The libraries will spend the next nine months improving and updating their programs to optimize them for use in libraries around the country.

"That's really the secondary end goal, is not only develop something that is really beneficial and impactful for our local community, but then also how do we design them in a way that they can be replicated at little libraries in rural Iowa, and also major metropolises in New York City and Los Angeles," Delecki said.

Comments: (319) 398-8494; marissa.payne@thegazette.com



THINGS TO DO TODAY

POWERED BY HOOPLA:
WWW.HOOPLANOW.COM

FAMILY-FRIENDLY

Mother Goose on the Loose

This early literacy nursery rhyme program for newborns to 3-year-olds helps strengthen babies' and toddlers' foundation for literacy. Registration for families with children is required and limited to 10 families per session. Social distancing will be encouraged. Register at <https://events.crlibrary.org/events>.

- **When:** 9 to 10:30 a.m.
- **Where:** Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 Fifth Ave. SE
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages

COMMUNITY

Cedar Rapids Area Genealogy Library

Research your family tree with help from library volunteers.

- **When:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Where:** Lower level of Masonic Library, 813 First Ave. SE. Parking is available in the rear and enter through the back door.
- **Cost:** Free; donations welcome
- **Age:** All ages

OTHER

Public Tour of Hancher Auditorium

Meet in the lobby before a tour's starting time, and your tour guide will greet and guide you or your small group through Hancher's facilities. A tour takes about one hour.

- **When:** 11:30 a.m.
- **Where:** Hancher Auditorium, 141 E. Park Rd., Iowa City
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages

EDUCATIONAL

Business and Leadership: Master of Management

At this information session, learn about Mount Mercy University's newest master's degree designed to broaden the essential aspects of business for those launching a career or seeking further development in the field.

- **When:** Noon to 1 p.m.
- **Where:** Online; sign up at <https://mtmercy.wufoo.com/forms/master-of-management-virtual-information-session>
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages

MUSEUM/EXHIBIT

Zoom Art Bites:

Freedom's Daughters

Join curator Kate Kunau to discuss the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art's newest exhibition, Freedom's Daughters: New Work by Kathy Schumacher. This collection of paintings depicts the largely unknown heroines of Black suffrage in the U.S., from the late 19th century to the present day.

- **When:** 12:15 to 1:15 p.m.
- **Where:** Online; register via www.crma.org/
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages

AAMI, Iowa City hosting Black History Month events

The Gazette

The African American Museum of Iowa in Cedar Rapids and the city of Iowa City have announced events commemorating Black History Month in February.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM OF IOWA

The African American Museum of Iowa will host special programming in honor of Black History Month. On Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Feb. 17 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., the museum will offer free admission as part of its Celebrating Black History at the Museum event.

Visitors can see the museum's exhibits, Endless Possibilities and Mapping Exclusion: Redlining in Iowa. For

this event only, the museum's traveling exhibit, Iowa Civil Rights, also will be on display. This pop-up exhibit explores the struggles and triumphs of the fight for equal rights. In addition to free admission to these exhibits, visitors also will be provided a free book, snack and activities sheets (while supplies last).

IOWA CITY

Iowa City will be hosting and co-hosting numerous events, including presentations, a book club discussion, movie screening, dance workshop, trivia and more. All commemorations are designed to celebrate the impact Black Americans have had on the country and educate participants on the barriers Black Americans have faced

and still face today.

Below is a list of each event. For more details, including how to register, visit icgov.org/BHM2022.

- Afro-Cuban Dance Workshop with Modei Akyea, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. today at the Iowa City Public Library
- Black History calendar creation studio, 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Iowa City Public Library
- Black History Month trivia night, 6 to 8 p.m. Feb. 9 via Zoom
- Book club discussion of Jason Mott's "Hell of a Book," 7 to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 15 via Zoom
- Superheroes of Science for prekindergarten K through second grade, 4 to 5 p.m. Feb. 16 at the Iowa City Public Library
- Black History storytime,

10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Feb. 17 at the Iowa City Public Library and online

- Presentation on the Tuskegee Airmen, 1 to 2 p.m. Feb. 21 via Zoom
 - Screening of "My Name Is Pauli Murray" documentary, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Iowa City Public Library
 - Presentation on "The Only One" by the African American Museum of Iowa, noon Feb. 24 via Zoom
- The Office of Equity and Human Rights also has 2022 Black History calendars available from 8 a.m. to noon, and then 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at City Hall, 410 E. Washington St., on the third floor. The calendars are available at no charge while supplies last. Calendars can be mailed out upon request.

EASTERN IOWA BRIEFS

CEDAR RAPIDS

Tanager Place hosts Harvard educator online on Saturday

The Tanager Place Speaker Series is proud to present nationally acclaimed Harvard University educator and author Brandon P. Fleming on Saturday.

The public is invited to hear Fleming's story of struggle, success and service as he transformed his life as a college dropout to an award-winning educator through literature and debate.

This free, virtual event will begin at 10 a.m. The first 100 registrants may pick up a complimentary copy of Fleming's book, "MISEDUCATED: A Memoir."

As the founder/CEO of the Harvard Diversity Project, Fleming leads an executive staff and board that has raised over a million dollars to enroll over 100 students of color into Harvard's international summer debate residency on full scholarship.

Fleming's story has enabled him to

use his voice to inspire and impact thousands of lives in places ranging from federal prisons to global platforms such as the United Nations General Assembly.

To register for this event, visit bit.ly/BPFleming.

WEST LIBERTY

Brick Street Gallery to host author Chuy Renteria on Friday

Brick Street Gallery, 104 W. Third St., will host a book signing from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday of "We Heard it When We Were Young" by local author Chuy Renteria.

Renteria's book tells the story of a young boy, first-generation Mexican American, who is torn between cultures: between immigrant parents trying to acclimate to Midwestern life and a town that was, by turns, supportive and disturbingly antagonistic.

His story looks past the public celebrations of diversity to dive into the pri-

vate tensions of a community reflecting the changing American landscape.

MAQUOKETA

Man rides bicycle across country, tells his story Sunday

Herb Miller of Maquoketa spent 61 days on a bicycle this past year traveling from Oregon to Maine. Hear about his adventure at a presentation at 3 p.m. Sunday at the Hurstville Interpretive Center. Miller will share why he wanted to do the bike trip, planning and logistics, photos and stories of his adventures, showcase his bike and gear.

This event is free and open to the public.

The Hurstville Interpretive Center is 1 mile north of Maquoketa; 18670 63rd St., Maquoketa, Iowa.

For more information, contact Jackson County Conservation at (563) 652-3783 or email jess@jacksonccb.com.

LIVING



Volunteers Jan Frischkorn and Susan Van Woert sort donated books Monday at the Cedar Rapids Public Library. Frischkorn and Van Woert both began volunteering at the library after retiring from teaching elementary school. (Nick Rohlman photos/The Gazette)

Donate OR Discard?

With limited resources, libraries ask for careful thought over donations

IF YOU GO

Find books for just a dollar or two at upcoming used book sales from Friends of the Cedar Rapids Library:

- **The Dollar Day Sale:** All books and media for \$1 on Saturday, Feb. 12, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the lower level of the Cherry Building, 329 10th Ave. SE.
- **First Saturday sales:** The First Saturday sales offer all books and media for \$1 to \$2 each on first Saturdays of February, March and April (Feb. 5, March 5 and April 2) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the commons of the Downtown Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 Fifth Ave. SE.
- **The Big Biannual Sale:** Two floors of books and media on May 13, 14 and 15 in the Cherry Building, 319 10th Ave. SE.

By Elijah Decious, The Gazette

Parting with books long loved can be a difficult thing. When that time comes for families cleaning out their homes or the homes of loved ones who have died, the idea of giving those books new life with another owner can be comforting.

But often, books that have been on your shelf or in a box for many years aren't worth as much for resale as their sentimental value, according to members of the Friends of the libraries in Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha. Over the last two years, the number of unusable book donations has ticked up substantially.

"They have the emotion of these books ... but they feel better if they're able to donate them to Friends of the Library," said Libby Slappey,

president of Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library. "But take a step back."

With tens of thousands of books sorted by Friends of the Cedar Public Rapids Library each year, about 40 percent go straight to the recycling bin. With limited volunteer hours and paying rent for space the nonprofit pays to store books for sorting and resale, donating worthless books incurs a sizable cost. The Friends organization, which raise funds to donate to the library for programming, spends between 60 and 120 volunteer hours sorting materials each month.

Though unusable book donations have always been an issue, Friends of the Hiawatha Public Library members have also noticed an uptick since the pandemic started two years ago. There, President Tom Raley said the nonprofit's eight volunteers might discard



Donated books await evaluation and sorting Monday the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

up to 75 percent of a typical donation box.

In a typical week, they get two or three unusable boxes of books. To control the flow of books, they ask donors with lots of books to bring in two boxes per week.

"Right now, I have 30 boxes in the basement that I need to get to the dump," he said. "I haven't had luck finding anyone to do it."

With far fewer volunteer hours and storage space to work with than Cedar Rapids, the organization is considering a new policy to meet all do-

nors at the door to ensure they aren't donating books they will only need to be thrown away, he said.

"It's just overwhelming at times. Books keep coming in and our space is limited," said Susan Van Woert, sorting center volunteer for Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library. "I don't think anyone has an awareness of the volume."

The number of donated books that have to be recycled at the downtown library is

► **BOOKS, PAGE 6B**



THINGS TO DO TODAY

POWERED BY HOOPLA:
WWW.HOOPLANOW.COM

MUSIC Coe College Keyboard Festival
Coe College keyboard faculty and students will present a piano recital of solos, duets and quartets of the music of Brahms.
• **When:** 7 to 8 p.m. today
• **Where:** Coe College, 1220 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids
• **Cost:** Free

THEATER "Eden Prairie, 1971"
On the night Apollo 15 lands on the moon, a draft dodger steals home to Eden Prairie, Minn., from Canada. He risks arrest to deliver a message to a young woman from his high school class.
• **When:** 7:30 p.m. today
• **Where:** Riverside Theatre, 119 E. College St., Iowa City
• **Cost:** \$15 to \$35

THEATER Iowa Directors Festival 2022
University of Iowa MFA directing candidates present "Letters from Cuba" and "small hours."
• **When:** 8 p.m. today
• **Where:** University of Iowa Theatre Building, 200 N. Riverside Dr., Iowa City
• **Cost:** Free

HISTORY "The Fuel Question"
This display is done in collaboration with NextEra Energy Resources, owner of the Duane Arnold Energy Center, which is planning a \$700 million solar farm.
• **When:** 1 to 4 p.m. today
• **Where:** Marion Heritage Center & Museum, 590 10th St., Marion
• **Cost:** Free

ART Carl Van Vechten: Man About Town Exhibition
Photographs taken by Cedar Rapids native Carl Van Vechten of significant people from the early to mid-20th century, including boxer Joe Louis and artist Georgia O'Keefe.
• **When:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. today
• **Where:** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, 410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
• **Cost:** \$4 to \$8; free for ages 5 and under

OUTDOORS Ice Fishing with TAKO!
Learn the basics of ice fishing, safety, equipment, techniques and fish ID. Free lunch. Anglers 16 years and older must have a fishing license. Park at the North Liberty Community Center.
• **When:** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. today
• **Where:** Liberty Centre Pond, 500 block West Cherry Street, North Liberty
• **Cost:** Free, but donations welcome

Books/Here's a list of donation do's and don'ts

► FROM PAGE 5B

sometimes so much that the bins become too heavy for trucks to pick up, she said.

Book donations can be deemed unusable or not appropriate for resale for a number of reasons: excessive wear, water damage, mold, odors, smoke, mouse droppings, being outdated or simply not worth a dollar or two. Sometimes, boxes of books are donated from estates without even being opened and examined by the donors.

For hardcover books, the process to discard is even more time consuming. Since hardcovers are not recyclable, they have to be cut apart with utility knives before being chucked into the bin.

With guidelines in place to help you decide, you have permission to pitch books that aren't worth anything, Slappey said.

"If you care about the organization, please let us use our time and volunteer power as efficiently as we can," she said. "It helps us so much if you don't give us things we don't use."

DONATION GUIDELINES

Here are some guidelines on what to donate and what to discard:

DO DONATE

- Hardcover and paperback books for all ages
- Rare, signed or first edition books
- Contemporary or classic fiction
- Non-fiction like cookbooks or biographies
- Complete and working DVDs and CDs like movies or audio books
- Financial or business books published in the last five years
- Travel guidebooks published in the last five years (Rick Steves or DK Eyewitness books have no restrictions)
- Computer manuals published in the last five years
- Test preparation guides published in the last five years
- Psychology or self-help books
- Dictionaries, thesauruses and health books published in



Susan Van Woert of Cedar Rapids sorts donated books Monday at the Cedar Rapids Public Library. Volunteers of the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Library say they've been inundated with donations that they have had to trash or recycle. (Nick Rohlman/The Gazette)

the last five years.

- Vintage books, if in good condition

DO NOT DONATE

- Encyclopedias
- Annuals or yearbooks
- Professional journals or periodicals
- Magazines
- Advanced Reader Copies
- Popular fiction from the 1970s or 1980s that is worn or no longer popular
- Workbooks or study guides that are filled in
- Readers Digest Condensed books
- Books discarded by other libraries
- Abridged audio books
- LP records, audiocassettes or VHS tapes
- Outdated books about computers, travel, psychology/self-help, medicine, finance or business
- Damaged books with: missing pages, broken binding, worn or torn covers, water damage, dog-eared covers or pages or dirty covers and pages
- Odds and ends like calendars, computer software and puzzles

WHAT ABOUT DONATING TO THRIFT STORES?

"Certainly, recycling is a big component of where some of our donations end up," said Brent Watkins, spokesman for Goodwill of the Heartland.

But don't feel bad about donating clothes that might not be usable. Sometimes, having donations that don't make the cut for their retail thrift stores isn't a bad thing, he said, as Goodwill often has recycling partners that pay for them.

In 2019, Goodwill of the Heartland received more than 39 million pounds of donations, just under 10 million of which were recycled. In 2020, a year impacted by pandemic closures, just under 8 million pounds of donations were recycled.

The vast majority of recycled poundage comes from clothing. In 2020, 5.5 million of the 8 million pounds recycled were textiles.

Some of the donations are repurposed, some are sold to third-party resellers and some go overseas, maximizing the value of donations and generating something for Goodwill.

Goodwill also recycles books, cardboard, belts, electrical cords, purses, scrap metal, shoes, computers and computer peripherals. In fact, the thrift titan is one of the country's largest computer recyclers, thanks to a partnership with Dell.

A list of things Goodwill does and does not accept can be found on its website.

Comments: (319) 398-8340; elijah.decious@thegazette.com



SAVVY SENIOR | JIM MILLER

How to recognize and respond to mini-stroke

Q: How can a person know if they've had a minor stroke? My 72-year-old mother had a spell a few weeks ago where she suddenly felt dizzy for no apparent reason and had trouble walking and speaking, but it went away, and she seems fine now. — Concerned Son

A: The way you're describing it, it's very possible that your mom had a "mini-stroke," also known as a transient ischemic attack (TIA), and if she hasn't already done so, she needs to see a doctor as soon as possible.

Each year, around 250,000 Americans have a mini-stroke, but fewer than half of them realize what's happening. That's because the symptoms are usually fleeting — lasting only a few minutes, up to an hour or two — causing most people to ignore them or brush them off as no big deal. But anyone who has had a mini-stroke is much more likely to have a full-blown stroke, which can cause long-term paralysis, impaired memory, loss of speech or vision and even death.

A mini-stroke is caused by a temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain and can be a warning sign that a major stroke may soon be coming. That's why mini-strokes need to be treated like emergencies.

WHO'S VULNERABLE?

A person is more likely to suffer a TIA or stroke if they are overweight or inactive, have high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol or diabetes. Other factors that boost the risks are age (over 60), smoking, heart disease, atrial fibrillation and having a family history of stroke.

Men also have a greater risk for stroke than women, and African Americans and Hispanics are at higher risk than those of other races.

WARNING SIGNS

The symptoms of a mini-stroke are the same as those of a full-blown stroke, but can be subtle and short-

lived, and they don't leave any permanent damage. They include any one or combination of the following:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
 - Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
 - Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
 - Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
 - Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.
- The easiest way to identify a stroke is to use the F.A.S.T. test to identify the symptoms.
- F (Face): Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
 - A (Arm): Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
 - S (Speech): Ask the person to say a simple sentence. Is their speech slurred?
 - T (Time): If you observe any of these signs of stroke, call 911.

GET HELP

If these warning signs sound like what happened to your mom, but they went away, she needs to go to the emergency room or nearby stroke center.

If the doctor suspects a TIA, he or she will run a series of tests to determine what caused it and assess her risk of a future stroke. Once the cause has been determined, the goal of treatment is to correct the abnormality and prevent a full-blown stroke. Depending on the cause(s), her doctor may prescribe medication to reduce the tendency for blood to clot or may recommend surgery or a balloon procedure (angioplasty).

For more information on mini-strokes and how to recognize one, visit the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (StrokeAssociation.org).

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org.

Sharing Faith

Our religious communities welcome you!

Assembly of God

CR FIRST
Sunday Services
 8:30, 10 and 11:30 AM.
 Kids Worship Experience at 10 and 11:30 AM.
 3233 Blairs Ferry Rd. NE, Cedar Rapids
 crfirst.org 393-6353

Catholic

St. Patrick Catholic Church
 500 1st Ave. NW, Cedar Rapids
 www.stpatrickscr.org
Mass Times
 Saturday 4pm
 Sunday 8am, 10am, & Noon
Eucharistic Adoration
 Seven Days a Week 9am-9pm
 Come and spend an hour with our Lord

Christian Science

First Church of Christ, Scientist
 640 Blairs Ferry Rd. NE • 393-1207
 Sunday Service • 10:30am
 Sunday School • 10:30am
 Wednesday Service • 12 Noon
 www.cschurchcedarapids.com

Lutheran

Bethany
 LUTHERAN CHURCH
Living and Sharing God's Love
 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
 9:45 a.m. Education Hour
 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
 2202 Forest Dr. SE • 364-6026
 LCMS • bethanycr.org

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
LIVE Sunday @ 9 a.m. Traditional & Sun. @ 11:15 a.m. Celebration
 firstlutherancr.online.church
 replay @ youtube.com/firstlutherancr
 In the heart of the city with God's heart for all.

King of Kings
 LUTHERAN CHURCH
 3275 N. Center Point Rd (in Robins)
 SUNDAY 8:00AM-10:45AM
 Education hour for all ages Christian education 9:30am
 393-2438 • www.kingofkingscr.org • LCMS

St. Paul's Lutheran Church (MO)
 915 27th St., Marion
 319-377-4687
 www.mystpauls.org
 SUNDAY CHURCH WORSHIP: 8AM & 10:30AM
 9:15AM. SUNDAY SCHOOL/BIBLE STUDY

St. Stephen's
 Lutheran Church - ELCA
 610 31st St SE, Cedar Rapids
 You can join us every Sunday for two services.
 8:00 a.m in-person
 Between the two services there will be an education hour
 10:30 a.m. on Facebook Live, YouTube, or in-person.
 To Know, Live, and Share Christ.
 Check out our website for more information: ssluth.com

Non-Denominational

River of Life
 We Worship, We Connect, We Contribute
 3801 Blairs Ferry Rd NE | (319) 393-3709
 www.riveroflife.org
 Sunday Worship: 9:00 & 10:45 am
 Weekly small groups

ANTIOCH
 CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 Visitors & Newcomers Welcome!
 Marion Campus & Online Services
 Saturdays | 6PM
 Sundays | 8:15, 9:45 & 11:15AM
 lifeisforliving.org
 433 Cross Road, Marion • 377-3410

Presbyterian

1st Pres
 In-person service
10:00am
 Or join us online
 fpccr.org
 Pastor Heather Hayes
 FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 310 5th Street SE, Cedar Rapids

Westminster
Presbyterian
 1285 Third Avenue SE
 366-7185
Sunday
 In person worship 10am
 live streaming on
 YouTube.

Religious Society of Friends

Whittier Friends Meeting
 Unprogrammed Quaker Worship
 Sundays 10:30 a.m.
 Silent Meeting
 All Welcome
 County Home & Whittier Rd., Springville
 393-2508 / 563-590-4294

Seventh-Day Adventist

Turning the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.
Home Page
 Malachi 4:6
 1260 29th St. • Marion, IA
 Saturdays - 2:00 p.m.
 (319) 361-8630 • hpindahouse.org

Unitarian Universalist

Peoples Unitarian Universalist
 A Welcoming Congregation
 Any Age, Race, Sexual Orientation
 Spiritual Growth & Social Justice
 319-362-9827 | www.peoplesuu.org
 Sunday Service 11:00am
 In Person, Zoom & YouTube
 4980 Gordon Ave., NW 52405

United Church of Christ

FIRST
 CONGREGATIONAL
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 "A Community of Faith, Learning and Service"
Sunday Worship
10:00am
 361 17th St. SE • 362-1926
 Rev. Melanie Van Weelden • www.fcocr.org
 An Open and Affirming Congregation

United Methodist

Lovely Lane
 United Methodist Church
 2424 42nd St. NE - Cedar Rapids - 393-6674
 Services 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM
 Online Worship 10:30 AM
 Sunday School 9:30 AM
 www.lovelylane.org
 Let's Find Hope Together!

ST. PAUL'S
 UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 9:00 & 11:15 am | Worship (English)
 1:00 pm | Worship (African Nationals)
 1340 3rd Avenue SE | Cedar Rapids | Live 9:00 am & 1:00 pm
 319.363.2058 stpaulsumccr
 In Person, Zoom & Facebook | stpaulsumccr
 youtube.com/c/StPaulsUMCCR

Please check with your religious community before attending a social gathering. For all of your Worship and Church Event advertising needs contact Joann Dodson at 319-398-8237

COMMUNITY



THINGS TO DO TODAY

POWERED BY HOOPLA:
WWW.HOOPLANOW.COM

OTHER

Mustang Visit Day

Take a tour of the Mount Mercy University campus, meet current students and learn about admission requirements and financial aid. For more information, go to mtmercy.edu/visit.

- **When:** 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Where:** Mount Mercy University, Chapel of Mercy, 1330 Elmhurst Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages

MUSEUM/EXHIBIT

University of Iowa Scottish Highland Bagpipe Band Exhibit

The exhibit includes a large display of the uniforms, equipment and memorabilia of the University of Iowa Scottish Highland Bagpipe Band that began in 1937.

- **When:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Where:** University of Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame, Roy G. Karro Building, 2425 Prairie Meadow Dr., Iowa City
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages

HEALTH/FITNESS

Metta Yoga at Prairiewoods

Experience the healing powers of meditative yoga in a spiritual and natural environment. People of all fitness levels and abilities are encouraged to participate. For more information or to register, contact Heather at harbaugh@hotmail.com or (319) 389-1463.

- **When:** 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
- **Where:** Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center, 120 E. Boyson Rd., Hiawatha
- **Cost:** \$99 for an 11-punch card or \$60 for a six-punch card, one punch per session
- **Age:** All ages

COMMUNITY

Connection Recovery Support Group

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for any adult who is experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. More information at nami.org/Support-Education/Support-Groups/NAMI-Connection

- **When:** 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) of Linn County, 610 Second Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** 18 and older

MUSIC

Cedar Rapids Community Orchestra

All may join; no auditions are required. Just come and experience playing your musical instrument in a group setting.

- **When:** 7 to 9 p.m.
- **Where:** Cedar Hills Community Church, 6455 E Ave. NW, Cedar Rapids
- **Cost:** Free
- **Age:** All ages



The Cedar Rapids Public Library is shown. Library cardholders here and in Iowa's other public libraries have access to HelpNow and VetNow by Brainfuse. The sites provide help with homework in core subjects and help in finding a job. (The Gazette)

Access to assistance

Free homework, career help available through Iowa libraries

By Grace King, The Gazette

Need help writing a resume or preparing for a job interview? Filing for unemployment or getting help with homework?

That help is available — for free — through Iowa's public libraries.

All it takes is a library card — the cards are free — to gain access to HelpNow and VetNow by Brainfuse. The sites provide help with homework in core subjects and help in finding a job.

The programs also help students, veterans or those looking for employment or a new career “level up,” said Amber McNamara, with the Cedar Rapids Public Library.

“Every day people are coming to the library looking to access resources,” she said.

The Cedar Rapids Public Library made the programs available in September 2020, thanks to funding from Friends of the Library, McNamara said. The Iowa State Library made programs available last year to all Iowa libraries.

Now, no matter what Iowa library someone walks into, they can find the same “good and strong” resources, McNamara said.

HelpNow and VetNow can be accessed anywhere at any time, McNamara said. Anyone who may need help navigating the resources can get that help at the library.

VetNow also connects veterans with an expert to help them learn about what benefits they can access through Veterans Affairs. The site also



The Marion Public Library is shown in 2019. (Jim Slosiarek/The Gazette)



The Swisher Community Library. (The Gazette)

connects qualified veterans and their spouses to Iowa businesses with job openings.

Counselors at VetNow walk veterans through the “bureaucratic side” of Veterans Affairs, said Laura Hoover, the sole librarian at the Swisher Community Library.

HOMework HELP

HelpNow offers students homework help in math, reading, writing, science, social studies, skill building and test

preparation.

Students can communicate with live, online tutors using an interactive, virtual whiteboard to chat, write, draw and graph homework problems. Free online tutors are available daily from 2 to 11 p.m.

Students also can create their own virtual flashcards to help them study.

An adult learners' version of HelpNow — the Adult Learning Center — offers help preparing for the Graduate

Equivalency Degree and the U.S. citizenship test, as well as Microsoft Office support and career resources.

The program even offers an online chess club, which “saw a ton of use at the height of the pandemic when people were home,” McNamara said.

Blaine Phillips, marketing and community relations specialist at the Marion Public Library, said the program is one example of how a library is “more than a big collection of books.”

Phillips imagined how helpful Brainfuse's services might have been when he was in school and only had his parents to help him with homework questions.

Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when students transitioned between virtual and in-person learning, Brainfuse has been an important resource when learning from home, Phillips said.

Comments: (319) 398-8411; grace.king@thegazette.com

EASTERN IOWA BRIEFS

JACKSON COUNTY

Hold moon rocks, see Apollo memorabilia this Thursday

The Apollo missions enabled astronauts to collect and bring lunar rocks and soil back to Earth. Participants at an upcoming event at the Hurstville Interpretive Center will have the opportunity to see and hold these very rocks and soil from the moon. Join Jackson County Conservation for an event at 6 p.m. Thursday to learn more about the moon and the Apollo missions.

This event is free and open to the public. Registration is required 48 hours in advance. For more information or to register, contact Jackson County Conservation at (563) 652-3783 or jess@jacksonccb.com. The Hurstville Interpretive Center, 18670 63rd St., is one mile north of Maquoketa on Highway 61.

The program will begin with a short presentation from Dave Gossman about the moon rocks, including what these lunar samples reveal about the geology of the moon and the insight they give into the moon's history. Bruce Droessler of Maquoketa worked for the Apollo program and will share about his experience as a launch technician and in the Firing Room at NASA. Droessler will have memorabilia from the Apollo missions, including a launch procedure

signed by astronauts that went to the moon.

Following the presentation, participants will be able to view the memorabilia and hold the moon rocks and soil samples, while also viewing them through a microscope. For additional learning, a 57-minute video, “From the Earth to the Moon,” will begin around 7 p.m. This video examines the world of lunar geology and the preparations for making lunar exploration more than just an engineering feat.

CEDAR RAPIDS

Cedar Rapids woman's quilt featured in national contest

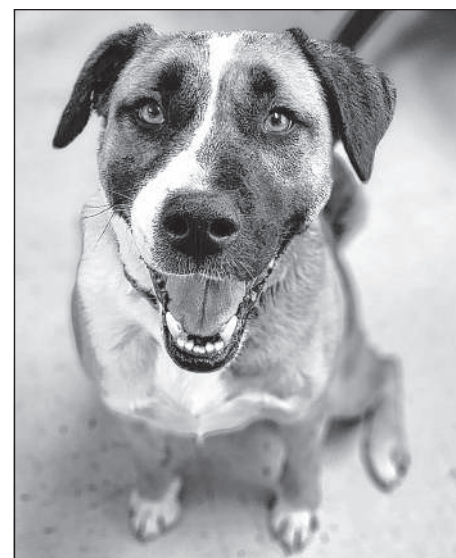
Sherril Harris of Cedar Rapids is a semifinalist for the 2022 American Quilter's Society's Quiltweek event, which takes place this week in Daytona Beach, Fla.



Sherril Harris
Cedar Rapids

Harris has been chosen to display her quilt, “Squared Ornaments,” in this contest, along with 240 other entries from 37 states and 14 countries. The contest has several awards, including Best of Show, which includes a \$10,000 prize. The event is expected to draw more than 15,000 people.

PET OF THE WEEK



Trip is a 5-year-old shepherd mix available for adoption at the Cedar Valley Humane Society, 7411 Mount Vernon Rd. SE. Trip has a special \$14 adoption fee. He loves people and knows several commands, but also doesn't realize his own strength, so he should be in a home without small children or other animals. Call (319) 362-6288 for more information. (Cedar Valley Humane Society)

Cedar Rapids Public Library steps up workforce development activities, outreach

By Steve Gravelle,
for The Gazette

These days it seems almost every industry is struggling to hire and retain workers, and that challenge is making workforce development programs even more important. The Cedar Rapids Public Library is redoubling its efforts to assist people looking for work.

“We’re really not competing with the other workforce development games that are in town, because they do amazing work already,” said Kevin Delecki, CRPL programming manager. “But what can we do to elevate this and support the work they’re doing?”

In October, CRPL received a \$45,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to improve its workforce development activities. The grant was part of \$15.2 million in the American Rescue Plan Act to support community libraries’ recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, to be matched with non-federal funds.

CRPL’s workforce programs center on its Opportunity Center, launched in 2018 in the library’s Ladd Library branch at 3750 Williams Blvd. SW. A collaboration with Kirkwood Community College and United Way of East Central Iowa, the center assists job seekers with job training and placement, health care navigation, housing, financial counseling, social services and entrepreneurial training.

The grant funded the addition of CRPL staff to

the Opportunity Center to help walk-ins connect with existing programs. Later this year, the grant will help the library continue to provide services to neighborhoods across the city with its new Mobile Technology Lab. The van will be outfitted with portable laptops, printers and other technology and staffed with CRPL specialists.

“We actually bring a mobile computer lab out with us,” Delecki said. “We have laptops and generators and mobile printers, and we give them the access to print something off or actually walk through and write the whole thing with them. We’re doing more and more with that.”

Just as the Opportunity Center builds upon connections with existing workforce services, the van is an outgrowth of CRPL’s current outreach.

“We were out at four parks a week this last summer alongside the Rolling Recmobile with (city) Parks and Rec,” Delecki said. “We’ll be looking at school year 2022–23, getting into the schools and bringing some of that curriculum-based intervention with that focus on workforce development. This year hasn’t been a great year for it because they didn’t allow volunteers in until a couple days ago. The intent is to expand its reach beyond those pop-up fun events.”

Providing such resources makes a big difference for households that can’t afford them, and not just for finding a job. It can also connect people with training to build the skills they’ll

need to develop and keep pace with employers’ needs.

“We’ve always viewed the workforce development work and the mobile technology lab

advancement.

“The goal of the Opportunity Center from the beginning, and Urban Dreams as well now, is to bring people into stable long-term employment,

“Right now it’s pretty easy to figure out what the workforce needs are: it’s everyone.”

— KEVIN DELECKI, CEDAR RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

as two sides of the same coin,” Delecki said. “The mobile technology lab does a lot of outreach out in the parks and working with kids, but right in its core mission statement from the beginning has been that workforce development as well.”

Another partner, Urban Dreams, joined the Opportunity Center in 2021. The Des Moines-based nonprofit maintains a food pantry at the center as part of its mission to connect city residents with jobs that pay livable wages and offer opportunities for

Delecki said. “They want to take them out of working four part-time jobs at minimum wage into something that, if they’re looking for full-time, will be full-time with benefits.

Regular communication with its partners and local employers helps keep CRPL’s development efforts focused on market needs, ensuring success for participants and the local economy.

“We are able to adjust and tailor the things we’re doing, based on what the workforce needs are in the city, without having to be the

one who’s seeking out individual employers and asking those questions,” Delecki said. “What we do is target our efforts to the organizations that are already focusing on what the needs are in the city. Right now it’s pretty easy to figure out what the workforce needs are: it’s everyone.”

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted many workers to reassess their careers, often opening positions for others.

“Pre-pandemic, we had mostly been helping people who were unemployed or drastically underemployed move into some level of stable employment,” Delecki said. “Now we’re able to ask that question, ‘What is it you want to do?’ Before it was, ‘What can you do, what are you qualified to do?’”

Answering that question often brings job seekers to Kirkwood’s career counselors and the college’s training programs through the Opportunity Center.

“We really enjoy being that connection hub, keeping people from having to bounce from door to door to find those (resources),” Delecki said.

Most Opportunity Center and mobile outreach programs are also available at the library’s main downtown branch. Delecki said the Ladd Library location was chosen for its proximity to apartment complexes where its clients live.

“There’s such a lack of access to social and workforce services on the west side,” he said. “So offering that space where organizations

who want to work with the citizens who are out there have a point of access that doesn’t require travel to downtown or the northeast side,” where the city’s Iowa Works office is located.

The library has also worked with the Sixth Judicial District to host expungement clinics to help low-level offenders who have completed their sentences to clear their criminal record. The clinics were paused during the pandemic, but there are plans to revive them as part of full-scale job fair events.

Delecki said the library plans to bring its mobile resources to a job fair for local youth this spring at Kirkwood.

“We’ll have 20 computers, four printers and a handful of staff who will help these kids walk through writing their first resume, applying online for probably the first time for a job,” Delecki said. “Really opening that access to the technology, because people don’t have it in their homes, or if they do they don’t have stable internet or the knowledge of how to use that.”

Library staff recently helped workers at the Catherine McAuley Center with job searches for recently arrived immigrants from Afghanistan.

“We helped nearly 20 people apply for jobs on the spot,” Delecki said, and provided CRPL staff with valuable experience.

“We’re moving people from unemployable to employed in one event, which is really an uplifting thing to be able to do,” Delecki said.

Category	Platform	Metrics	January 2021	January 2022	% Change
Virtual Programming	Facebook	Virtual Program Views (minutes)	2,525	1,051	-58%
Digital Collection Use	OverDrive	eBook Circulation	6,841	6,987	0%
		eAudiobook Circulation	4,857	5,796	16%
		New Users	276	272	1%
	cloudLibrary	eBook Circulation	1,677	1,483	-12%
		eAudiobook Circulation	804	1,035	22%
		New Users	109	54	-50%
	Hoopla	eBook Circulation	761	855	11%
		eAudiobook Circulation	838	1,295	35%
		eMusic Circulation	80	116	31%
		eVideo Circulation	399	507	21%
	Freegal	New Users	50	74	32%
		eMusic Downloads	1,272	1,326	4%
		eMusic Streaming	3,368	3,628	7%
Kanopy	New Users	1	8	88%	
	eVideo Circulation	1,397	1,779	21%	
Total	Total Digital Circulation	22,294	24,807	10%	
Other Online Use	Databases	Visits	21,862	21,857	0%
	CRLibrary.org	Visits	11,715	14,019	16%
	WiFi	Logins	1,628	8,818	85%
Social Media	Facebook	Followers	10,349	10,560	2%
	Instagram	Followers	3,571	3,736	4%
	YouTube	Views	639	5,838	89%
Meeting Room Use	Downtown	Number of Reservations	0	325	N/A
	Downtown	Number of People	0	2558	N/A
	Ladd	Number of Reservations	0	67	N/A
	Ladd	Number of People	0	662	N/A
Number of Visitors	Downtown	Door Count - Downtown	1,832	22,958	92%
	Ladd	Door Count - Ladd	1,457	6,993	79%
	Total	Door Count - Total	3,289	29,951	89%
Curbside Holds	Total	Curbside Holds - Number of Patrons	6,828	211	-97%
*Number of items was not possible after Polaris transition					
Materials Circulation	Circulation	Print Circulation	23,852	38,559	38%
		Total Circulation	41,345	57,185	28%
		MLN Circulation (Print only)	42,657	65,970	35%

To: Monica Challenger, Finance Committee Chair
From: Dara Schmidt
Date: 2/9/2022
Subject: **January 2022** Financial Report

In January, the City received State Coronavirus Relief funds that was created for denied FEMA projects relating to COVID. This revenue covers expenses posted FY 2020 and FY 2021. Due to prior year expenses, the City amended the Library budgets in January to include the revenue. Total received for Library was \$90,394.83 with fund breakdowns are included in the notes below.

Library Operations 151XXX: I have reviewed the January 2022 financial information. Here are items, concerns, and highlights that you should be aware of:

- When reviewing budget to actual, we assume 1/12 of the expenditure budget is spent per month; likewise that 1/12 of revenue will be received per month. If we assume this, that means thru January actual revenue should be at least **7/12 or 58.3%** of budget and actual expenses should be no more than **7/12 or 58.3%**.
- Actual revenues are expected to meet or exceed budgeted amounts.
 - **Total actual revenue (less Flood insurance transfer in) is 69% or \$503K of budgeted \$730K. – exceeding budget due to receipt of Linn County annual payment.**
 - If you are short revenues at yearend, unspent expenditure budget will have to cover.
- Regardless of funds/cash available, total actual expenses, excluding transfer out, may not exceed total budgeted expenses.
 - **Total actual expenditures are 58.2% or \$4.12M of \$7.1M budgeted. Right on track with budget.**
 - *Total FY22 COVID expenses recorded thru January is \$5.1K. See below for COVID info.*
 - Personal Services is tracking at 54% or \$2.93M of \$5.42M budget.
 - Discretionary is trending above budget. Total incurred thru January is \$566.8K of \$633K budget or 89%.
 - Accounts over budget are: IT related for computer hardware & software maintenance including one broadband payment that was for FY21 of \$4.8K, building & grounds supplies.
 - 531109 – Equipment/Furniture/Fixtures is at 445% spent or 51K of 11.5K budget. This is mainly due to Chromebooks purchased for circulation that were not budgeted but will be reimbursed by and Emergency Connectivity Fund Federal Grant. In addition, the Library purchased an archive collection storage unit to prepare for transfer of the Zerzanek Collection to the Library from the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art. Both of these expenses can be moved into 7010 funds if necessary at the end of the fiscal year to make budget.
 - Estimated budget remaining expected in Other expenses 522107 to help offset building and grounds spending, up to \$25K.
 - Rent of Land & Buildings has incurred 12 months of Lease & Cam (\$16,387.67) for Ladd library for total FY cost of \$196,652.04. Parking actuals thru January is \$25K.
 - Electricity is over budget thru January. 62% spent or \$117.7K of \$188.8K budget. Estimated to exceed budget by at least \$15K at yearend. Bu
 - Facilities Maintenance has posted EMS costs thru January - \$9.5K. Maintenance for July – November is 112K, estimating annual \$25K budget remaining for discretionary spending.

- **Current budget amendments** = July adjustment posted to remove Refresh Savings (\$92K) and *January added revenue budget of \$5,616.60 for COVID State reimbursement for prior year expenses.*
 - Moved budget across funds to cover capital expenses (meeting room technology) as shown in spreadsheet for cost-neutral tracking purposes

CIP:

316 – 54% or \$271K spent of \$500K budget on circulation material.

- **Current budget amendments** = *January added revenue budget of \$58,878.82 for COVID State reimbursement for prior year expenses.*

Special Revenue:

7010 – 23% or \$51.6K of budgeted revenues \$220K have been received and 8% or \$50K of budgeted expenses \$663K has been spent.

- Budgeted \$463K use of fund balance in FY22, current revenues cover current expenses, without using fund balance.
- **Current budget amendments** = *January added revenue budget of \$20K for COVID State reimbursement for prior year expenses.*

7020 – 100% or \$25K of budgeted expenses have been spent. Current fund balance is just over \$25K.

- **Current budget amendments** = *January added revenue budget of \$5,899.41 for COVID State reimbursement for prior year expenses.*

Account Name	Account	Prior Fiscal Year 2021 YTD Actuals	Current Fiscal Year 2022 Adjusted Budget	Current Fiscal Year 2022 YTD Actuals	Favorable (Unfavorable) Variance	Percent of Budget Received Spent	Current Month 2022 Actuals	
Revenue								
Taxes								
Total Taxes		-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Intergovernmental Revenue								
State Operating	422001	97,473.90	120,616.60	112,069.27	(8,547.33)	93%	5,616.60	Enrich Iowa & COVID Aid
Local Govt Grants	423000	21,426.26	130,000.00	107,264.82	(22,735.18)	83%	100,670.19	\$5,616.60 for Prior Year Expense
Total Intergovernmental Revenue		118,900.16	250,616.60	219,334.09	(31,282.51)	88%	106,286.79	Reimb Robins User Fee - Qtr 1 & 2 and Linn County
Other Revenue								
Printing & Duplicating of Form	431006	557.65	25,000.00	2,694.95	(22,305.05)	11%	469.10	
Admin Charges - External	431012	228,544.28	330,000.00	225,599.58	(104,400.42)	68%	59,373.21	
Library User Fees - Not Fines	431201	-	600.00	5,658.19	5,058.19	943%	563.90	
Vending Sales	431301	9.98	-	32.04	32.04	0%	-	
Library Fines	441001	3,818.96	-	-	-	0%	-	
Building Rental	461001	5,382.40	43,455.00	20,517.40	(22,937.60)	47%	4,160.20	
Contributions & Donations	471002	46,917.29	70,000.00	28,500.00	(41,500.00)	41%	-	
Sale of Inventory	471003	395.25	7,000.00	878.75	(6,121.25)	13%	93.50	
Other Miscellaneous Revenue	471005	-	3,500.00	-	(3,500.00)	0%	-	
Total Other Revenue		285,625.81	479,555.00	283,880.91	(195,674.09)	59%	64,659.91	
Proceeds of Long Term Liabilities								
Total Proceeds of Long Term Liabilities		-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Transfers In								
Operating Transfer In - Inter	483001	14,000.00	14,000.00	14,000.00	-	100%	-	flood insurance
Total Transfers In		14,000.00	14,000.00	14,000.00	-	100%	-	
Total Revenue		418,525.97	744,171.60	517,215.00	(226,956.60)	70%	170,946.70	
Expenditures								
Personal Services								
Regular Employees	511100	2,085,597.84	3,899,390.00	2,174,914.65	1,724,475.35	56%	312,452.42	City budget refresh
Temporary/Seasonal Employees	511200	-	31,803.20	-	31,803.20	0%	-	
Overtime	511300	(1,006.14)	114,773.40	44,002.31	70,771.09	38%	6,334.23	
Other Special Pays	511400	11,011.75	18,894.00	19,478.12	(584.12)	103%	-	
Group Insurance	512100	250,569.95	503,982.00	250,146.83	253,835.17	50%	41,115.38	
Social Security Contributions	512200	150,552.02	317,122.00	160,596.90	156,525.10	51%	21,428.82	
Retirement Contribution	512300	191,664.87	392,024.00	203,462.29	188,561.71	52%	27,325.04	
Unemployment Compensation	512400	3,338.74	-	-	-	0%	-	
Workers' Compensation	512500	79,576.98	143,639.00	75,350.75	68,288.25	52%	10,227.05	
Other Employee Benefits	512600	3,605.62	6,365.76	3,734.84	2,630.92	59%	579.68	
Total Personal Services		2,774,911.63	5,427,993.36	2,931,686.69	2,496,306.67	54%	419,462.62	
Discretionary Expenses								
Advertising & Marketing	521100	9,559.68	25,000.00	11,474.44	13,525.56	46%	4,622.46	
Consulting & Technical Service	521104	1,890.00	-	46,940.18	(46,940.18)	0%	21,008.48	moved to cover 55400 capital expense
External Contracted Labor	521105	31,764.47	63,000.00	47,994.19	15,005.81	76%	3,616.70	
Health Services	521106	177.00	-	203.55	(203.55)	0%	29.50	
Other Professional Services	521108	36.00	5,250.00	2,097.00	3,153.00	40%	-	moved to cover 55400 capital expense
External Banking/Financial Fee	521109	5,330.87	17,700.00	7,786.47	9,913.53	44%	1,509.64	
Security Services	521110	-	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	0%	-	
Computer Hardware	522100	25,478.26	35,000.00	40,076.44	(5,076.44)	115%	332.50	
Computer Software Maintenance	522101	181,803.17	175,220.00	145,886.14	29,333.86	83%	917.38	
IT Services - External	522102	54,582.86	20,500.00	31,320.41	(10,820.41)	153%	2,515.68	
Building & Grounds Services	522104	449.00	-	1,543.80	(1,543.80)	0%	-	
Equip/Furniture/Fixtures Serv	522105	13,971.22	9,000.00	-	9,000.00	0%	-	
Phone Services	523107	17,994.61	26,500.00	17,849.27	8,650.73	67%	2,559.12	
Rental of Equip & Vehicles	524101	-	500.00	-	500.00	0%	-	
Printing, Binding, & Duplicate	525102	4,047.78	15,500.00	7,240.66	8,259.34	47%	1,169.32	
Awards & Recognition	531102	15.00	500.00	22.50	477.50	5%	7.50	
Books & Subscriptions	531103	92,781.56	109,171.80	102,236.35	6,935.45	94%	15,238.46	
Cleaning & Janitorial Supplies	531105	1,217.30	1,250.00	97.36	1,152.64	8%	-	
Computer Supplies	531106	1,615.92	5,000.00	1,836.66	3,163.34	37%	98.98	
Equipment/Furniture/Fixtures	531109	1,914.91	11,500.00	51,226.16	(39,726.16)	445%	46,013.59	includes Chromebooks for circulation & an archive collection storage see memo
Photography Supplies	531110	-	500.00	-	500.00	0%	-	
Miscellaneous Supplies	531114	188.35	2,000.00	393.39	1,606.61	20%	79.05	
Office Supplies	531116	6,951.45	15,320.00	9,983.65	5,336.35	65%	1,290.25	
Program Supplies	531118	9,872.87	37,000.00	19,955.93	17,044.07	54%	3,064.86	
Shop Supplies	531119	12.10	250.00	11.89	238.11	5%	-	
Sign & Signal Supplies	531120	-	-	235.13	(235.13)	0%	-	
Uniforms	531123	-	694.00	-	694.00	0%	-	
Personal Protective Gear	531124	1,498.42	-	3,826.27	(3,826.27)	0%	754.41	
Building & Grounds Supplies	533100	48.40	1,748.15	4,180.51	(2,432.36)	239%	1,020.08	supplies for internal facilities position budget requested for next year
Equip/Furniture/Fixtures Parts	533101	243.46	-	426.74	(426.74)	0%	203.98	
Conferences, Training, Travel	542102	1,074.00	14,747.29	2,269.67	12,477.62	15%	1,980.00	moved to cover 55400 capital expense
Dues & Memberships	542103	5,896.24	10,000.00	6,916.55	3,083.45	69%	1,073.00	
Miscellaneous Costs	542107	-	-	-	-	0%	-	moved to cover 55400 capital expense
Postage & Freight	542108	1,501.71	17,500.00	2,585.10	14,914.90	15%	1,006.14	
Mileage Reimbursement	542111	6.90	3,000.00	188.92	2,811.08	6%	26.74	
Admin Charges - Inter Departments	521114	-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Chemical Supplies - Non-Snow & Ice	531104	-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Facility Services - Non-routine	522107	-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Fleet Services - Abnormal Maintenance	522108	-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Fleet Services - Non-Safety Modifications	522108	-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Fleet Services - Accidents	522108	-	-	-	-	0%	-	
Total Discretionary Expenses		471,923.51	633,351.24	566,805.33	66,545.91	89%	110,137.82	
Other Expenses								
City Accounting Services	521113	42,583.94	75,000.00	43,750.00	31,250.00	58%	6,250.00	
City Information Tech Services	522109	5,391.54	9,242.64	5,391.54	3,851.10	58%	770.22	
Electricity	523100	97,712.82	188,800.00	117,658.37	71,141.63	62%	28,485.66	
Natural Gas	523103	1,157.64	4,500.00	3,301.52	1,198.48	73%	2,642.52	
Rental of Land & Buildings	524100	133,009.19	245,000.00	221,702.04	23,297.96	90%	71,722.43	Ladd rent billed through end of year
Liability Insurance	525104	13,646.50	31,315.00	20,452.51	10,862.49	65%	2,609.58	
Property Insurance	525107	30,632.63	88,821.00	51,812.25	37,008.75	58%	7,401.75	
Vehicle Insurance	525108	350.00	1,746.00	1,018.50	727.50	58%	145.50	
Gasoline Fuel	532101	19.40	498.58	93.81	404.77	19%	53.50	
City Inter Department Charges	521114	-	-	-	-	0%	-	

City of Cedar Rapids
 151 General Fund - Library
 2022-01-31

Account Name	Account	Prior Fiscal Year 2021 YTD Actuals	Current Fiscal Year 2022 Adjusted Budget	Current Fiscal Year 2022 YTD Actuals	Favorable (Unfavorable) Variance	Percent of Budget Received Spent	Current Month 2022 Actuals
Chemical Supplies - Snow & Ice	531104	-	-	-	-	0%	-
Facility Services (Routine)	522107	76,823.41	311,558.07	121,955.98	189,602.09	39%	24,252.04
Fleet Services (Routine)	522108	462.33	250.00	137.60	112.40	55%	-
Total Other Expenses		401,789.40	956,731.29	587,274.12	369,457.17	61%	144,333.20
Capital Outlay							
Vehicles, Equipment, Software	554000	-	48,452.71	30,243.66	18,209.05	62%	12,269.22
Total Capital Outlay		-	48,452.71	30,243.66	18,209.05	62%	12,269.22
Debt Service							
Total Debt Service		-	-	-	-	0%	-
Transfers Out							
Total Transfers Out		-	-	-	-	0%	-
Total Expenditures		3,648,624.54	7,066,528.60	4,116,009.80	2,950,518.80	58%	686,202.86
Net Revenues over/(under) Expenditures		(3,230,098.57)	(6,322,357.00)	(3,598,794.80)	2,723,562.20		(515,256.16)

budget moved as above to cover meeting room tech update



Chapter 8: Evaluating Service and Advocating for Advancements

Evaluating Service

The library has a strategic plan and a budget that dictate what the library should be doing to provide service to the community. It is the board's responsibility to monitor and evaluate overall results of service and programming based on these documents. Monitoring doesn't mean that you should be in the library every day observing the kind of service provided by library staff. However, the board can survey the community to measure the satisfaction of those who use the library and to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The very term "trustee" indicates what the community expects from you. The community puts its trust in you to make sure the library is operating the way it should and the library is achieving the desired outcomes. It's your job to keep an eye on the progress of the library for the community.

A successful library reflects the strategic plan and the annual budget working to support each other.

Board Evaluation

Another aspect of evaluation is gauging the effectiveness of the board itself. Successful boards pay attention to communication, relationships, and hold themselves accountable for smart decision making. The most highly functioning libraries are led by highly functioning boards.

Your group should take time every year to formally evaluate board performance. The purpose of a board evaluation exercise is not to find fault with individuals, but instead to identify strengths and areas for improvement. A board evaluation should be followed with a plan to improve. See **Appendix** for sample board assessment tools.

Advocating For Advancements

As a library advocate, it is necessary that you understand the value and importance of public library service. And further, that you communicate that value to the community, government leaders, and other decision-makers. When you advocate for better public library service, you are promoting a better quality of life for your community today and in the future. Advocacy is a primary role of library trustees because you have statutory responsibility for your library's governance and are expected to better its services.

As a volunteer leader of the library, you can be a good advocate for the organization because your motivation is service to the community. Board members are also community leaders and influential in the community, prime qualities for an advocate. You serve as the connection between the local community and its public library and are in a unique position to promote the library and see that it meets the needs of the community.

Advocacy efforts will generally be part of a planned board effort, where the board speaks with one voice. You, as an individual board member, can speak about the board's official position on issues and can also promote the interests of the library at any time. Advocacy may include establishing a relationship with the mayor, city council, and county board of supervisors; communicating to the taxpayers the needs and plans of the library; and carrying out public relations activities for the library.

In carrying out its advocacy role, one of the main responsibilities of library boards is to obtain adequate funding for the library. As a representative of the general public, you can make a more effective case for the importance of adequate funding for the library than the director, who may be viewed as having a vested interest in a larger budget.

Effective advocacy requires:

- ❖ A deep personal commitment to your library and the services it provides.
- ❖ A willingness to go out into your community on behalf of the library.
- ❖ A sense of what the community needs the library to be in the future.
- ❖ A willingness to work to help move the library forward.

Telling the Library Story

Don't wait for a budget presentation to make a case for needed funding or to describe library programs and services. To make sure the library is seen as an essential community service, tell the library story all year. Invite officials to library programs and activities. Ask the director to provide reference services and assistance to city departments and officials. Share your successes with your city and county. Awards, record numbers at summer library programs, staff accomplishments and news articles should be part of regular reporting about the library to the city council.

In your community there are people who use the library and people who pay taxes to support the library but do not use it. Embrace all community members and be prepared to work with groups as well as individuals. This means not just waiting for an invitation, but initiating opportunities to meet with community groups such as Rotary, Kiwanis, school parent-teacher groups, Chamber of Commerce. Learn about community issues, interests, and concerns. Work with the director and other board members to communicate how the library can meet the needs of the community.

A successful advocate can bring new users and new revenue into the library, as well as increased awareness of library service. Legislators have been known to change their view of libraries after speaking to a trustee advocate. Or the people you talk with might become so enthused that they will leave a bequest to the library in their will, help with a fundraiser, or speak to state or federal legislators on behalf of the library.

More information regarding **Advocacy** is available on the State Library website.

Intellectual Freedom Advocate

Finally, as a trustee advocate, you will be a defender of intellectual freedom, defined by the American Library Association as the “the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction.” Once the board has established a collection development policy and library resources are purchased which respond to community needs, trustee advocates must recognize a sacrosanct responsibility to permit people access to those materials. One of the most frequent questions asked of trustee advocates (usually in front of an audience) is whether a particular book or other item should be in the library's collection. The response must be unequivocal in defense of intellectual freedom.

See **Chapter 15: Intellectual Freedom** for more information.

“A library outranks any other one thing that a community can do to benefit its people.”

Andrew Carnegie

A Statement of Ethics for Library Trustees

Public library trustees are accountable for the resources of the library as well as to see that the library provides the best possible service to its community.

Every trustee makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to faithfully carry out his/her duties and responsibilities effectively and with absolute truth, honor and integrity.

- Trustees shall respect the opinions of their colleagues and not be critical or disrespectful when they disagree or oppose a viewpoint different than their own.
- Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their library.
- Trustees, in fulfilling their responsibilities, shall not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure or fear of criticism.
- Trustees shall not engage in discrimination of any kind and shall uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in the use of library resources.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.
- Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business and not disclose such information to anyone. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information laws
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained as a result of their position or access to privileged library information, for either themselves or others.
- A trustee shall immediately disqualify him/herself whenever the appearance of or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees shall not use their position to gain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others from the library or from those who do business with the library.
- Trustees shall not interfere with the management responsibilities of the director or the supervision of library staff.
- Trustees shall support the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- All authority is vested in the board when it meets in legal session and not with individual board members.

Amended from the policy approved by the United for Libraries Board in January 2012.

Members of the Cedar Rapids Public Library Board of Trustees are appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council of Cedar Rapids, Iowa and are also governed under city policy 1.11 titled Ethics.

Adopted: 01/30/92

Revised: 11/99, 08/05, 10/2015, 3/2019

Reviewed: 2013, 3/2022

Department Updates

Community Relations events and activities are picking up as the weather warms up. We have just launched the spring issue of *OPEN+*, including many in-person and virtual event options for patrons. We are continuing to share stories of the 125th Anniversary, including highlighting some of the memories we are receiving from the public. We are beginning work on our summer 2022 collateral and promotions.

Events has had another busy month particularly managing daily use of our spaces. Many of our planned corporate events have been moved to March due to the Omicron variant. One event that did not get rescheduled was hosted by Swamp Fox Bookstore from Marion who held a public conversation with author Heather Gudenkauf in Whipple Auditorium on January 26 to celebrate her latest book.

In January 2021, we launched the Closed Captioning volunteer role. In the past year, volunteers have captioned 111 videos. That is 30% of all videos posted on the Library's YouTube channel. The work of these volunteers is directly aligned with our mission and our ongoing goal of connecting with and better serving our diverse community. We look forward to continuing to expand the program and making these videos more accessible to our community - both in Cedar Rapids and beyond. Volunteer Hours in January 2022: 301 hours

The *Materials* department has been busy with Spring arrivals at the start of the heavier publishing season. Supply chain issues affecting print materials are persisting but we are seeing some increase in availability. We have seen enormous success with our Wonderbook collection Downtown and are planning an expansion of this very popular format. These are print children's books at multiple reading levels with a built-in audio component to allow for an easy read-along. These items are in high demand from our vendors but we hope to have our expansion complete for summer.

The *Technology Solutions* team has been working on updating meeting room hardware at our Ladd Community Room. This should work similarly to our technology available in Beems Auditorium and the Conference Room Downtown, allowing for more hybrid virtual and in-person meetings. The team is also working on ADA updates to our technology spaces allowing better access to printing, faxing, and scanning.

Programming has seen a lot of exciting things begin in the past month! The Maker Room, a by-appointment learning lab allowing patrons to get in-depth hands on experience with a variety of technology, has officially opened, and has been in use every day since opening! Patrons of varying ages have utilized the space, and have created things on the 3D Printer, the laser cutter, and the button maker. Our Grant Wood Country Online Writer's Forum – a 10-week programming partnership between the CR and Anamosa Libraries, the Grant Wood Writers Forum, the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, and the Iowa Poetry Association – has been immensely successful, bringing together more than 50 people from around the country to explore creative writing through the lens of Grant Wood's art. In-person and online Early Learning programs were well attended by patrons, and we brought back live music to the Commons, which delighted the over 75 patrons who enjoyed Charlotte Blu's performance.

Plans are also being finalized for Summer 2022, where we are going to reach over a dozen different locations each week around the city with a variety of library programming – working to bridge the digital and print literacy gap for young children, students, teens, and adults. We are also working to develop a wide-ranging array of programs and partnerships to support the workforce development efforts happening across the city by supplying our technology and expertise to all aspects of community efforts.

Public Service. Based on the success of the Service Navigator Position at the library and the need of patrons using the library – we started piloting a project in February to expand Service Navigator availability during more library operation hours. Crystal Carter accepted this opportunity starting in February, and between Crystal and our other Service Navigator Wes, we are able to

offer this service for 50 hours per week. If successful, we may be able to offer additional hours for FY23. After Crystal started, we have seen an increase in compliance with library behavior issues.

Director Goal Updates

1. Engage stakeholders and the community by updating the strategic plan while maintaining the priorities of Literacy, Access, and Inclusion: No progress this month.
2. Connect with patrons and stakeholders to help them engage in the library's story and make it their story. Utilize new and existing pathways (committees, board packets, data and metrics) to further storytelling: No progress this month.
3. Prepare a long-term west-side service strategy: No progress this month.

Great Stories

A message over Instagram Messenger from a patron:

I'd just like to say thanks! We have 6-8 hours in the car coming up this weekend, but I checked out a couple great audiobooks from CRPL for the family to listen to! It is so easy, convenient, efficient, and WONDERFUL to have this resource at my fingertips. Thank you for helping to entertain my kids with books (even when one feels ill if he reads physical books in the car.) We love our public library!

A patron was needing assistance filling out his travel visa. English was not his first language. I read all of the questions out loud and helped him understand what they meant. He told me about his country of origin. A small northeast African country on the Red Sea coast. He was unsure how to attach a photo of his passport to the visa application, but I made it seem effortless to him. We finished up and he thank me for taking the time to go through the application with him. He said he wouldn't have been able to complete it without help. It was an unexpected surprise when he showed back up a few days later beaming with joy. His application had been approved and he could go home to visit his family. He needed help printing off the acceptance letter/barcode to show at customs. I was so honored to be a part of his journey home. - Elysha Holley, Patron Services Specialist