



## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 2020

### **Staff and Volunteers:**

The full-time Library Assistant I position was offered to the board-appointed candidate. However, due to the closing of the Library, her start date remains undetermined.

Supervisors, librarians, and library assistants have been taking advantage of many online training opportunities as they learn new methods of library service in the virtual world. Examples of classes offered include: running an online book club, creating effective video content, managing working from home, offering virtual reference assistance, etc.

Staff in the three service departments (Adult, Children's, Support) remain available to patrons via email and Google Voice. Google Voice creates a telephone number that enables staff (taking turns in shifts) to engage in conversation with and answer queries by patrons without using their personal phone numbers during regular Library business hours. It also handles texting. The email addresses and Google Voice phone number are displayed on the Library's homepage.

### **Collections:**

The electronic collections have seen a significant increase in usage with the closing of the Library due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As we have temporarily ceased purchasing print materials, the budget has been shifted to building the online offerings. Overdrive eBook circulation rose over 20% this month. The checkouts per month limits for our two pay-per-use services, Kanopy (movies) and Hoopla (ebooks, digital audiobooks, movies, and TV), were raised and resulted in a 119% and 68% increase in usage, respectively.

Arrangements were made for temporary, remote access to the genealogical research database, Ancestry.com. Prior to the pandemic-related shutdown, in-house access was the only method.

When the Library was first closed, several carts of discarded and donated books and audiovisual materials were placed on the portico as a "little free library." This was a popular attraction for patrons who were disappointed to learn that the Library had closed but still needed reading and watching material. There was intent to keep the

little free library stocked through the closure; however, with the NYS-mandated closure of non-essential businesses, we have been unable to replenish it.

### **Programs:**

Programming has taken on a decidedly different format with the Library closed.

At the beginning of the month, we had a successful Bobby Darrin program and a well-attended teen babysitter’s class. But by the end of the month, our focus shifted to creating online content and keeping our social media accounts active and engaging.

In March, our inactive YouTube channel was brought back to life with new content: storytimes, local history topics, poem readings, children’s music, tech instruction, book reviews, etc. To date, there are 75 videos posted on the channel. All of the content has been created by both children’s and adult librarians and their supervisors.

While not programming per se, the Library’s social media activity has been an effective method of connecting with patrons and alerting them to our constantly evolving services and collections:

- Facebook – 560 followers (up 45 from last month). Engagement rate up to 24.4% from 5.4%
- Instagram – 703 followers (up 34 from last month)

### **Building and Facilities:**

The Library was closed to the public on Friday, March 13, due to the increasing concern for the health and safety of patrons and staff in light of the evolving COVID-19 Pandemic. Staff remained that day and altered the physical arrangement of the public areas to accommodate the recommended social distancing practice in the anticipation of re-opening. However, after doubts remained, the Library remained closed through the weekend as more was learned about the transmission of the virus.

On March 14, the decision was made to keep the Library closed through the end of the month. On March 23, after email consultation with the Library board, the decision was made to remain closed “indefinitely.”

**Technology:**

Makerspace Librarian Matt Aull was given permission to take home the Library’s 3D printer, and he has been in significant production of over 57 face shield frames as PPE for healthcare workers. Please be sure to watch his video on the YouTube channel.

**Miscellaneous:**

We are able to offer library card sign-up via an online form that will give patrons access to all of our online offerings immediately. Once the Library re-opens, those patrons would need to come into the Library with a photo ID to fully activate the card and check out physical materials.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marianne Gallagher, Director  
NEW CITY LIBRARY  
April 13, 2020

MG/kc