



FEBRUARY 2021

MONTHLY REPORT

From the Director

Children's programs returned to live online performances. The Storytime and Toddler Time formats were revamped to allow staff to film without masks from home – an important early literacy aspect. Staff are planning a new program, "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" which will begin in March. As the name suggests, this program encourages parents to read 1,000 books to their children before kindergarten starts. The Beanstack app, which was used for summer reading last year, will be used to track books. Teen programs included online gaming tournaments on two Friday evenings.

Adult programs in February celebrated Black History Month with the PROFILES presentation on the "Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement," which had a spirited conversation with participants after the presentation. Hoping to bolster attendance, the Tuesday evening English Conversation Group changed meeting days to Mondays. Article Club and Book Club continued as scheduled, but the genealogy workshop was postponed due to the power outages from the winter storm. The same storm kept the library closed for two days and some staff helped out at the city's debris drop-off site.

The Winter Reading Challenge ended February 28. Over one hundred participants of all ages signed up and completed nearly three hundred reading activities. Prizes will be distributed to winners in March. The next reading challenge for all ages is the Spring Break Reading Challenge, which will start March 15.

We added some services in February. New to the lineup is the return of the faxing service. Thanks to revised policies and procedures, Chromebooks and WiFi hotspots are available once again for patrons to check out.

Along with other City departments, library staff participated in a safety drill concerning suspicious mail. Our safety representative has served her 2 year term and passed the torch to a new staff member, who has hit the ground running.

The American Red Cross held a blood drive on February 2 in the library parking lot. The next scheduled blood drive is Friday, April 2.

New on-call clerks and a shelver started work this month. We are pleased to have them on-board and already into the swing of things.

Rotary International approved a \$1,000 grant to the library in support of the Summer Reading Program. This Program encourages parents and children to read books appropriate for their level with the chance of winning a prize for the most books read. Funds from the grant will be used to purchase books, puppets, and science kits as prizes for winners.

The sense that the library has been incredibly busy during open hours was validated with recent circulation numbers. Before the pandemic, library users checked out on average 1,500 items during a regular day (open 10 hours). Currently, we have been seeing daily item checkouts around 1,000 items on a regular day in our limited hours (open 4 hours). Compared to before the pandemic, we also have three times the number of items on our holds shelves that patrons have ordered for pickup.

-Pat Duke, Library Director