TO: RPL Board of Trustees  
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director  
DATE: April 29, 2020  
SUBJECT: Monthly Report – April 2020  

Action Items  

Amendment, Tri-Delta Resources (Harrison)  
To accelerate rollout of Branch library public computers, and in support of Windows upgrades at all RPL locations, Library Automation staff have requested additional hours from Tri-Delta through the end of the fiscal year. Tri-Delta maintains an annual equipment service agreement approved by the Board in June 2019. An additional $4,000 will provide a block of consultant hours for PC set-up and Windows server configuration. Funding is available from the operating budget for Library Automation professional services. This will increase the current agreement to a total not-to-exceed of $7,000.  

Board Action Requested: Approval of an amended agreement with Tri-Delta Resources, Inc. for an additional $4,000, with a revised not to exceed total of $7,000, for the services described.  

Report Items  

RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting  

Budget updates: as everyone is already aware, measures taken by Federal, State and local governments to mitigate the spread of coronavirus has placed revenues and government activity into unknown territory. We are planning for the next several budget cycles to follow reductions similar or in access of the 2008-10 recession. For the RPL, this means tracking NYS Aid, City tax support and County tax support. While our work is fluid currently we have the following updates:  

- NYS Library Formula Aid will be reduced 2.6% for 2020, which impacts current MCLS and RPL budgets. For Central and Community budgets, these reductions are minor and primarily supported library materials, which can be reduced to meet changes in revenue receipts. We are working through freezing several expenses on the MCLS side that should not substantially impact system operations.  
- City property tax support will be reduced by an additional $317,200 for the FY21 budget year; library management is working through targeted savings efforts on the Community budget and Capital side. We will update the Board at the meeting with a proposed amended budget for consideration in May.  
- We have reached out to the County for guidance on the level of Central Library support for the County 2020 and 2021 budget but have not received information at this time.  

Facility and capital updates: the City has determined that all current public works construction projects are essential construction activities under the Governor’s Executive Orders; therefore Rundel Terrace and Technology Center activities continue. Facilities is opening Central Library daily for our Technology Center contractors and sub-contractors and Brie is representing Library on all weekly construction meetings, which have moved online. We are in process of re-negotiating CIP requests for annual allocations, Rundel masonry
work and Bausch & Lomb building HVAC; the final CIP will be shared with all proposed operating budget changes in May. Several project updates are as follows:

- **Rundel Silt Removal Project**: This NYSED-funded grant project was completed in early March, with repair of the original basin flush valve and removal of 6,000 cubic yards of sediment, ensuring optimal building cooling chiller operations. Given the ongoing turbidity of the river, it is likely sediment clearing in a reduced capacity may be required every few years. The City and Library will pursue a bid for term contract services in 2021; the current contractor provided fill and ramping for improved access in the future.

- **Master Space Plan Phase 4, Technology Center**: Construction is nearing completion, with anticipated furnishings and IT equipment installations in late April/early May. We anticipate a soft opening to coincide with building re-opening, with PC relocations from Divisions to occur prior to re-opening Central to the public.

- **Rundel Terrace Reconstruction**: A groundbreaking ceremony celebrated the start of construction on March 5th. This will be a two-year project. It will involve the removal and re-building of the north terrace (Broad Street), as well as the removal and reconstruction of the sidewalks and bus shelter along the east terrace (South Avenue). The east terrace portion has an impact on building accessibility; fencing around South Avenue now redirects future entrance from the Court Street sidewalk while maintaining public access to Rundel for future. Library staff are in regular contact with the City’s designated construction managers and attend bi-weekly construction meetings (via conference) to review schedules and work scope for the project duration, given complexity of this project. There are three contractors involved with this project: Crane-Hogan (General Contractor), Hewitt-Young (Electrical Contractor), and Cannon & Noto (Plumbing Contractor). As shared previously, there will be four art installations by Chevo Studios. The project website will be updated as progress continues: https://www.cityofrochester.gov/rundelterrace/

- **Lincoln Branch Library design**: Thirteen firms submitted proposals; City Architectural Services and Library are submitting questions to the top two scoring firms, with a recommendation by mid-April. This first phase priority of the Branch Facilities and Operations Plan provides interior design services includes program development, schematic design and cost estimating to enable a NYSED library construction grant application. The focus of the full project is to improve sightlines, provide safe and secure entry, improve signage and access, and optimize access and visibility to the Toy Library. Given the reduction in NYSED construction grant funds, we will be requesting the project be developed as potentially a two-phase project: interior finishes, and exterior landscape, parking and vestibule/entry improvements. We anticipate this to be a six-month project beginning in late summer 2020.

- **Douglass Green Roof Installation**: Titan Roofing will begin construction of a green roofing application at the Douglass branch this summer. This project was partially funded from a state Water Quality Improvement Program grant, which will act as a demonstration of newer green roofing technology as well as reducing storm water runoff and add to building insulation. We are confirming construction schedules now. An image of the current plan is below.

- **Technology updates**: The FY21 round of Federal E-rate program included new proposal solicitation for internet and digital transmission services, as well as a firewall replacement. The MCLS Board approved three-year agreements for internet and digital transmission services with Crown Castle Fiber in March. All branch libraries will increase bandwidth to a minimum 100 Mbps. We will provide a summary of selection process to the Board at the meeting.
Central Library Updates

Access to Digital Content

Due to COVID related closures, many MCLS libraries have shifted their budgets to electronic content, with a focus on Overdrive. Overall MCLS spending on Overdrive content was up almost 400% from last March (2019). Alicia Gunther set up 29 new purchasers and led a workshop called “Introduction to Overdrive Marketplace,” to support library staff who have not purchased e-content in Overdrive. In addition, Overdrive reduced pricing on a model called “Cost-per-Circ,” which allows unlimited simultaneous use, but charges for each use; Gunther added 14 titles to this collection (and an additional 20 Overdrive made available for free) to help alleviate holds and allow access to classics generally taught in schools; Duke Publishing made their collections of over 4,000 titles freely available, which has been added to the MCLS collection.
In a surprise announcement on March 17, Macmillan CEO John Sargent issued a brief memo stating the company would be lifting the embargo they created in November 2019. That embargo had limited libraries, or library systems with a shared e-book platform, to one copy of a new title for the first 8 weeks after publication. Since Macmillan has lifted their embargo, MCLS has resumed purchasing Macmillan content.

**Arts & Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting**

**Programs**

- Librarian Mary Fraser applied to the "Eastman to Go" program, and the Central Library was chosen as a concert venue this year. "Eastman to Go" is an annual event in which the Eastman School of Music sends selected freshmen into the community to play chamber music, and to talk about their instruments and choices of music. Five young musicians calling themselves the "Wonderful Woodwinds" performed works ranging from Beethoven to "Let it Go" from Frozen in the Kusler-Cox Auditorium. The students each had a chance to talk about their backgrounds, having come to Eastman from all over the world. Flutist Jahshanti Henry is from Rochester, and he described how the Pathways program, a collaboration between the Rochester City School District and the Eastman School of Music, gave him the opportunity to learn to play the flute. Jahshanti was able to develop his talent to such a high level that he was accepted to Eastman School of Music on a full scholarship. His inspiring story and beautiful musicianship was a wonderful example of how community partnerships can change lives.

- Irish music, and a little bit of Mardi Gras, were the themes for the March Ukulele Sing & Strum Jam session, led by Fraser. Since the group has been meeting in the Kusler-Cox Auditorium, where there is more space and privacy than in our previous location, there has been an increase in participants who use wheelchairs, as well as a greater range of ages and backgrounds. Bringing people together through music is one of the benefits of the jam, besides giving people a chance to improve their ukulele playing skills.

- Librarian Carol Moldt is very pleased to say that their monthly Brownbag Book Discussion group met during March, despite the closure of the library. They used the Zoom video conferencing site to meet on their usual scheduled day to discuss the historic fiction book, *The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn. This popular novel tells the stories of two courageous women, one a spy for England during WWI and the other an American woman searching for her lost cousin in Europe post-WWII, and their journey to resolution and healing after their lives become intertwined. The discussion was a great success with most of the group participating and gave Moldt great encouragement to continue to offer some library programs via Zoom during library closure.

- The final Lecture in the 2020: African American History Series at Central was given by Dr. Marvin McMickle, President Emeritus of Colgate Divinity. The lecture title was *Five Faces of the African American Religious Experience: Richard Allen, Martin Luther King Jr., Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Samuel DeWitt Proctor and Malcolm X*. Art and Lit plans on continuing the series next year.

**Business Insight Center, Jennifer Byrnes reporting**

**Outreach**

- Byrnes and Kate Meddaugh met with Winona Dixon, Manager, Research and Information Systems at Greater Rochester Enterprise and Gaby Amos, Business Development Associate, to discuss how the Business Insight Center and Carlson Center can better partner with Greater Rochester Enterprise. They also met twice with two Monroe Community College professors to discuss Monroe Community College’s “Launch Your Business” Business Plan Competition in May. Byrnes and Meddaugh will present to participants via Zoom on how the BIC can assist them, and Byrnes will be a judge for the event. For more information: [https://www.monroecc.edu/events/launch-your-business](https://www.monroecc.edu/events/launch-your-business).
- Byrnes and Meddaugh video recorded two podcasts for RocStarts.com, one on market research and one on intellectual property. Those will be posted at https://nextcorps.org/podcast.
- Meddaugh assisted six students at Rochester Institute of Technology’s Simone Center for Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship. She also attended Roc Starts Coffee Hour and spoke to 50 people about the services of the Carlson Center and the Business Insight Center.

Anecdotes/Other
Lily Anthony is writing an article on “pruning” collections, rather than weeding collections. The article will be submitted to Library Journal.

Consulting
The Carlson Center for IP assisted: 9 in person, 20 by email, 1 by mail, 1 by phone. Webpage views: 55.
In depth market research: More than 60 hours.

Databases
InnovationQ: 27 users with 318 independent patent searches.

Children’s Services, Tonia Burton reporting

Programs
Most programs were cancelled. The only public program held was Lego Lab.
- Girl Scouts had two meetings, both meetings focused on selling Girl Scout cookies. Cookie sales are designed to help girls develop five skills: goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. The Central Library Girl Scout Troop set up their booth and before they could even get all the cookies out, lines were forming. There was one more night of selling scheduled and had to be cancelled due to closures. There are thirty boxes of cookies left to be sold.
- Burton and Steve Shons served families dinner after each Scout meeting. Foodlink provides the food and families can sit and socialize while enjoying a healthy meal. Burton began doing this as a thank you to the parents for bringing their children each week and the feedback revealed that it was extremely helpful for the families because they often didn’t have time to prepare a meal before coming to the library.

COVID-19
The Covid-19 crisis seemed to bring library services to a quick halt and just as quickly, library staff adjusted to serve our patrons. The Children’s Center experienced an immediate decrease in visits and circulation until curbside service began. The amount of reader’s advisory soared! Families seemed to not be able to get enough books, it was a scary and yet gratifying time. The last days before we closed were some of the most fun we have had!

Once working at home began, Burton created a list of resources for parents and caregivers who were now thrust into homeschooling their children. The resource list was curated with free educational websites and literature-related virtual programs. Also obtained was access to content made free from publishers. MyOn, Teaching Books.net, and Tumble Books provided Monroe Library System with free access through June 30.

Other staff used their time to take online webinars, catch up on email, and meet virtually. Each week is a Children’s Center Staff meeting where updates are shared and later in the week is a Coffee Break meeting where everyone connects and shares.

Hazen and Cesare are working on summer programs that can be done virtually and Take & Make craft kits. Hazen will curate short videos for crafts so patrons can view the instructions. Written instructions will also be included. Levi will curate content that will teach, inform, educate, and entertain children and their
parents/caregivers in the subjects of card games, magic tricks, taking care of pets, etc. and will post this content to social media.

Burton and Cesare are also using this time to update the Kids page on the website. Graphics and LAS worked very quickly to change the banner, and add new resources. Burton is updating current information while Cesare is creating more in depth content that will remain on the site. This is a project that is long overdue and possible now through the closure.

Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting

New Borrowers – 57
Notarial Acts – 55

COVID-19
Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation the library closed to the public at 5 P.M. on Monday, March 16. On that day only the first floor of the Bausch and Lomb building of Central Library was open to the public. Circulation and Information staff spent a very busy day answering questions, checking items out to patrons, and sometimes running from floor to floor to find items for patrons.

On Wednesday, March 18, the library began offering curbside pickup for patrons who needed library items, mi-fi units, and the occasional tax form. With librarians manning the service desks to answer phone calls from patrons, clerks and pages retrieving items, Media Center staff processing mi-fi units at an impressive rate, and Circulation staff contacting patrons, arranging pickup times, and handing items to the patrons it was a busy, productive, and exhausting two day effort.

During the four days that library staff reported for duty that week there was a common refrain heard from staff repeatedly: “I love stuff like this! This is what we do! I love that we’re so busy!” Staff remained positive and patron-focused, showing the dedication and passion that library workers of every job title show in times of crisis. After the library closed to staff as well as the public, patrons were still contacting us to get their library cards updated or to learn how to access digital items.

To say that our patrons are appreciative is an understatement. Patrons have been extremely grateful for the service they are receiving from the library. Patrons who haven’t used the library in years are coming back to us in order to get items to help them cope with these troubling times.

As one patron put it: “Glad to hear that you are there. I hadn’t thought about it, but along with folks to work the unemployment offices, you people in the library are very busy now, I’m sure. A measure of that: *every* Barbara Kingsolver e-book is checked out.”

Another patron, on learning that all items are now due on May 18, said: “Thank you for your time and dedication to continuing to keep things running as long as possible. Stay healthy.”

These two responses encapsulate the feedback the library has overwhelmingly received from patrons.

Despite the closure, staff have remained busy attempting to level up their own skills or develop online programming. Staff are learning Spanish, ASL, French, and Japanese using Pronounciator, updating welcome packets for new patrons, developing a library-themed role playing game, and training on various hardware to provide the best patron support when the library reopens.

Cunningham continued to answer e-mails from patron regarding expired accounts, borrowing items, and other circulation issues. E-mails are coming from both Help With Your Account and Ask a Librarian e-mails. Multiple e-mails to staff regarding required coursework and work from home tasks. Answered questions about
recording courses and activities in the log. Reached out to Circ staff via text, e-mail, and phone. Had two phone conferences with Kathy.

A personal note from Mr. Cunningham:
I have worked in libraries for more than 30 years. There has never, in all that time, been a situation quite this stressful or overwhelming. In the last few weeks the library has been tested in every way possible and has, in my opinion, risen to every challenge with the needs of the patrons firmly in mind. I am amazingly proud to be part of this team and to lead such an amazing, dedicated group. The Circulation Services and Information Desk staff are truly outstanding in every way!

Local History & Genealogy, Christine Ridarsky reporting

COVID-19
Staff in the Local History & Genealogy Division have stayed productively engaged in substantive and relevant work since the library shutdown due to COVID-19 at the end of the day on March 16. As soon as we found out that the library was closing, Ridarsky and Michelle Finn developed individualized work-from-home plans for each of our staff members, as well as documents outlining expectations for working from home (including reporting requirements), and protocols for responding to patron reference questions from home. The situation has provided a unique opportunity to address backlogs on several projects, including a clean up of our archive of digitized files created by the now-defunct Digitizing Department and an inventory of images in the Harold W. Lara Negative Collection.

Concern about and interest in the current pandemic has been reflected in the reference questions submitted to the division this month, as well as in some of the work produced by staff. Library Assistant Daniel Cody’s Master’s thesis from The College at Brockport was cited by the Democrat & Chronicle’s Jim Memmott (https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2020/03/19/how-did-rochester-handle-1918-flu-epidemic/2868170001/) and Talker of the Town blogger David Kramer (https://talkerofthetown.com/2020/03/24/dr-joesph-roby-could-not-help-elenore-engel-11-victim-of-the-1918-pandemic-buried-in-mt-hope-cemetery/). Both writers used Cody’s work, Rochester Coughed: The 1918 Influenza Epidemic in Rochester NY, to make historical connections between today’s COVID-19 pandemic and the World War I-era flu outbreak. Cody’s thesis also serves as the basis for a piece he wrote for the division’s Local History ROCS! blog; it will be published in early April. Cody’s full thesis is available in the Local History & Genealogy Division and can be accessed online through The College at Brockport’s Digital Commons: https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/.

Community Outreach/Meetings

- Ridarsky, working in her role as City Historian as well as in her position as president of the Association of Public Historians of New York State, initiated a project to collect stories and photographs documenting the experience of Rochesterians and New Yorkers during the COVID-19 crisis. People are encouraged to respond to a series of questions in a Google form and to upload images or artwork. Anyone can contribute at https://forms.gle/3eAwMTgD3pU1q1z49. Please share this link with friends, family, and co-workers via email and social media.

- Ridarsky and Library Director Patty Uttaro met with a group of individuals about the possibility of using the division’s newspaper clippings files as inspiration for one or more local podcasts. Participants were excited about the prospects. We were clear in pitching the idea that library staff would provide access to resources but not otherwise play any role in researching or creating the podcasts.

- Emily Morry worked with LAS to have digital versions of the five most recent past issues of Rochester History journal uploaded to the library’s website. The newly available titles include: “The Rochester Royals’ Maurice Stokes: Kodak City’s (and the NBA’s) First Black Basketball Star” by Pat Farabaugh; “Mr. Abbott’s Wars: The Life and Times of Rochester’s Leading Cold Warrior and Most Dedicated Soldier,” by Jeff Ludwig;
“Greetings from Rochester: Exploring the Past through Postcards,” by Michelle Finn; “Lifelong Fascinations: A Portrait of Margaret Woodbury Strong,” by Julia Novakovic; and “Racial Segregation in Rochester Schools, 1818-1856,” by Justin Murphy.

Special Collections
- Fess accessioned and completed finding aids for three new special collections in March: The Hamilton Royal Arch Chapter 62 Masonic Temple Records (9 volumes consisting of ledgers and notebooks from one of Rochester’s oldest fraternal organizations); the Al-Farabi Ishaq Collection of Frederick Douglass Memorabilia (a small group of modern-day Douglass commemorative memorabilia); and the Bonazza Family Papers (a modest collection of photographs, postcards, and ephemera related to the first two generations of a local family from Italy). The division also added new material to the existing Green and Jordan Families Papers through a transfer of materials from The Strong; the collection documents multiple generations of two local African American families.
- The Office of the City Historian’s Harold W. Lara Negative Collection has received some extra attention this month. Genealogy Specialist Barb Koehler, Clerk/Typist Jordan Wallance, and Christansen have been working to enter data that the photographer had written on envelopes containing sets of negatives into a database. Before the library closed, staff were able scan and/or photograph several thousand envelopes so that these three staff members could do the data entry from home. The spreadsheet to which they are contributing serves as the catalog of the collection. Since the library closed, the three staff members working on the project have added 764 entries to the database. Before the COVID-19 shutdown, volunteer Ira Srole processed 132 envelopes, which will also need to be added to the database.

Digital Projects
In preparation for the adoption of a Digital Asset Management System at the library, Brandon Fess has undertaken a massive file clean-up of the digital archive server as his primary work-from-home assignment. This work involves deleting non-archival files, converting some image files from non-archival to archival formats, renaming files to meet New York Heritage standards, and organizing the server to allow clear access to all stored files. This file clean-up project will allow us to see how much space is needed to store the preservation files from our digitizing projects so we can make an informed decision about a long-term storage solution. In March, Fess reviewed 218,859 files in 7,605 folders, which is approximately one-third of the initial content on the archival server.

Rochester Voices
Finn’s primary work-from-home assignment has been to edit, format, and add primary source materials to the 13 lessons and two teacher guides created by Educational Consultant Andrea Geglia for the Erie Canal for the Classroom project that was funded by a grant from the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor. Once all the resources are finalized, Finn will add them to the Rochester Voices website. Finn completed four of these in March.

Social Media
Staff from the Local History & Genealogy Division contributed content for 14 social media posts in March: 4 on Twitter, 5 on Facebook, 2 Facebook Events, and 3 blog entries on www.rochistory.wordpress.com. These posts reached 5,749 people: 2,436 on Facebook, 1,335 on Twitter, and 1,978 on our blog; 111 people engaged with our posts on Facebook, 24 on Twitter, and 39 on our blog. Morry contributed one blog entry, “Heavily Historic Parking Lot: The Rise and Fall of Corinthian Hall”; Cody contributed one blog entry, “The James Cunningham, Son & Company, Part 1”; and substitute librarian Christopher Brennan contributed one blog entry, “Frightening Death Away: Criticisms of Susan B. Anthony by her Contemporaries.”
Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

- Hoopla Circulation – 1,727
  - Movies / TV – 442
  - Audiobooks – 703
  - Music – 90
  - Ebooks – 384
  - Comics – 108
- New Users – 139

Hoopla Engage is a program Rochester Public Library rolled out this month that allows non-card holders to access our Hoopla collection on a trial basis. Individuals can borrow 2 items from Hoopla without signing up for a library card; after two, they receive a message encouraging them to sign up for a library card before they can borrow any other Hoopla items. This program was responsible for 49 circulations by 48 patrons and 1 patron was “converted” to a new library card holder.

COVID-19
With direction from Patty Uttaro, RMC procured 500 more hotspots from T-Mobile to assist families during the closure who do not have reliable internet access at home. Reynolds Media Center staff worked like a well-oiled machine to process and link almost 300 units in the 2 ½ days before we closed to staff. Most of those 300 units are currently in the hands of patrons during this COVID-19 shutdown.

Sciences and History, Darlene Richards reporting

- Richards informed Grant Writers Network of resources they could use for grant seeking during the pandemic, an online grant writing conference and information about FDO (Foundation Directory Online) Essential, the database that Candid is providing free access to for the public at this time.
- Richards also met with a patron representing the Friends of the Chili Library following recommendations from Jeff Baker and Rebecca Fuss. Information shared included several resources focusing on library funding as well as a tour of the Foundation Directory Online and Rochester Business Journal’s top fifty grant makers.
- Darlene Richards and Sarah Bishopp Velez were asked to find Mental Health resources to help patrons during the pandemic.
- Joon Kim joined the Central Library as the 4th-year medical student for March. He started on March 4, and though his time was cut short due to the library’s closing, he was able to conduct health screenings and provide health information for an average of three patrons each day. He also assisted Sarah Bishopp Velez in identifying appropriate blood pressure kits to purchase for the Hands on Science collection. After the library closed, Joon continued to help remotely by creating a Type 2 Diabetes fact sheet to give to patrons, as well as a blood pressure log sheet to include with the new blood pressure kits. Joon’s work was very much appreciated by patrons and staff alike, and the library wishes him well as he goes on to his residency for general surgery.
- The NYS Dept of Taxation and Finance Facilitated Self Assistance (NYS DTF FSA) Program is a worthy, vital program for the community, and this is the 6th year of this partnership. People who have used the FSA Program have expressed to the staff that they are very grateful for having access to such a program. Despite apprehension about electronic filing, patrons feel a relief by coming into a familiar setting and finding out that the staff are professional, knowledgeable, friendly, and are able to put people at ease in
what can be a stressful situation. NYS DTF FSA Program Staff were able to assist patrons on the first two Wednesdays in March.

- NYS DTF FSA Staff – 8 (4 each day)
- Clients Served – 35
- Tax Returns Prepared – 29
- Walk-Ins – 11

Flo Morris calls each patron to remind them of their appointments; no-shows allow for walk in sessions. Due to the success of the program, two laptops were added.

**Teen Central, Dennis Williams reporting**

**Programs**

- Before shutting down, Jeff Bostic and Williams were actively helping the three teens for the ‘art project,’ begin uploading, editing, and most importantly labelling their hours of footage.
- Williams met with James Daniels the Director for Student Support Services from Vertus High School. As soon as we are able to resume accepting patrons, and the High School returns to in-class sessions, there will be a cohort of students arriving in the imagineYOU lab weekly who will complete one studio project per year. The focus will be on media literacy with a strong leaning toward STEM. Staff members from both the library and the school will guide the students through their projects. The goal will be media literate students who will walk away with a new skill set.
- Bostic has been running very successful photography and videography classes on Saturdays. The last two were cancelled due to external circumstances. Bostic and Williams have been collaborating and brainstorming on ways to reach audiences via social media and cell phone. The idea is to advertise it widely via all library platforms including social media.

**Meetings and Trainings**

Williams is still waiting on the Mac locks for the laptops, so he may decommission the Windows 7 machine running the Wacom tablet. He successfully ran critical malware updates on all three gaming computers and upgraded the Oculus software. Also, Williams began studying Php, XHTML, and Python. He successfully completed over 80 hours of training and practice. In addition, Bostic and Williams have been training on Adobe Photoshop, Final Cut Pro, Logic Pro, Adobe Premiere, and Acrobat Pro.

**imagineYOU Media Lab, Jeff Bostic reporting**

Last month’s contest winner Saun was the only person to finish March’s contest before the library was closed. He may have won even if others had also completed the videos.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/121b3wLG11DKpxUqohBh1zVUJ2zgShsK_s/view?usp=drivesdk

Here’s a clip of him editing the video.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MO8wl4glwCHgEhm96NiiHOU-EjkPvyMt/view?usp=drivesdk

Art in the Loop was completed this month. The student recipients also received their payments.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UJeaccqjpFhpYR5waodDkDw5xeryUV6IK/view?usp=drivesdk
Branch Library Updates
Assistant Director Tolley Reeves, EdD reporting

Branch Administration, Patricia Connor reporting

Programs
- Patricia Connor coordinated showings of the Rochester International Children’s Film Festival at branch and
town libraries and was in the process of distributing the DVDs to the libraries for showing during April—the
Month of the Young Child. The Kick-off was scheduled for April 1, in the Kate Gleason Auditorium, with
Tonia Burton’s coordination. Because schools and libraries were shut down, the festival has been
postponed. The Committee met on March 30, and began discussion about alternative ways to continue the
festival using social media and/or the festival website. Details are still being finalized and Connor will
contact all libraries when decisions have been made.
- The Pizza and Census programs at City Branch libraries were also postponed. The programs were planned
to encourage City residents to come to libraries in order to learn more about why the 2020 Census is
important and to complete their forms using computers at the library. Library Automation Services was in
the process of installing dedicated computers at each branch that would allow patrons to only access the
Census website.

Community Outreach
- All community outreach and programs were cancelled as the library and the City began social distancing to
combat the COVID-19 virus. Hopefully, some of them will be rescheduled when the crisis is over. Among
the cancellations was a return visit to the Universal PreK classes at John Walton Spencer School #16 for the
Arnett Branch, and Family Reading Night at John Williams School #5 with Jessica Smith from the Lyell
Branch. (Education & Engagement)
- Due to Dr. Reeves’ leave of absence, Connor was appointed Acting Area Coordinator on March 2. Much of
the month was spent giving support to Joan Lee as Acting Assistant Director and making sure that Branch
Supervisors were kept aware of what was happening in regards to the COVID-19 shutdown. Connor had
many emails and phone calls with branch supervisors and continues to keep them informed of work-from-
home and webinar opportunities as the library moves forward. Connor also provides work-from-home
support for Xandi DiMatteo.

Arnett Branch, Bruce Tehan reporting

Programs
- Prior to the COVID-19 response, Arnett held several adult, teen, and children programs conducted by
Bruce Tehan, Shetora Banks, Prudence Anderson-Leusch, Nancy Cholewa and various volunteers and
presenters. These programs included story-times, arts-and craft projects, one-to-one and classroom digital
literacy programs, adult and child tutoring. Also, Arnett held an adult local history themed program
presented by Author Justin Murphy; Ernest Flagler-Mitchell, County Legislator; and Dan DeMarle,
Community Volunteer. The program discussed racial and financial inequality in Rochester housing.
• Ginger Brewer-Bennett purchased a computer with her own money. She installed the needed software and presented it to the very happy student.
• Our most popular program this month was presented by Cholewa who described it this way: On March 7, we held a “Read Across America Day” to celebrate Dr Seuss’ birthday. In all we had about 40 patrons participate in some or all of the activities available during the day. Some of those activities included: the Hop and Pop Trail (a trail of bubble wrap stepping stones), several storytime opportunities, Dr. Seuss word searches, and title scrambles, a vote for your favorite Dr Seuss book (Green Eggs and Ham won, hands down), coloring pages and book BINGO. We also had birthday cake, Moose Juice, Goose Juice and Pink Ink Drink. We had a wide range of participation including children, teens and adults. One tween commented that she had “a really fun day” when she was on her way home.
• Since the library closed, we presented a story-time via ZOOM. Six households were in attendance. My favorite part of this story-time took place before the stories and the recording started. During that pre-recorded time lots of kids and parents who are friends through our regular story-times were able to reconnect and chit-chat. It was heartwarming to see.

Anecdotes/Other
Since the COVID-19 shutdown our security officer, Chris Webb, has been working at a Rec-Center providing security during the grab-and-go food service. All other staff is working from home.

Charlotte Branch, Paul Tantillo reporting

Programs
Children’s programs were poorly attended all month. Even though the general Covid-19 response didn’t ramp up in Rochester until the second week in March, it was obvious to us that parents were already starting to keep children at home. We saw some decline in adult usage as March progressed, but it was not as extreme as for Children’s Services.
Our local history program was scheduled for the first week in March and we had a normal turnout of 17 attendees. Emily Morry of Central’s Local History Department presented a program on the Fee Brothers Company. Fee Brothers is a local producer of syrup and bitters for the bar trade and has been in business for 155 years. The program was very well-received. After the first week in March, we cancelled most programs.

COVID-19
On Monday, March 16, we were open until 5:00 p.m. Many town libraries had already closed indefinitely, so we experienced fairly heavy library usage. People from the towns were coming in to stock up on library materials. We had hand sanitizer at all entrances and encouraged people to use it. Most people were happy to oblige, though we did see a lack of concern for physical distancing and for keeping library visits short. While most patrons were concerned and compliant, we did have a few people who were resistant to requests for safe behaviors.
**Frederick Douglass Community Library, Erin Clarke reporting**

Virtual programming statistics for March 23 through March 31

Mini Facebook Story Times with Miss Sarah
- Total number of virtual programs (recorded): 9
- People reached: 4179
- Engagements: 800
- Comments, Shares, and Likes: 115

Project Time with Miss Emily and Simon
- Total number of virtual programs (recorded or standard post): 4
- People reached: 1098
- Engagements: 245
- Comments, Shares, and Likes: 25

**Lincoln Branch, Sarah Lehman reporting**

Children’s Services
- Due to COVID-19, library staff was given the option to file for unemployment or work from home. Jasmine Santiago, Library Assistant decided to work from home and she created online storytimes, attended online trainings, and read lots of emails. Santiago was glad to post her first online storytime to Lincoln’s Facebook page. *Ivy Loves to Give* by Freya Blackwood is a fun story about sharing! She used this story to emphasize vocabulary, problem solving, and empathy with the little ones able to see her post.
- Santiago is well on her way to offering a Spanish storytime with just as much interaction, emphasis and silly questions! Also, she’s been participating in the Supercharged Storytime Training. This training has provided her with tools and resources that she can use to create programs and services.

**Lyell Branch, Shamika Fusco reporting**

Children’s/Family Programming
- Read across America with Dr. Seuss Day- We gave away goodie bags, read a story, and did crafts and coloring sheets. Patrons also had the opportunity to take a picture with the Cat in the Hat mask.
- Homeschool Kits- The homeschool or at home learning kits are now available. Kits include books, crafts, toys or games. They can be borrowed like traditional books for a 3 week period.
- Lyell Loyalty Program- We are always trying to keep things fresh and new at Lyell, so this month we added a Lyell Friends Club. If patrons brought in a non-perishable food
item, we would post their name with a good luck clover on it. Patrons would then be entitled to loyalty card perks such as being a part of the coffee club and could win prizes.

- Mindful Mondays- The community room is available for one hour of meditation. You can Relax, Unwind, or just Breath. Participation was starting to pick up this month, but we hope that once this pandemic is all over participants will return.

- Lyell Library Fitness Crew- Active participation from the Snead family has kept this program afloat. Coach AJ is an inspiration and keeps everyone motivated.

- Healthy Eating with Kadeira Cox, Nutrition Educator-Kaderia Cox, Community Nutrition Educator from Foodlink, Inc. presented a 30-minute lesson followed by a 30-minute food demo: Zucchini Corn Black Bean whole grain quesadillas. There was excellent participation from staff and adults.

- Soulstainable Living Literary Circle Book Discussion-Book for March was *Heavy: An American Memoir* by Kiese Laymon. The book discussion was very HEAVY. Many of the participants shared how the instances and experiences hit very close to home. The book speaks from an overweight, insecure, black male experience. This is rare conversation but was much anticipated and appreciated.

**Maplewood Community Library, Johann Buran reporting**

**Programs**

- For obvious reasons March was short and we saw a decrease in numbers. For adults there was the last No Passport Required Program that was well attended. Through a partnership with WXXI, Maplewood showed one of the episodes. According to the PBS website, “Hosted by renowned Chef Marcus Samuelsson, No Passport Required is a series that takes viewers on an inspiring journey across the U.S. to explore and celebrate the wide-ranging diversity of immigrant traditions and cuisine woven into American food and culture.”

- The teens participated in a writing activity that focused on how to write from different points of view.

- The Genshiken Club which is the anime/manga club continues to be well attended. The group has been learning Japanese. They learn Japanese vowels, consonants, and some words.
**Monroe Branch, Mary Clare Scheg reporting**

**Programs**
Margaret Paige did a Zoom Singalong with School #23 Pre-K class. She is also planning to read to families and create StoryCorps posts. There were some very positive things happening in March before we closed. The Flower City Pickers were starting to donate bread and some fresh produce for our Food Truck.

**Sully Branch, Maria-Heeks-Heinlein reporting**

**Programs**
- The Dungeons and Dragons club remains strong with new members joining weekly. Word of mouth among the teens has spread quickly and each week we have a full table of players eager to go on an adventure.
- In celebration of Women’s History Month, Jacob Bigelow put up his Rochester Women’s Hall of Fame showcasing famous Rochesterians. As with his Black History Month Display it drew a lot of positive interest from patrons coming into the library.
- A representative from the US Census Office set up additional tabling at the library to educate the public about census jobs. During her time at the Sully branch she was able to connect with many people, and she expressed her gratitude to the library for our assistance in reaching the public with census employment information.

**Outreach**
- March 5 - Beechwood Neighborhood Meeting – The library provided another cart of books for the child care service at this meeting. We always participate in virtual outreach on our Facebook page, but we did focus more energy on this type of outreach after the physical library closed to the public.
- The three virtual outreach posts that received the most engagements were:
  - Updated information regarding the RELIEF FOR WORKERS AFFECTED BY CORONAVIRUS ACT (CARES ACT). - Posted 3/31
  - Information shared from another page about resources for child care and food during a state of emergency - Posted 3/15
  - Math activities for at home learning - posted 3/16

**Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Lori Frankunas reporting**

The library was open to the public for a total of 13 days before being closed until further notice due to the novel coronavirus (COVID 19). No orders were placed and one thousand dollars was spent on eBooks through Overdrive.
There were no teen or adult programs during this time with the exception of FoodLink snack.

**Winton Branch, Kathy Wolf reporting**

Kathy Wolf attended the Remembrance Gathering that was held at the Central Library for the staff members and family of RPL staff that have died this past year. This was a very meaningful service that allowed us all to share our feelings of grief for those we have lost. Having spent so many years working at the Central Library, I have many friends there and knew all those who had died. It is good to work for an organization that recognizes the struggle we face working with each other and the public while grieving for our lost friends. This beautiful and well organized ceremony helped to begin to heal our collective loss.
Selected Meetings & Outputs
MCLS Director, Patricia Uttaro reporting
March 14 – April 17

Standing Meetings
City Senior Management Team (weekly)
RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)
A. Traub, T. Reeves, B. Harrison, A. Suro, T. Burton, C. Ridarsky – one-on-one meetings (monthly)
FFRPL Executive Director Ned Davis (monthly)
MCLS System Services and Operations Committee (monthly)
New York State Library – Division of Library Development conference call (monthly)
Public Library System Directors’ Organization (PULISDO) conference call (monthly)

Other Meetings
County & City Planners on COVID 19 response (several meetings in person and by phone)
Circulation Staff on curbside pickup
Continuity of Operations Plan – refresher webinar
April Directors Council

Email Activity
March 2020

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