



115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

TO: RPL Board of Trustees
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director
DATE: January 27, 2021
SUBJECT: Monthly Report – December 2020 and January 2021

Action Items

RPL FY20 Audit (Harrison)

The Library's auditors, Freed Maxick CPA's, have completed their audit of the 2019-20 RPL fiscal year and met with the RPL Board Finance Committee on December 30, 2020 to review their findings. The Board Finance committee members will provide their summary and recommendation to the Board, with the attached management report and financial statements.

Board Action Requested: Accept Freed Maxick's audit of the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Agreement Amendment, Audit and Tax Preparation Services (Harrison)

As part of the competitive solicitation of services in 2017, proposals included two optional extension years covering City and Library audits for fiscal years 2020-21 and 2021-22. The City has optioned to execute this extension and the Library will continue to pair with the City's services as an efficiency and cost savings measure.

As part of the original agreement from April 2018, Freed Maxick proposed fees of \$12,000 for FY21 and \$12,200 for FY22; their total fee payable shall increase their agreement from \$34,850 to \$59,050 over the amended five-year term. Funding is allocated from Library annual operating budgets.

Board Action Requested: Approval of an amended agreement with Freed Maxick CPA's, P.C., for the additional terms and services outlined above and a total fee of \$59,050 for the agreement.

Grant Acceptance, Play Everywhere Design Challenge (Uttaro)

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and KABOOM! Inc. has awarded the Central Library \$32,000 for renovations for the Secret Room in the Children's Center under its Play Everywhere Design Challenge. This grant builds on 2020 engagement with RIT's school of design (HyperSpace) where student cohorts developed design concepts to transform the Secret Room into a space that celebrates Rochester history and encourages open play.

As part of the grant, the RPL will conduct outreach to families and educators on the RIT design concepts and space use preferences; feedback will inform final design to include new lighting, paint, carpet, audio visual and furniture upgrades. The estimated schedule is to have construction work and new furnishings completed by fall 2021. Grant funding shall cover the design agreement and term contract work; in-kind support includes support from Children's staff (outreach) and Facilities (painting and furniture moves). Library will provide cash capital and trust fund match of up to \$18,000 for new furnishings (tables, chairs, special seating). The grant project must be completed by January 31, 2022.

Board Action Requested: Acceptance of a Play Everywhere grant award of \$32,000 for the purpose and activity described.

Agreement, Design and Construction Management Services (Uttaro)

RIT professor and architect Kelly Jahn has worked as a consultant on several Central Library projects, most recently preliminary design and cost estimating services for the Business Insight Center. Ms. Jahn maintains her own WBE firm and has the unique skillset and knowledge of the Secret Room as the project manager of the 2020 RIT student design challenge. Ms. Jahn will prepare final design drawings, assist in obtaining quotes from City term contractors, and supervise construction as well as recommending furnishing options for bid. Services will be funded through the Play Everywhere grant and will be completed by September 30, 2021.

Board Action Requested: Approval of an agreement with Kelly Jahn Interior Architecture & Design, for an amount not to exceed \$6,150, for the services described.

Report Items

Patricia Uttaro, RPL Director reporting

RPL Marketing Team Update - Early in 2020, the Rochester Public Library Marketing Team was awarded a Rochester Regional Library Council Causewave Capacity Building Grant. The original intent of the grant was to perform a Customer Touchpoint Analysis. Due to the pandemic shutdown, the focus was shifted to developing a marketing plan to reach new users as well as current users to make them aware of how the Rochester Public Library is continuing to provide programs and services despite our buildings being shut down. Branch Administration's Patricia Connor serves as a liaison between the team, the Branch Administration office, and the library branches.

The Marketing Team began meeting with Causewave Community Partners in December to develop a Marketing Plan Strawman. Two meetings of the team were held with Tiffany Paine-Cirincione and Todd Butler from Causewave and the plan was presented to Patricia Uttaro and Ned Davis on January 15 for input. Members of the Marketing Team will present the plan to the Board for input at the January meeting. (Strategic Priority #2: Sustainability and Resources).

COVID Update – We continue to manage staff testing positive and I am happy to report that staff who have been ill have recovered or are recovering. Despite recent articles regarding the efficacy of heightened cleaning, we have elected to maintain the high level of disinfection and general cleaning throughout all facilities. While this helps allay staff concern, it is also developing a better process for keeping our buildings clean and safe for staff and patrons alike. I am recommending that RPL locations continue to provide curbside service until the community COVID rate drops low enough that the City is no longer in the “orange zone.” Despite being closed to the public, staff continue to find ways to provide excellent service. You will read about some of the more extraordinary efforts in this report. Due to patron demand, the Central Library curbside team have added additional pickup slots later in the afternoon, which has been much appreciated by patrons.

Social Media

December 2020	RPL Twitter	MCLS Twitter	Facebook	Facebook Calendar	Instagram	YouTube
Profile/Page Visits	717	61	631	-	795	-
New Followers/ Page Likes	14	9	45	-	31	14
Engagements	117	12	1957	81	390	446
Check In/ Mentions	26	7	14	-	8	-
Post Reach	19,200	5,961	20,500	1,200	6,204	-
Video/Story Views	-	-	762	-	67	1,302
Saves/ Actions on Page	-	-	5	-	-	-

Central Library Updates

Patron Services Manager, Cynthia Dana reporting

- Cindy Dana met with Patty Uttaro, Nanci Nugent, Tonia Burton, and Carol Moldt to discuss moving the Cooper Doll collection from the Secret Room in the Bausch and Lomb Building over to 1st floor of the Rundel building. There are letters that accompany some of the dolls and Local History is very interested in these. If there are funds to digitize these, copies of the letters could be displayed along the dolls.
- The curbside service has been running smoothly, thanks to Chad Cunningham, Kathy Sochia, and their team. That team added another step this time around to make it even better; staff write down on the master schedules, hosted on OneDrive, whether they are teleworking or in the building (if in building, they add the phone number at which to reach them.). This has helped tremendously with retrieval of items.

Arts/Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting

Programs

- Artist Barbara Freiberg has been instructing patrons how to draw in the style of various artists. In this class students learned how to complete a drawing in the folk style of Grandma Moses. Moses was a self-taught American Folk artist who began painting at the age of 78. Patrons learned how Moses paid little attention to perspective and how she used solid bright colors to bring her works to life. One patron remarked: "I am very happy the library is offering these classes as I am learning a lot about drawing and drawing methods."
- Rochester Writes ended its successful 2020 year of creative writing classes by offering a writing workshop called *Unexpected Gifts*, taught by Jennifer Case. The class



was an uplifting experience that included exercises encouraging students to write about people and experiences that have brought them joy, hope, warmth, and wonder. Stories were shared and students left the class feeling more appreciative and joyful.

- Melissa Manczuk of the Arts/Literature Division is continuing to create craft videos for patrons to do at home. This month she posted 3 new videos:
 - No Sew Sock Snowmen
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLXVDSXuT9I>
 - Felt Snowflakes
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Npa1jRHeteo>
 - Pinecone Penguins
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwyolijoL6g&feature=emb_logo

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Library Graphic Designer Corinne Clar and Nugent met with Eve Jacobs-Carnahan and Hinda Mandell to discuss a program and exhibit to accompany the upcoming Thrift Style Exhibit (<https://eusa.org/exhibition/thrift-style/>) in May 2021. Jacobs-Carnahan is a fiber artist in the state of Vermont who brings together fiber and democracy. Mandell is a professor at Rochester Institute of Technology who examines craft and social order. She will help facilitate the piecing together of the Knit Democracy squares which will result in a sculpture of the NYS capitol building. Mandell was also responsible for last year's Crafting Democracy exhibit here at Central. Jacobs-Carnahan will be doing a Zoom lecture in May where she will speak about sustainability in fiber, human interaction with nature, democracy, and society. Patrons will also contribute to a sculpture that will be created by adding pieces they have knitted.

Business Insight Center, Jennifer Byrnes reporting

Statistics

The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted:

- 1 in person, 14 by email
- Webpage views: 38
- Hours of in-depth market research: 29 hours
- Tracy Jong usage: 1 hour

Database Use

- Frost & Sullivan: 18 downloads; value: \$52,400.
- IBISWorld: 42 Page views; value: \$19,675
- InnovationQ: 11 users; 120 searches
- MarketLine: 8 downloads; value: \$6,210
- PitchBook: 5 logins
- Statista: 11 users; value: \$285
- ValueLine: 164 logins; 3,993 searches; 334 downloads

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Jennifer Byrnes met with documentary filmmaker Mikhail Gershteyn, who is making a film about Eastman Kodak titled "A Moment That Lasted A Century." The Business Insight Center will assist him with his research and Byrnes will be interviewed to discuss how Rochester is still a hotbed of innovation.
- Meddaugh is learning Spanish using Pronunciator.

- Meddaugh also attended “Nuts & Bolts of an IP Licensing Agreement” through the Monroe County Bar Association and “Raising Capital for Your Business” through NextCorps.
- Byrnes studied American Sign Language through Udemy.

Children’s Center, Tonia Burton reporting

Programs

- Alla Levi led a project for the Rochester City School District (RCSD), which created a virtual tour of the Central Library for RCSD teachers. The following divisions and staff participated:
 1. Arts & Literature-Melissa Manczuk
 2. Business Insight Center-Kate Meddaugh
 3. Children’s Center-Alla Levi
 4. Local History & Genealogy-Michelle Finn
 5. Reynolds Media Center-Bob Scheffel
 6. Sciences, Social Sciences & History-Darlene Richards and Gabe Pellegrino
 7. Teen Services-Alla Levi

Each Division created a PowerPoint presentation which Levi curated and on December 16, 2020, three Zoom sessions were presented to RCSD teachers where division representatives articulated and shared, via PowerPoint slides, their division’s virtual tours and resource listings. This was a great way to publicize the Central Library and share what we have to offer to RCSD teachers. After these Zoom presentations, Levi received the following feedback from her contact person at the RCSD:

“Thank you so much for your THREE workshops yesterday. They were fantastic. We have had great feedback from staff and they all want to see you again some time!”

- Take and Make Program for December: The theme this month was “Celebrate!” The bag included supplies and ideas to create celebrations for the month. Activities incorporated materials to make a beaded bracelet, design your own gift box, create a countdown chain, along with supplies to make a gift card.
- Save the Gingerbread Contest was held in December. Children disguised Gingerbread People to save them from being eaten during the holidays. Completed pictures were posted on the Children’s Center Facebook Page where people voted for their favorite. Every child received a free book and the picture with the most votes won a book pack.



Raising a Reader

- Nine guest readers from the community visited the library over the past several weeks for our “Community Readers” series. Library staff recorded and edited their storytimes, which are posted weekly on the Central Library Kids’ Club Facebook page. Guest readers include Erick Stephens from Common Ground Health and Jasmine, a ten-year-old regular patron and library Girl Scout Troop member. Superintendent Lesli Myers-Small and other RCSD staff and administrators also read stories for the series.



RPL Board Director's Report– January 2021 (Continued)

- At Home Storytime Bags were distributed to RCN, ABC Home Visiting Program, and VOA. Sarah Ngo and Burton are working to create additional kits for the winter/spring season.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Tonia Burton hosted the MCLS Children's Services Best Books meeting via Zoom. This annual meeting is a chance for everyone to share their favorite books and learn about books they may have missed. The committees work throughout the year to choose the Best Books. The list of books considered was shared with area school librarians and used to create reading suggestions for the Central Kids Facebook Group.
- Burton concluded her last Supercharged Storytime training for the year for Rochester City School librarians. Five sessions were offered as a part of the New York State Library Every Child Ready to Read Staff Training Program. Each session contained three live online classes with outside homework completed on Moodle. One hundred and forty-three people received this training this year.
- Burton connected with B.O.B- Black Owned Businesses in Rochester after a suggestion from Tanishia Johnson at Roc the Future to reach people we cannot serve in the library while we are closed. Burton connected with teacher, Euri Sehce at School #33, who took the early literacy supplies provided by Burton and turned them into gift baskets for her students. Sehce will also be assisting Burton find businesses willing to pass out activity bags and books to families.



Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting

Anecdotes/Other

- Chad Cunningham helped an out-of-county patron figure out how to download eBooks to her Kindle Paperwhite. She's 82, lives in Florida, and loves e-books because she can increase the print size. Her local library no longer uses Overdrive and she is very happy to still have access to free e-books!
- Brian DiNitto took a call from a patron with an unusual question. She wanted to know if the walk-up book drop on the side of the building was fireproof. She wanted to know because she was reading *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean and wanted to make sure that Central would not suffer a catastrophic fire the way the Los Angeles Public Library did in 1986.
- In December there were 539 curbside pickups scheduled. Patrons picked up a variety of items- everything from mi-fis to books to sewing machines to movies to craft kits and program materials. On December 31, circulation staff did their most to make sure that everyone who wanted to pick up an item was able to do so. Normally, only five patrons are scheduled for each pickup time slot during the day. But, on the last time slot of the last day of the year, circulation staff made sure that anyone who still wanted to pick up an item could. Instead of the normal five pickups there were eleven!

Local History & Genealogy, Christine Ridarsky reporting

The Local History & Genealogy Division served nearly 100 patrons by email and telephone in December while the Central Library campus was closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the difficult working conditions, the division launched a major new initiative aimed at establishing a community curated archive of local Black history and culture when Christine Ridarsky and Antoine McDonald hosted the first meeting of a staff advisory team. Members come from throughout RPL and include Arianna Ackerman, Yusef Bartlett, Derrick Coley, Jocelyn Cox-Hiller, and Jonathan Hammond, as well as Brittany Wells (Mayor's Chief of Staff). Fess and Morry will advise the team in their areas of expertise, archives and special collections and African American history, respectively. Ridarsky and McDonald also presented a lightning talk on the proposed archive at the 2020 Rochester Regional Library Council Archives Fair (via Zoom).

We are grateful to the Rochester Regional Library Council and the Friends & Foundation of RPL for their early support for our efforts. The Rochester Regional Library Council awarded the library a Special Project Grant to provide training for the team. This will include a four-week self-paced online course on the Basics of Archives, presented by the American Association for State and Local History, and two workshops, Building Community Archives and Archiving Diverse Perspectives, facilitated by Steven G. Fullwood of the Nomadic Archivist Project. The two workshops will be open to all members of the Monroe County Library System and the Rochester Regional Library Council. FFRPL raised almost \$10,000 on ROC the Day to support a contributing project initiated by the Clarissa Street Reunion Committee and Teen Empowerment to identify and digitize photographs and archival records documenting the history of Clarissa Street in Corn Hill, which was a vibrant African American business and entertainment district until it was destroyed in the mid-twentieth century by urban renewal and highway construction.

Exhibitions

Despite its current inaccessibility to the public, the *Everyday People* exhibition continues to attract attention. Several people have expressed interest in coming to see it once the library buildings reopen to the public, and we have received numerous invitations to present on it (virtually). This month, Ridarsky featured the exhibit in a training session on diversifying curriculum content for Genesee Community Charter School teachers. In February, Finn and Morry will speak during a session of the Friends & Foundation of RPL's Tuesday Topics series and at the Greece Historical Society's monthly program. Karen and Jerry Bunton, members of the family on which the exhibition is based, will participate in both February sessions.

Community Outreach/Meetings

- Michelle Finn presented on the resources and services offered by our division as part of the library's series of Zoom presentations to teachers from the Rochester City School District. Questions from the teachers during the program and feedback received afterwards indicated that the teachers consider our resources and services to be educationally valuable.
- Ridarsky and Brandon Fess met with representatives from the Rochester Regional Library Council and the Empire Archival Discovery Cooperative to discuss the procedures for joining and adding our collections to the statewide online archives and special collections discovery tool. We expect to begin contributing in Spring 2021 after Fess has finished updating our existing finding aids.
- Finn met with Nazareth College professor Isabel Cordova (via phone) to discuss an internship for the Spring 2021 semester. The student will be developing content for the Latino Voices collection and adding the new material to RochesterVoices.org.
- Ridarsky continues to represent the City and library on an ad hoc mental health memorial committee and met once with that group, which is exploring ways of better memorializing people who died while patients

in the historic almshouse, penitentiary, and/or insane asylum and of educating the public about the history of mental health.

- Ridarsky met with representatives from the New York State Archives, the Museum Association of New York, and several other cultural heritage organizations to discuss plans to present a webinar on Documenting the COVID-19 Pandemic. The session is scheduled for February 25 (<https://nysmuseums.org/documenting-covid>).

Digital Projects

- Fess met with staff from the Rochester Regional Library Council to discuss a plan to apply for a Rochester Regional Library Council Technology Grant, due February 1, to upload materials from Rochester Images to New York Heritage, a statewide digital collections platform. Fess and Finn also assisted staff from the Greece Historical Society and the Gates Public Library with their own Technology Grant applications, which propose to digitize town newspapers that we have only on microfilm. If funded, we would lend the film for these projects.
- Morry arranged with University of Rochester professor Morris Pierce to have Optical Character Recognition (OCR) applied to 175 issues of the *Rochester History* journal that had previously lacked this technology. As soon as these updated documents are uploaded to the website, patrons will be able to digitally search all past issues of the journal.

Social Media

- Staff from the Local History & Genealogy Division contributed content for four (4) social media posts in December: two (2) on Facebook, one (1) Facebook Event, one (1) on Twitter, and two (2) blog entries on *Local History ROCs!* (www.rochistory.wordpress.com). These posts reached 1,779 people: 1,472 on Facebook (posts and events), 255 on Twitter, and 52 on our blog.
- The blog entries posted this month were “500 Norton Street, Pt. 3: When Rochester Fans Saved Baseball” by Dan Cody and “Meat Me in the Morning: Memories of Front Street, pt. 1” by Emily Morry, who edits the blog. In addition to these posts, readers revisited 140 previously published posts this month. Two of these (“Carthage: Rochester’s Forgotten Rival” and “McCrackenville, the Town Which Isn’t There”) garnered 285 views and 278 views, respectively. Two others (“Silent Alarm: Rochester’s Rare Ringer” and “Time of the Season: Sibley’s Toyland”) garnered 114 views and 103 views, respectively. Three others (“A Good Guy?: The Life and Death of Salvatore ‘Sammy G’ Gingello,” “Monorail! Monorail! Monorail!” and “Kool Things: The History of the J. Hungerford Smith Company”) each drew more than 50 views.
- We also discovered this month that local distillery, Black Button Distilling, features research and quotes from two of Morry’s previous blog articles on their website: “In Search of Lost Spirits: Prohibition in Rochester, Pt. 1” and “In Search of Lost Speakeasies: Prohibition in Rochester, Pt. 2” (see <https://www.blackbuttondistilling.com/black-button-blog/2020/9/9/pre-prohibition-whiskey-a-taste-of-history>).

Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

Hoopla

- Circulation – 1,669
 - Movies/TV – 438
 - Audiobooks – 705
 - Music – 85
 - eBooks – 310
 - Comics – 131
- New Users – 65

Statistics

During the month of December, RMC handled 261 reference questions and 76 non-reference transactions for a total of 337. RMC rented 7 pieces of equipment and 164 Mi-Fi units in addition to the regular collection, for a grand total of 1,060 items or 33% of the Central Library's total circulation of 3,272 (before renewals from Catalog Plus, Classic Catalog and Telephone are added). When adding in the RMC items that circulated at other libraries, RMC's collection circulated 4,289 items.

Anecdotes/Other

RMC has had an increase in people looking for equipment to view older non-print media before transferring to digital. There is a waiting list for the 8mm projector (five patrons), the VHS to DVD transfer unit (two patrons), and the slide projector (two patrons). These units are currently being rented at no charge until we can handle money again. Two of the patrons using equipment during December stated that they were so happy with this service being available they were planning to donate to the library in lieu of rental fee!

Sciences and History, Darlene Richards reporting

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Darlene Richards and Gabe Pellegrino participated in the first "Black Men in White Coats" Zoom discussion, regarding the lack of people of color entering the medical field. Another meeting is scheduled in January, with the goal being to add programming for Black History Month. Richards reached out to a contact from the Wilmot Cancer Center to see if she had any suggestions for speakers for the panel.

Anecdotes/Other

- While Pellegrino was on Chat Reference, he saw a request from FFRPL's Rebecca Fuss. Fuss had found references to two articles in the Democrat & Chronicle regarding the Sampsonaires. Walter Becker had once been a part of this group of male singers from the former Sampson Air Force base on Seneca Lake. This is the same Walter Becker for whom the Becker Digital History Center is named—a donation from his son Bob in his father's memory. Fuss wanted to give copies of these articles to Mrs. Becker, who was celebrating a birthday in the next week. The Sampsonaires were extremely popular, making many personal appearances, and even had their own radio and television programs. A brief search on the Fulton History website also provided some photographs of the group. Pellegrino created a Word document with these articles in chronological order, arranged like a scrapbook, and sent it on to Fuss. FFRPL's Ned Davis presented the document to the Beckers, who very much enjoyed it. Bob is 90 and is currently in rehab after breaking his ankle. Fuss said this really made his holiday a little brighter.
- Florence Morris had a lengthy reference question on chat. The chat was from a student who is a junior at Cornell University who is currently in NYC, working on a paper. Her research involves the Erie Canal during the time period 1800-1870. Morris corresponded with her and sent her several titles on the topic from Local

History and the Business Insight Center. The student plans to use the information for her senior thesis graduating in 2022, she commented: *"Thank you so much!! This is amazing. I had a productive meeting with the NYPL this morning thanks to the many resources you have provided. I cannot thank you enough for your help."*

Technology Center, Jay Osborne reporting

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- With the staff schedules reduced in our buildings, the Technology Center staff have been committing themselves to online training in a variety of areas. The Ryan Dowd trainings have been a fantastic resource to provide librarians with new ways of evaluating situations. Techniques shared in these videos can be applied to patrons we serve.
- Staff are also concentrating on creating better presentations using PowerPoint and video editing software and on learning more effective strategies for teaching Spanish speaking patrons. The goal is to create technology-related tutorials that could be viewed through YouTube.

Anecdotes/Other

- The team continues to find ways to connect with patrons, even when not in the building. An elderly patron reached out to a staff member that lives in his neighborhood. The patron's frustration with his computer network was pushing him to the brink of tossing all his equipment out a window and starting over with a new computer. With just a few mouse clicks and a couple of suggestions on file management from the Tech Center staff, his computer is up and running fine.
- One staff member received a call from someone looking for advice about job searching who was very anxious and upset. While she was on the phone, that staff member talked her through setting up an account and doing a job search on the Wegmans site. Once they got through the initial steps, she began to feel a little more comfortable with the process. She was very appreciative for the help and felt she could finish the application on her own.

Teen Central, Jennifer Cherelin reporting

- Email was received from Dan Lill, Director of R Community Bikes, seeking assistance in moving 45 bicycles as soon as possible (30 children's and 15 adults'). Cherelin made some suggestions to Dan and reached out to Dennis Williams who has a relationship with R Community Bikes through Sully Branch. Williams was able to secure a safe location for the bikes at the Charlotte Branch.
- Cherelin gave one of her book club participants (who at times can struggle with connecting to wi-fi) her personal copy of *The Golden Compass*. The teen came in on the last day before Central closed to make sure they could stay in touch via email, continue to be a part of the group on Zoom, and he is reading on his own and is now up to chapter five.
- Miranda Stefano sent in the video featured in the animation for a Hillside school project. Using skills learned from Jeff Bostic's online courses, Miranda became a cartoon character that mimicked her speech without her sitting in front of the camera:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/119YxUfgqdrKejke4VFeH11qhYjaXBxB/view?usp=drivesdk>

Branch Library Updates

RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

We said goodbye to Dr. Tolley Reeves on January 6, as she left RPL to pursue additional educational opportunities at Syracuse University. Dr. Reeves and Director Uttaro spent much of December discussing unresolved issues in Branch Administration and the Branch libraries. Uttaro also convened a team that will assist with hiring a new Deputy Director to replace Dr. Reeves. Eleven applications were received by the City, with 6 found to meet the minimum qualifications. The team decided to interview 4 candidates – two internal and two external. The first round of interviews will take place on January 22.

We were able to secure 10,000 disposable masks from Commissioner Norman Jones, who heads up the City Department of Environmental Services. These masks were distributed to each branch where they were made accessible to the public via curbside service. The City has been distributing masks at our local Recreation Centers, so adding distribution points in the Branch Libraries was a natural fit. (Strategic Priority: Stewardship and Curation - provide a variety of programs based on community needs.)

Safe To Be Smart, Derrick Coley reporting

All STBS staff continue to telework and are focusing on continuing education in a variety of topics that will help them in their work with teens. Some STBS staff, such as John and Lydia Hylton, have established some virtual outreach with teens.

Long-time STBS staff member Shetora Banks has been promoted to fulltime and transferred to Teen Central from Arnett. Shetora will work with Tonia Burton and Cynthia Dana over the next several months to acquire the skills she needs to eventually take over as supervisor of Teen Central. Jennifer Lenio will provide collection development training for both Banks and Teen Central librarian Jennifer Cherelin. Jeff Bostic and Banks have both joined a team regarding the documentary "Black Men in White Coats," which the Central Library will provide to all MCLS for Black History Month; promotional materials and programming will accompany a screening of the film.

Arnett Branch Library, Bruce Tehan reporting

Programs

The Arnett Branch staff recently responded to a request from a patron for curbside service. A grandmother was asking for materials to help keep her two-year-old grandson occupied. The library staff was able to supply the grandmother with children's DVDs, craft materials and a bookmark featuring the library murals. The boy and his older sibling also received books from a recent donation. Staff involved in this project included Nancy Cholewa, Carmetha Jones, Joniah Anderson and Prudence Anderson-Leusch. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Community Outreach/Meetings

Members of the First Tuesday Book Club and Friends, a group located in one of Monroe County's towns, heard about the Arnett library and decided they wanted to do something for the neighborhood children. Terry Parks spearheaded the project; monies were collected from club members and their friends and books were purchased from the Hipocampo Children's Bookstore, located on South Avenue in the City. The titles chosen for

the project have been featured in past library programs and on the Arnett Branch murals. The books are being given to young patrons in the neighborhood.

Anecdotes/Other

- Bruce Tehan nominated General Lindsey and Jason Maio for a “Do the Right Thing award.” The program has been part of the Rochester Police Department (RPD) since 1995. The goal of the program is to foster positive relationships between local law enforcement and youth in the community. The Do the Right Thing Awards program recognizes youth for their bravery, courage and valor, such as volunteering, aiding law enforcement or other first responders, acts of heroism, leadership and positive role model behavior. The award distinguishes school-aged children who strive to make good choices, do well in school, give back to their community, or demonstrate a “turn-around” or improvement in their behavior, and to publicly highlight these students and their stories in the media to show that good kids are newsworthy. Both teens impressed Tehan with their polite and friendly demeanor and the manner in which they have conducted themselves and responded to situations at the Arnett Library.



- Arnett Branch patrons have been very appreciative of the masks supplied by the City of Rochester. Staff has distributed the masks alongside curbside service. The library received this response from one of the patrons: *“Hi Bruce! Merry Christmas! I hope you and Shari are doing well. Just wanted to say what a nice surprise it was when I picked up a book from the library yesterday and received some face masks as well. What a great promotion for the libraries to have. I'm assuming this is something all the branches are doing. It's a great service to the community as we head into the home stretch (we hope) with the virus. Have a great holiday! Hope to see you soon. Carol”* (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)

Charlotte Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

The Food for Thought Book Group discussion of *Little Big Love* by Katy Regan occurred under the leadership of Maureen Whalen. The group enjoys their time together sharing reflections on what they've read. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Anecdotes/Other

- Charlotte has recently added a unique item for circulation to patrons – dulcimers. Patrons can search “dulcimer” in CARL and borrow for three weeks. The box includes a small songbook and two picks. There are five dulcimers available, making it will be possible for patrons to borrow several at the same time and have a small class or a family fun night.
- Patricia Uttaro recently passed this email on to Kim Whittemore:
“Dear Ms. Uttaro, I wanted to send kudos for Kimberly Whittemore. My Greece library was closed so I saw online that the Britton Road library was open. When I got there, I saw the sign that it was only open for pickup or drop off. I called the number on the door and Kimberly said she would be glad to assist me. I needed to print my resume and she was pleasant and offered for me to email her and she would print it for me. It was such a relief for me because it was a timely issue. I went back to the library and she had my resume ready. She was friendly and helpful. Great employee! Sincerely, Sharon”
- Whittemore also received holiday greetings and thanks from another patron family that she has been assisting.



Frederick Douglass Community Library, Erin Clarke reporting

Programs

- Sarah Ngo continues to offer story times to children at Rochester Childfirst Network over Zoom and posts story times to Facebook every Monday and Friday morning. (Strategic Priority: Stewardship and Curation)
- Isaac Lewis hosts lunchtime Zoom sessions to help with homework, play games, and talk about K-pop. He has seen an increase in students asking for homework help and computer help in December.
- Erin Clarke, Emily Kleykamp, and Lauren DelGaizo implemented the Lit Loot program/service and have been advertising it on Facebook and handing out flyers with materials pickups. The hope is that use of the service will increase now the holidays are over and the program has been advertised county-wide. New Books are being displayed in the front windows, and patrons have been calling to have titles added to their pickup stack.

Anecdotes/Other

A patron posted to her Facebook page about how excited she and her daughter were about the New Year's Eve party bags Ngo put together with our craft items and materials from WXXI. The bags were very popular, and the

supply ran out before the end of the day on December 31. Ngo's post about the bags had the most views of any post on the library's Facebook page.

Lincoln Branch Library and Toy Library, Sarah Lehman reporting

Programs

- Jasmine Santiago planned a Gingerbread House kit for patrons to pick up as a take-and-make craft kit during the month of December. Thanks to posts shared on social media from community partners, the kits were very popular and were picked up by patrons as fast as library staff could assemble them. (Strategic Priority #1: Education & Engagement)
- Matt Seidel conducted the first two Virtual Playtimes for the Toy Library. Both were highly successful and received enthusiastic reviews from families. Seidel also began a Virtual Chess Club. The club was very successful, and some schools have expressed interest in promoting it to their students. (Strategic Priority: Education & Engagement)

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Sarah Lehman, along with Brie Harrison and Joan Lee, had a virtual meeting with Edge Architecture to discuss the initial plans for building layout and timeline for renovations of the Lincoln Branch Library. Some small suggestions were made by RPL staff to the first draft layout plan, but there were exciting ideas presented from Edge and staff is excited to see the next steps.

Anecdotes/Other

A Toy Library in Cape Cod, MA reached out to Seidel to discuss how their toy library might start a program similar to the Virtual Playtime and to inquire about sharing Seidel's playtime with patrons in Cape Cod.

Lyell Branch Library, Shamika Fusco reporting

Programs

- The Gingerbread Person Disguise Contest was a big hit. Participants had to disguise a gingerbread person so that they could avoid being eaten. The winner had the honor of receiving a customized book pack and a take-and-make cupcake mix. The success of the gingerbread challenge was continued in the Kwanzaa Bread Man program. Patrons could pick up craft kits that included a gingerbread cut out and accessories to decorate it for a Kwanzaa celebration. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)
- In 2020, Zoom has been the preferred platform to connect and as a result of that, a new term is floating around called "Zoom Fatigue" and its REAL. Lyell branch staff have tried to give teens the ideas/opportunity to do something together to connect without being on a screen with the Book Buddies for Teens program. Multiple copies of specific Teen literature titles have been made available so that patrons can read with a buddy. Lyell staff has created a Facebook page dedicated to listing and providing activities outside of the use of screens. The page is called "Too Much Screen Time for Teens".



Anecdotes/Other

- The staff at the Lyell Branch is always looking for ways to connect on social media. This month a variety of question were asked to promote engagement. Prizes were offered for those that participated. One of the questions this month was “Can you name this guy? He was responsible for making milk safe to drink in Rochester.” (Answer: Dr. George Washington Goler)



Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran

Programs

- The Maplewood Community Library’s English language classes have moved to Zoom, allowing people from across the world to attend. Currently, there are nine countries represented: Argentina, Cameroon, Mexico, Myanmar, Somalia, South Korea, Sudan, Syria and Turkey. The participant from Argentina is a college student in that country; he hopes to travel to the United States in the future. Another participant is in Rochester, Minnesota; he’s a businessman from Cameroon who was looking for a way to improve his English while visiting the United States and found Maplewood’s program. Several of the students have been reading and discussing *The Curious Incident of the Dog at Night* by Mark Haddon. Evanna DiSalvo hopes to try a book club meeting when the different groups finish reading the book. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)
- Participants originally from Somalia, Sudan and Myanmar are preparing for citizenship. As of December 1, 2020, applicants for citizenship will have to take a new version of the civics test. There are now 128 questions instead of 100 – only 37% of them are the exact same questions, 23% are a variation of the former questions, and 40% are completely new. DiSalvo is working with participants on preparing for this new exam.
- What started out as making activity and coloring books for the children turned into a larger idea. As the children of the Maplewood Community Library have not been to the library since the move to curbside, Maplewood staff members decided to show the children that they were missed. A bag was created for each child and delivered to their homes. The bag had coloring pages, activity pages, books, stamps, stickers, crayons, pencils, candy, mandarin oranges and a personalized handwritten note telling the children that they are missed by the staff. (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)

Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg, reporting

Programs

Rebecca Hudson, Teen Librarian, created a December take-and-make craft, which was a candy cane mouse. This was a very popular craft with Monroe patrons. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)



Anecdotes/Other

Through a neighborhood Facebook group, Cherrin Arnold learned about a need for children’s books for ages infant to 3 years old. Arnold and Mary Clare Scheg put together two dozen children’s books for “The Society for the Protection and Care of Children.” Arnold contacted the social worker who made the request and set

up a time for her to pick-up the of books. The social worker was very appreciative and Arnold and Scheg hope to continue working with the agency. (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)

Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Lori Frankunas reporting

Programs

Children's Librarian Alexandra Haehn and her sister, Sarah Haehn, recorded a video for the library's Facebook page about making origami reindeer bookmarks. This video proved to be popular on the page and has had over 40 views. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Anecdotes/Other

Site Supervisor Lori Frankunas is participating in community collaborations. Frankunas is on the panel for Inclusion & Content advisors for the Rochester Museum and Science Center "Water Worlds" exhibition design. She is also on the selection panel for the 2021 Big Read hosted by Writers & Books. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Sully Branch Library, Maria Heeks-Heinlein reporting

Programs

- Jennifer Nesbitt is happy to report another successful Gingerbread House program this month. This program has become a Sully tradition and Nesbitt enjoyed bringing this program into the community again, despite the challenges of the pandemic. One hundred gingerbread kits were made using frosting packs, graham crackers, assorted candy, marshmallows, paper plates, empty milk cartons, and plastic forks. Khajari Marshall-Hosier and Li'Asia Campbell assisted with assembling the kits and creating directions on how to build the gingerbread houses. Families were invited to pick up kits during our curbside hours. Every kit was taken, and several people expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this program again for the holiday season. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)
- Maria Heeks-Heinlein was able to do a PreK Storytime, through Zoom, for a Rochester City School District teacher. While the format was different from what Heeks-Heinlein is used to, she enjoyed seeing the children's smiling faces while they were listening to the story. Sharing books with people does not have to stop when we are social distancing, in fact, social distancing makes sharing books even more important. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Maria Heeks-Heinlein attended two Rochester Police Department/Safety Net outreach programs via Zoom. At both meetings, Heeks-Heinlein talked about Sully's gingerbread house program, curbside service hours for city branches, and how to get a library card.

Anecdotes/Other

- Jacob Bigelow was heartened to see how much the community still loved and respected their library even in these challenging times. Bigelow helped a patron scan important papers for her new vehicle and transmit them to her e-mail. The woman was so delighted with the help she got that she offered Bigelow a sizable tip that he of course refused to take, instead informing her that donations can be made to the FFRPL. The ebullient reaction of the patron and their praise for the library brightened Bigelow's day and proved how loved and needed the library is, even in its current state.

- Staff members continue to reach out to patrons as much as possible. Carmen Gonzalez contacts patrons when opportunities happen in the neighborhood that she feels may be of interest to them. When Gonzalez found out about a coat give away at the Thomas Ryan Center, she made sure people knew about it. She also made sure to get the Holiday Information Bulletin out to patrons. The library received this response via a website message from a patron: "I would like to give a Compliment on your Employee Carmen Gonzalez. She has great customer service, and is a hard worker. She gave me information on signing up for holiday baskets. I was able to pick up coats that were donated to Sully Branch & I was able to give them to people that needed them." (Strategic Priority #2: Stewardship and Curation)

Winton Branch Library, Kathy Wolf reporting

Programs

Pat Pittman worked with the Genesee Country Village and Museum to host "Once upon a Midnight Dreary: Poe on the Solstice." The program, geared toward both teens and adults, provided an educational framework for Poe's life and work, including dramatic readings of some of his most popular works, emphasizing the motif of darkness. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Anecdotes/Other

- Patricia Finnerty received a lovely email from one of her regular book discussion attendees. It read:
"Happy New Year to you! The book discussion is the first thing I entered on my 2021 calendar this morning! The Scarlet Letter is as heavy as I remember from college, but I have a better appreciation and perspective 50 years later! See you Monday. And please pass along my gratitude to Kathy and the staff for providing such great pick-up service. Yesterday I picked up 3 Holds, plus the latest Book Page and a bag with masks (which I will share with relatives). I ❤️ Winton!"
- Brie Harrison and Kathy Wolf met at the Central Library to look over some existing shelving units that will be used in the Winton Branch Library's updated Children's Room. The room was painted during the shutdown in March, new carpeting was installed just before the Christmas break, and some new shelving units, tables and chairs will be ordered soon. The repurposed furniture will be coming in early January, and the new furniture shortly thereafter.

Selected Meetings & Outputs

MCLS/RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

November 16, 2020 – January 22, 2021

Standing Meetings

City Senior Management Team (weekly)

RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)

Adam Traub, Tolley Reeves, Brie Harrison, Ana Suro, Tonia Burton, Christine Ridarsky – one-to-one meetings (monthly)

FFRPL Executive Director Ned Davis (monthly)

Monroe County Chief of Staff, Amy Grower (monthly)

RPL All-Staff Meeting (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)

City Dept. of Environmental Services Commissioner, Norm Jones (bimonthly)

Other Meetings

City Budget Director – RPL/Central Maintenance of Effort budget review (twice)

Ted Caupano, City Communications – Library Community Conversations Prep

FFRPL Publishers Circle Online Celebration

Arts Council Board Meeting

Jumpstarting Roc committee meeting (three times)

City Council call on COVID response

Monroe County Rec & Ed Committee meeting

Monroe County Ways & Means Committee meeting

Reynolds Library Board meeting

Monroe County Legislature full meeting

Roc the Future Early Grade Literacy Team meeting

RPL Branch Administration Staff

Genesee Country Village Board meeting

Roc the Future Convener meeting

RPL All-Staff with Dr. Cephas Archie on COVID Preparedness

Roc the Future Digital Divide meeting (presenter)

City Council meeting

Kearstin Warren Brown – parent on reinstation bookmobile service in Rochester

FFRPL Board meeting

City Community Conversation presentation

Weekly meeting with Dr. Reeves prepping for her departure

RPL Board President Benjamin and VP Hamilton regarding RPL/Central budget

Central staff on moving Cooper doll collection

MCLS Plan of Service small group discussions – 6

RPL Youth Services Coordinator Derrick Coley

Search Committee for RPL Deputy Director position

Phone call with potential donor (2)

MCLS Advocacy Team meeting

MCLS Board President Marjorie Shelley (2)

RPL Board Director's Report– January 2021 (Continued)

Roc the Future Digital Divide follow up presentation (facilitator)
RRLC Advisory Council meeting
RPL Finance Committee meeting with Alesco Advisors
RPL Branch Supervisors meeting
Chili Library Director Jeff Baker
Causewave & RPL Marketing Team
Neighborhood Business Meeting on Inner Loop Development
New MCLS Trustee Orientation
MCLS Directors Retreat
Deputy Director interviews (4)

Email Activity

December 2020

Name	Send Actions	Receive Actions	Read Actions
Uttaro, Patricia	509	3148	4589
Traub, Adam	309	1302	1309
Harrison, Brie	272	1559	1931
Suro, Ana	462	1977	1348