



**Rochester  
Public Library**  
More Than You Think



**Monroe County  
Library System**  
[www.libraryweb.org](http://www.libraryweb.org)

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TO: MCLS & RPL Boards of Trustees  
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director  
DATE: February 24, 2021  
SUBJECT: Joint Monthly Report – February 2021

## ***Joint Action Items***

### **Proposed FY22 Central Library Budget (Harrison)**

For the FY2021-22 fiscal year the Central Library faced an approximate \$300,000 gap, based on benefits and contractual wage/salary increases (both actual and estimated). The gap was closed through new positions on revenue receipts, including a proposal for a 1.5% inflationary increase to be requested from Monroe County for Central Library support (\$104,000) and from the Central Facilities increased share of building maintenance support for Branch Libraries (\$30,000).

For remaining revenues, we are projecting a State Aid decrease of 5% based on the Governor's proposed budget. The elimination of several proposed vacancies, one mid-year new position and one conversion of a part-time position to full-time results in an increase of 0.75 FTE positions.

Based on 2020 MCLS expenses under budgeted allocations, the projected MCLS fund balance is approximately \$437,220, pending final County year-end close. This is also the available balance, as no current funds are encumbered or projected for use in operations or capital at this time. The minimum fund balance required by the MCLS fund balance policy is \$71,401, based on 1.5% of the MCLS 2021 budget.

The proposed budget was reviewed by the Joint Board Finance Committee on February 16<sup>th</sup>; the recommendation, on a 5-0 vote, was to submit the budget as reviewed and accepted by the committee.

We are continuing to revise the Central Library Development Aid (CLDA) budget, based on legislative adoption of the state budget and evaluation of FY21 expenditures. How expenses within the proposed FY22 budget will be allocated for CLDA will be submitted for Board approval in the spring.

Board Action Requested: Approval of the proposed 2021-22 Central Library Budget.

## ***MCLS Action Items***

None

## **RPL Action Items**

### **Proposed FY22 Community Library Budget (Harrison)**

Each year, the City Office of Management and Budget establishes a Base Level Allocation (BLA) amount to be met with each department's budget proposal. This year, a reduction of \$1,154,900 was requested, primarily a reflection of the current economic challenges for the City and New York State. Facilities maintenance is proposed to be consolidated with Central library staffing, with the elimination of a full-time position (-\$80,900), offset by a chargeback to Central Library (\$30,000). A vacant full-time Branch Administration position is eliminated for savings (-\$101,100), offset by a new part-time position (\$28,800). Several adjustments to part-time support and various operating expenses are recommended as outlined in the attached budget detail. Given the substantial reduction request from the City, and the available fund balance, the budget submission proposes use of \$530,000 in RPL fund balance to reduce impact of budget cuts on operations.

In addition to operating reductions, capital cost reductions of \$430,000 are recommended, recognizing savings from NYSED grants and a future fund balance appropriation to support an upcoming HVAC project. Lastly, a second-year grant request to the Rippey Charitable Trust is anticipated to support Raising A Reader services in the Douglass and Wheatley branch service area (\$30,000).

The RPL will advocate for the restoration of a part-time librarian position abolished in FY21 to meet budget reductions, which will enable the Phillis Wheatley Library to operate with the same hours as FY20. A full-time children's librarian position at the Maplewood Community Library is also advocated for in the event of increased federal aid to municipalities, as well as restorations of full-time reductions made to meet the BLA. The proposed budget was reviewed by the Joint Board Finance Committee on February 16<sup>th</sup> and endorsed 3-0 by the RPL Finance Committee.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval of the proposed 2021-22 Community Library Budget.

### **Professional Services Agreement Extension (Harrison)**

The most recent extension of the library services agreement for The Strong ended December 31st. The RPL has operated limited services to The Strong to enable operation of a "mini-branch" at the museum, which includes access to the catalog, shipping and delivery services, and automation (IT services) as requested. We are proposing an additional one-year extension of the December 2014 agreement through December 31, 2021. The extension intention is to enable The Strong to review any changes to their desired services with any changes to the MCLS Document of Understanding, which is an opportunity to review options for The Strong to consider enhanced service options or participation as a full member. Currently The Strong operates as a satellite branch of the Rochester Public Library, not as an independent member of the MCLS.

In addition, The Strong has requested a decrease in the number of days of delivery given the impact of attendance during the pandemic, with only one day of delivery services versus three days. With the inflationary increase of 1.5% and reduced delivery, the charges total \$4,907. This charge is incorporated as Central library revenue in the annual budget.

**Board Action Requested:** Approve a professional services agreement extension with terms, conditions and charges as described above, extending the original terms of the 2014 agreement.

## **Report Items**

### **MCLS & RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting**

#### **Budget Equity Benchmarking Tool - RPL**

This year, the City required the submission of a formal budget equity toolkit with our budget submission. This toolkit was developed by Dr. Cephas Archie, the City's Chief Diversity Officer, and his staff and provided a process for City department heads to thoughtfully review how their budget planning and submissions support equity. A copy of the library submission is included with this packet.

One of the requirements of this process is the creation of an Equity Team for each department, drawing membership from all levels of the organization. The library team includes Pages, Clerks, Librarians, and Administration. The team met to discuss the toolkit questions and developed some interesting strategies to help us meet our equity goals relative to hiring and staff development. The team will meet once a month going forward, with the first active project being the creation of a mentoring process for staff who are interested in moving up through the organization.

### **MCLS Member Libraries**

#### **Associate Director Adam Traub reporting**

##### Gates Public Library

Gates Public Library is celebrating National Bird Feeding Month with a birding display set up in their atrium. The display includes bags of birdseed to take home, information about local birding groups, birding checklists, a raffle for a birdseed-birdhouse, and more. On Wednesday, February 24, at 6:30 PM, Mike Bergin, founder of the 10,000 Birds website will be presenting a program via Zoom called "Local Hotspots for Birders."

##### Henrietta Public Library

Luticha Doucette, owner of Catalyst Consulting, presented "Born in Babylon: Stories of the Disabled," which was moderated by Amanda Chestnut, educator and curator of *In This Moment: Revolution Reckoning Reparation*. This program is part of a series highlighting participants of *In This Moment*, a project for ten teams of Black writers and photographers to profile ten Black leaders from across Rochester, published by the Visual Studies Workshop. These workshops are sponsored jointly by the MCLS and Henrietta Public Library, with funding provided by the MCLS/RPL Director's Discretionary fund. This fund is provided annually by the Reynolds Library Board and FFRPL.



##### Mendon Public Library

Patrons of the Mendon Public Library can draw or write entries for the "Create an Igloo Character Contest." Entries should illustrate or describe a character who could live in Ivy's igloo, build by a local girl scout from milk jugs, which is on display in the library.

## **MCLS Office Updates**

**Associate Director Adam Traub reporting**

### Social Media

<b>January 2021</b>	<b>RPL Twitter</b>	<b>MCLS Twitter</b>	<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Facebook Calendar</b>	<b>Instagram</b>	<b>YouTube</b>
<b>Profile/Page Visits</b>	542	572	546	31	74	-
<b>New Followers/ Page Likes</b>	0 (1966)	0 (2186)	15 (4685)	-	26 (1823)	14 (207)
<b>Engagements</b>	48	82	1709	72	164	55
<b>Check In/ Mentions</b>	21	24	12	-	2	-
<b>Post Reach</b>	7880	12,500	20,030	1600	8393	21,665
<b>Video/Story Views</b>	-	-	456	-	115	1174
<b>Saves/ Actions on Page</b>	-	-	3	-	28	-

### Statistics

#### *Overdrive*

- Total Checkouts
  - eBooks & Audiobooks – 82,286
  - Magazines – 1,025<sup>1</sup>

#### *Cataloging*

- No Hits - 2,593
- New Titles - 2,427

#### *Shipping*

- Totes Hauled – 4,700
- Holds Totes Processed – 759

#### *ILL*

- Lending Requests
  - Received – 498
  - Filled – 267
- Borrowing Requests
  - Received – 27
  - Filled – 22

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<sup>1</sup> Subscription cancelled mid-January due to vendor change and subsequent price increase.

### Programs

- Alicia Gunther collaborated with RochesterWorks to kick off the “Getting ROC to Work” program series. This series was funded with aid from the State’s Adult Literacy grants. Three programs were held in January, one “train-the-trainer” session for library staff and two for patrons: “Getting Started in Your Job Search” and “Building Your Resume.”
- Advocacy season kicked off in January, including meetings with the Advocacy Team to finalize priorities which focus on restoring State Aid for library construction and avoiding the Governor’s proposed cuts to operating aid. Gunther was instrumental to reaching out representatives and coordinating meetings with local advocates. Traub continues to work with ALA and NYLA on advocating for libraries on the federal level, including supporting Senator Jack Reed’s (D-RI) *Build America’s Libraries Act* to help repair and modernize library facilities.
- MCLS hosted the annual Directors’ Retreat for member libraires; this year topics focused on the System’s upcoming plan of service, the work of the Racial Equity and Justice Initiative, starting a fresh round of the New Directors Roundtable to help support new library directors, discussing Board development, and what library service looks like in a post-COVID world.

### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

In a partnership with the Rochester City School District, students of the district may now borrow MCLS ebooks directly from their school’s ebook platform, without a separate library card! The system works by connecting the school’s ebook platform, Sora, with MCLS collections to help complement the school’s own holdings.

### ***Outreach, Melanie Lewis reporting***

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Amy Discenza spoke with staff from Pathstone’s Employment Focused Services Program, which serves individuals (18+) who are unemployed and recently placed on probation or released from incarceration. Discenza presented various library services from the educational to the entertaining, which included information about the various ways Rochester Public Library is serving the community during the pandemic and highlighted new databases such as Udemy and Creativebug.

#### Patron Spotlight

Betty has been an Outreach Patron since 2007. She’s been sharp, independent, and lived alone with family support. She was an avid reader, conversationalist, and letter writer. In the first few months of the pandemic she would call, demanding to be visited, wanting her new books.

During the past few months, the letter writing slowed, then stopped. The phone calls became a struggle to understand and be understood. Then during the last month Outreach staff received no contact and became concerned. Then, an email from her son:



*“Melanie, my mother has been admitted to a nursing home and I don't think she will be getting any books going forward. She still has the Nancy Pelosi biography, but I hope to get that back before she*

*transfers to the new facility...Thank you (and her buddy Larry, of course) for all that you have done for her over the years."*

This type of communication is a regular part of Outreach services. During this time of COVID, one wonders if isolation may have contributed to Betty's decline. Betty was the last person Discenza visited in March 2020, prior to the pause on in-home services. Outreach staff will miss seeing and hearing from her.

### ***Catalog and Collection Services, Jennifer Lenio reporting***

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Lenio took about 50 RPL calendars to the City's Southeast Neighborhood Center (SE NSC) for distribution to the community. Afterwards, the SE NSC's Administrator sent this note:

*"The calendars were a big hit at the MLK event. It was awesome to have people take time to take a look and then take one with them. You and your team did a great job."*

#### Anecdotes/Other

Progress on the National Library of Medicine grant for children's and teen mental health in the time of COVID continues. Common Ground Health received 300 applications (for 15 spots) from teens in the five-county area. Because of the need and interest, Common Ground will be asking teens who are not chosen to participate in this grant if they would be willing to have their name and contact information shared with their local library. In this way, the grant team hopes each library will be able to engage with these teens in some fashion. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education & Engagement)

## ***Central Library Updates***

### ***Patron Services Manager, Cynthia Dana reporting***

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Cynthia Dana met with Business Insight Center staff and Nancy Danzell, from Creative Library Concepts, to discuss plans for private meeting room spaces on the fourth floor of the Bausch & Lomb Library Building. This will be the first phase in renovations, following the carpet replacement in February.
- Along with Shetora Banks and Tonia Burton, Dana met with Diane Bardeen and Yvonne Wenzel from Action for a Better Community regarding their Summer Youth Employment Program. Traditionally, they have two groups of 20 youth, but may have to decrease that number to comply with COVID guidelines. The program runs from July through August, with some dates off site.

### ***Arts/Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting***

#### Programs

- Joe DiFiore, executive director of City Roots Community Land Trust, gave a virtual presentation about his organization. City Roots is active in Rochester, working to strengthen the Rochester community by making housing accessible and equitable for all. City Roots purchases and rehabilitates property, and the “before and after” slides were amazing.
- The 4th year of Rochester Writes began with a new writing series: Write What You Care About with award winning author and writing teacher, Alex Sanchez. This four-part class uses in-class readings, discussions, and writing exercises to help each of the participants clarify the things they feel most passionately about, are most curious about, and care most deeply about.
- Nanci Nugent collaborated with Darlene Richards to present Black Bears in New York State, a discussion led by Dr. Paul D. Curtis, professor of Wildlife Science in the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment at Cornell University. Attendees learned about the bears’ habitats, food sources, and what to do if a bear is encountered. There was ample time for questions, of which there were many; Aliaikia Miller also shared a bibliography of books with attendees.

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Carol Moldt attended a meeting with Writers and Books and other Monroe County Library System librarians to discuss the book selection for the National Endowment of the Arts Big Read program that Writers and Books is planning on hosting in the fall; this program will take the place of the annual Rochester Reads program.

### ***Business Insight Center, Jennifer Byrnes reporting***

#### Statistics

- The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted: 3 in person, 16 by email, 3 by phone.
- Patent Virtual Assistance Center: 0
- Webpage views: 38
- 3D Printer: 0
- Hours of in-depth market research: 39
- Tracy Jong usage: 2 hours

#### Database Use

- Frost & Sullivan: Downloads 2; Value \$5,900
- IBISWorld: Page Views 24; Value \$10,175
- InnovationQ: Logins 11; Searches 120
- MarketLine: Downloads 5; Value \$3,675
- PitchBook: Logins 7
- Statista: Users: 3; Value \$45
- ValueLine: Logins 141; Searches 4,049; Downloads 233

### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Jennifer Byrnes met with entrepreneurs in the medical device and food processing industries to discuss market research. Byrnes and Kate Meddaugh had two meetings to discuss Simon Vision Consulting, an initiative of the Simon School at the University of Rochester.
- Byrnes is taking a series of data analytics classes offered through Urban Libraries Council. This month's topic was "Observations: Data Hiding in Plain Sight." Meddaugh attended the following trainings through the United States Patent and Trademark Office: "Innovators and Entrepreneurs: Learn about IP Basics and Helpful Resources," "Trademark Fundamentals," "The Path to a Patent, How to Draft Provisional Patent Application," and "Path to a Patent, Patent Searching."

### Anecdotes/Other

Databases that provide "value reports" indicate that the databases provided by the Business Insights Center **saved the business community \$1,006,728 in 2020**. Byrnes posted the information on database savings to the community on her LinkedIn page, which received the following comments:

*"This group does excellent work. I highly recommend them to anyone who needs good research data on industries, markets and more"* Rich Notargiacomo, Venture Coach

*"I have benefitted from the Business Insight Center. I appreciate being reminded of that and will soon show my support with a contribution"* Robert Lawrence Hill, MD. Founder of Harmonigenic Corp.

*"Incredible! And I'm sure there are still so many people who don't know they can utilize it. Thanks for your tireless work to keep growing that number."* Andrew Brady, EVOLving Leaders and Organizations toward Conscious Capitalism

### ***Children's Center, Tonia Burton reporting***

### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Librarian Katie Powell presents a monthly overview of Children's Services to pediatric residents from University of Rochester Medical Center's Pediatric Links to the Community program. This contact has grown into larger collaborations.
- In January, Children's Services Consultant Tonia Burton recorded a session of Thriving Forward Podcast with Dr. Sarah Collins-McGowan. The podcast was developed in 2019 by Megan Callanan Lasaponara, MD, a pediatrician at Unity Hospital and Rochester General Hospital and the Founder and Executive Director of Kids Thrive 585, Inc. and Sarah Collins-McGowan, MD is a Pediatrician at Genesee Pediatrics and the Associate Director of Pediatrics Links with the Community at the Hoekelman Center. The goal is to speak with people involved in good works and projects in the Greater Rochester Area. Burton talked about all the ways Rochester Public Library and the Central Library have been sharing materials and services throughout the pandemic. The episode will air in the spring.
- Burton has also been working with a team at the Hoekelman Center to find ways to share early literacy materials and information to their staff and families using their services. In January they helped to deliver activity kits and Raising A Reader Shared Family Reading bags to families using their clinics and offices. The team is also planning to work with ABC Head Start sites next fall to supplement early literacy learning with toys for the children to take home.



- The early literacy work through Roc the Future is moving forward with Burton's participation on the Language and Literacy team. The team is comprised of staff from Nazareth College, Children's Institute, Child Care Council, Common Ground Health, Hoekelman Center, Mueller Foundation, and other early childcare providers. They are considering joining the library to share the Talking is Teaching Campaign.

Talking is Teaching is a national media campaign sponsored by Too Small to Fail. Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing is a strategy aimed at improving school readiness among children by recognizing that parents are their child's first and most important teacher. Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing reminds parents that learning begins at birth and provides parents with the tools to strengthen the start for their child. In New York State the Office of Child and Family Services has purchased space on billboards, grocery stores, and laundromats.

Burton has also been building a partnership with The Seneca Park Zoo. This summer's reading program theme has an animal focus. Early planning includes placing Talking is Teaching Signs throughout the zoo and programs for member libraries that can be done virtually.

### Programs

Local illustrator and muralist Chloe Smith presented a watercolor paint night class via Zoom. The class was well received by the participants and their caregivers. One parent followed up with Powell via email and said:

*"even my reluctant child said he enjoyed it. We all learned so much. And we are grateful for the materials to keep playing with. Thank you for coordinating such an engaging evening."*



### Upcoming Programs

- The Children's Center was awarded a Play Everywhere Grant from Kaboom and The Ralph C. Wilson Foundation to reimagine the Secret Room. Community feedback will be essential to the process.

Secret Room Focus Groups will be held in early March. Rochester area families and educators will participate in zoom sessions facilitated by Common Ground Health Staff.

- Rochester Public Library is joining Healthi Kids to promote #PLAYROCSATHOME: Play is SNOW much fun. Throughout the week of February 15, Healthi Kids will promote activities families can do at home and highlight library services.

### ***Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting***

#### Statistics

- Curbside Pickup Appointments – 377
- New Borrowers – 9

#### Anecdotes/Other

Patty Uttaro received a phone call from a patron who was worried about the amount she owed on her account, which she referred to Chad Cunningham. The patron is on a fixed income and had fines and fees accrued during the pandemic. Cunningham worked with staff from the Monroe Branch and the Pittsford Community Library to reduce the amount owed significantly. The patron was very appreciative of the way Monroe County Library System member libraries worked together to assist her.

### ***Local History & Genealogy, Michelle Finn & Christine L. Ridarsky reporting***

#### Programs

- The division hosted a special genealogy presentation this month (via Zoom). Eric Migdal's "Understanding DNA Matches & Analysis" addressed one of the most popular topics in the field today. Migdal shared his expertise and experience in using DNA testing to search for his biological family, helping participants understand how to use this tool to enhance their own research. This was an educational and engaging supplement to Koehler's regular weekly genealogy programs. The program is available to view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQCb2Kos1QI&t=1s>.
- The popular Mourning in the Morning series, presented in partnership with the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, featured Patricia Corcoran's talk "Lilian D. Wald: Rochester's Renaissance Woman" (via Zoom). This educational presentation explored Wald's work to improve the lives of the poor and disenfranchised in the early 20th century through her work as a nurse, social worker, and reformer. The program is available to view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGLKNvBxUD4>.
- The Young Men's Book Club, hosted by McDonald, met once this month. McDonald brought the program with him when he transferred from the Teen Center last year and is seeking to retool it to incorporate local history content into the bi-monthly meetings. This month the discussion mostly focused on the attack on the U.S. Capitol.

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Local History projects were the focus of two the weekly Tuesday Topics programs, presented (via Zoom) by the Friends & Foundation of the Rochester Public Library (FFRPL), this month. Ridarsky and McDonald gave an overview of the plans to develop an archive of Black history and culture in "Preserving Rochester's Black History at the Central Library of Rochester & Monroe County." The presentation is available to view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPUbfnJzx6s>. The second session, "Rochester's Black History through the Eyes of the Dinkle Family," featured the *Everyday People* exhibition, which remains on display in the Local History & Genealogy Division. In

this program, Finn and Morry discuss the creation the exhibit and the significance of the stories it tells with Karen Dinkle Bunton and Jerry Bunton, members of the family featured in the exhibit. The presentation is also available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYJbdgj9KLM&t=20s>.

- Ridarsky met with Simeon Banister and Annette Jimenez Gleason of the Rochester Area Community Foundation to discuss funding for the proposed archive of Black history and culture.
- Ridarsky and McDonald hosted the second meeting of the staff advisory team that is planning the archive of Black history and culture (via Zoom). The discussion focused on drafting a charter for the organization and starting to identify additional community stakeholders.
- Ridarsky met with Mayor Lovely A. Warren's Chief of Staff Brittaney Wells to bring her up to speed on plans for the archive of Black history and culture. Wells will be joining the staff advisory team.
- Ridarsky hosted a meeting (via Zoom) with members of the Clarissa Street Reunion Archive Committee and Teen Empowerment to discuss the Clarissa Street photo digitization project, which is set to begin in February. The Friends & Foundation raised \$10,000 to support this project on ROC the Day 2020. The project is a crowd-sourcing effort to collect and digitize photos from residents of the Clarissa Street neighborhood, which was the heart of the city's African American community before the Black business and entertainment district was razed during urban renewal and highway construction in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Material collected in the project will become part of the new community curated archive of local Black history and culture. Fess and McDonald also participated.
- Morry met (via phone) with Theo Munson of Spiritus Christi's Anti-Racism Coalition/First Universalist Initiative for Racial Equity to discuss the proposed Rochester Civil Rights Heritage Site and the experience of African American migrants in Rochester.

#### Digital Projects

- Finn added new Erie Canal curriculum for fourth grade to the Classroom Connections section of *Rochester Voices*: <http://www.rochestervoices.org/lesson-plan/erie-canal-for-the-classroom/>. Developed with support from the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, the seven inquiry-based lessons and two teacher guides are aligned to the New York State Social Studies Standards and Practices and incorporate local primary source materials from the library's collections. Finn will add more content to this unit in the upcoming months and coordinate teacher training on the new content this summer.
- Ridarsky and Fess submitted an application for participation in the Archive-It Community Webs program. If received, this grant will provide training and technology to Local History staff allowing the division to identify and preserve digital content from local organizations that is posted on the Internet, with a focus on preserving materials from local African American groups and organizations.
- Ridarsky prepared an application, submitted by FFRPL, to Dixon Schwabl for funds to subscribe to an online oral history collection and access platform, [www.TheirStory.io](http://www.TheirStory.io), in support a pilot project to collect oral history interviews with Rochester-area African American elders and activists as part of the archive of Black history & culture.
- Ridarsky met with TheirStory founder Zack Ellis, Trint.com and HyperAudio founder Mark Boas, and Brooklyn College professor Joseph Entin to discuss a possible joint application to the National Endowment for the Humanities to develop technologies that will make oral history interviews more accessible and usable and to test those emerging technologies in Rochester and Brooklyn.

#### Special Collections

- Staff completed a number of long-term special collections projects in January. Christansen finished data entry in the Harold W. Lara Photo Collection inventory, greatly increasing accessibility of this one-of-a-kind photographic collection of more than 100,000 images.

- Fess finished updating the division's finding aids so that they are in line with the current archival description standards, and Wallance finished rehousing and reorganizing the division's extensive Pamphlet File.
- Fess and Wallance are now focused on arranging, rehousing, and inventorying the division's extensive map collection; they processed 320 maps in January.

#### Anecdotes/Other

Cody was interviewed by *Democrat & Chronicle* reporter Justin Murphy for a story on the similarities and differences between the 1918 influenza and the COVID-19 pandemic in Rochester. The article, "A veritable plague of Egypt," ran on the front page of the newspaper (with a quote from Cody above the fold!) on Sunday, February 7. Read the article here:

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2021/02/04/rochester-ny-covid-deaths-equal-1918-influenza-epidemic-toll/4303978001/>

#### ***Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting***

#### Statistics

During the month of January, RMC handled 203 reference questions and 71 non-reference transactions and for a total of 274. In addition, RMC rented 9 pieces of equipment and 134 Mi-Fi units, for a grand total of 890 items or 30% of the Central Library's total circulation of 3,069 (before renewals from Catalog Plus, Classic Catalog and Telephone are added). When adding in the RMC items that circulated at other libraries, we circulated 3,749 items.

#### Database Use

##### *Hoopla*

- Circulation
  - Movies/TV – 501
  - Audiobooks – 812
  - Music – 61
  - eBooks – 383
  - Comics – 220
  - Total – 1977
- New Users – 72

#### ***Science and History, Darlene Richards reporting***

#### Programs

- Darlene Richards and Renee Kendrot hosted a self-care program called *This Year Resolve to Be Good to You!* The program was presented by Barb Klein, Life Coach from Inspired Possibility and received such good feedback that she will be hosting it again in March. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education & Engagement)
- Lenio, Gabe Pellegrino, and Richards have been involved with the Black Men in White Coats panel discussion program, which will take place during Black History Month in conjunction with a public viewing of the documentary film of the same name. Richards and Pellegrino have worked on publicity for the program and the related film. The well-rounded group of panelists includes medical

doctors, a nursing professor, a mental health counselor, and a current medical student; Jeff Bostic created superhero posters of the panel on display at the Central Library through February. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education & Engagement)

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Florence Morris had a telephone conference meeting hosted by Bradley Stanley, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance Facilitated Self Assistance Tax Assistance Program. A discussion was held about the 2021 tax season for filing of individual income taxes for both the Federal Internal Revenue Service and New York State taxes. The program will be conducted much differently than in past years as it will be conducted remotely. Stanley will be handling all appointments through email; the Central Library's Science, History & Social Sciences Division will be primarily promoting the program by providing information to patrons. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Stewardship & Curation)

#### ***Technology Center, Jay Osborne reporting***

##### Programs

Technology Center staff have begun developing some tutorials that may be made available on the library's YouTube channel. The pilot project is a very simple tool and the potential for this initiative intrigues the staff. Brian DiNitto has been recording some of his Zoom classes and though these do not work as standalone tutorials, they serve as jumping off points for future tutorials. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education & Engagement)

##### Anecdotes/Other

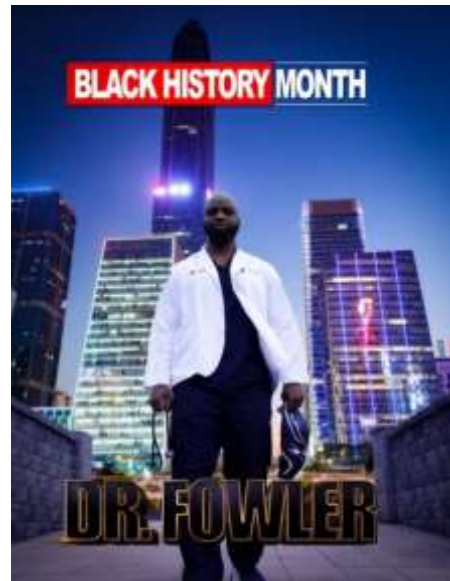
- Jay Osborne received an urgent call from a librarian in Washington State, seeking recommendations on how to safely reopen his library's computer center to patrons. Osborne talked him through the cleaning procedures used in the Technology Center, including staff buy-in, and justifying needed expenditures. They also discussed how this situation can be an effective public relations tool. Osborne followed up that conversation with a PowerPoint file that included an equipment list, cleaning procedure documents, staff guidelines, and images of how the Technology Center makes use of each computer's ability to drive two monitors and accept inputs from two mice and two keyboards.
- Ronald Frietag recently helped a patron over the phone access and print her paystubs from an app she had on her phone. She was being hurried by her landlord to provide proof of income and she was quite upset as she did not know how to get copies of the paystubs. He talked her through the general process of bringing up individual paystubs and sending them in an email. He kept her updated during the printing process, and the patron was very happy that the procedure was working. They arranged a time for her to come pick up her copies through our curbside pickup. She was very happy and very relieved to have what she needed and thanked him for helping her through it.

#### ***Teen Central, Shetora Banks reporting***

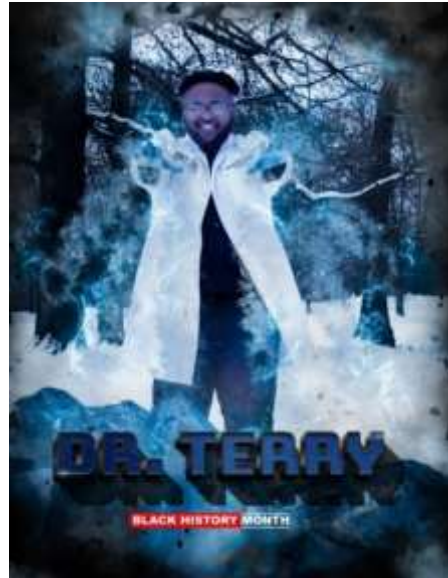
##### Programs

This month was filled with photoshoots and editing for the Black History Month events surrounding the Black Men in White Coats film documentary. Jeff Bostic was able to secure more than half a dozen black

doctors to participate in the posters and used his design skills to take them from regular photo to superhero. Here are some examples:







## **Branch Libraries**

### **Acting Assistant Director Joan Lee reporting**

We are pleased to announce that Melanie Lewis will join Branch Administration in March as the Deputy Director for Branch Libraries. Melanie brings a wealth of experience through her long career within the Monroe County Library System and especially at RPL.

Branch Administration staff Joan Lee and Pat Connor have done an exemplary job of keeping the branch libraries afloat. They have met weekly with site supervisors and fielded a number of issues for staff. We are grateful for their willingness to step in and keep things going.

### **Arnett Branch Library, Bruce Tehan reporting**

Faxing, printing, scanning, and copying are the things most often requested by our patrons during our curbside service; the Arnett Branch staff is also doing a brisk business loaning out materials. arts and crafts take and make kits, mask distribution, and the and the book give away sponsored by the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday Book Club are also very popular with patrons. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)

#### Community Outreach/Meetings

- The book giveaway program was the Arnett Branch's main outreach work during January. In cases where parents have not been able to visit the library to receive books for their children Arnett staff, especially Prudence-Anderson-Leusch, have brought the items to the family's front door. Shamika Fusco from the Lyell Branch Library and Katie Powell from Central have also conducted deliveries.
- Nancy Cholewa passed the Notary Public Exam and has started the next phase - applying for a license. She and already-licensed Ginger Brewer-Bennett are looking forward to providing notary services when the library welcomes patrons back inside the building.

### **Charlotte Branch Public Library, Dennis Williams reporting**

The Learning Pod at Charlotte continues to add students and still has capacity for more.

#### Programs

Food for Thought Book Discussion – In the 24th year, the January discussion focused on *A House Among the Trees* by Julia Glass. A small but intrepid group met under the leadership of Maureen Whalen to virtually share reflections on this book.

#### Anecdotes/Other

- The Charlotte Branch receives many nice compliments from patrons. One compliment came from the "Helping People Get Back to Work" webinar leader during a presentation to librarians from the Monroe County Library System. Rosa's comment was brief, "Charlotte is my favorite library."
- This comment was received the same day from a patron who called to request items for pickup. Suzanne B's stated, "Charlotte is an amazing library. It has such charm!"



***Frederick Douglass Community Library, Erin Clarke reporting***

Programs

- Sarah Ngo continues to offer story times to children at Rochester Childfirst Network over Zoom. Ngo also posts story times to Facebook every Monday morning. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Stewardship and Curation)
- Isaac Lewis hosts lunchtime Zoom sessions to help students with homework, play games, and talk about K-pop. He has seen an increase in students asking for homework help and computer help recently.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Erin Clarke has started working with Alicia Gunther, Patricia Connor, and multiple site supervisors to create a virtual programming group. Staff would partner to offer virtual programming options for patrons on a larger scale in the branches. The group could pool resources, plan events, get them booked, market them, and push them out to as many patrons as possible - live, as a recording, or both. If it works well, the group could easily transition into collaborating for in-person programming. Gunther has offered to provide training in virtual programming best practices, tips, and tricks.

***Lincoln Branch Library and Toy Library, Sarah Lehman reporting***

Programs

- Matthew Seidel, Jasmine Santiago, and Tashara Martinez collaborated on a superhero-themed Take-and-Make project for parents to bring home.
- Seidel and Martinez finished putting together the Early Intervention Kits. They should be ready for circulation to patrons soon.
- The Toy Library also continues to present Virtual Playtime programming. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)
- Santiago continues to collaborate with Lauren Seaver from the Fairport Public Library to post Bilingual Spanish-English Story times. Santiago is posting them in the Toy and Lincoln Library Facebook and the Toy Library Instagram.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Staff from Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School coordinated with Seidel so that a group of second graders could learn chess during an upcoming chess club meeting. The chess club holds weekly virtual meetings. The staff from the school have also reached out to discuss the possibility of creating a display on Spanish Language materials or authors in the Lincoln Library, a planning meeting is scheduled for this in early February.

Anecdotes/Other

Recently, out of gratitude, a patron insisted on returning to the library after a visit to drop off a dozen fresh doughnuts for the Lincoln staff.

**Lyell Branch Library, Shamika Fusco reporting**

Programs

- This month, the Pasta-bilities challenge went well. Participants were given pasta and tomato sauce to create a pasta dish. After creating the dish patrons were encouraged to post pictures on Facebook. This challenge did not have a winner, but it was put forth to encourage family engagement, and discretely fight food disparities. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)
- The staff at the Lyell Branch Library was contacted by the Cornell Cooperative extension SnapEd program to teach nutrition classes via zoom. The first class had a good turnout. Many of the participants were from other member libraries. Patrons were excited about the learning opportunity and equally excited to learn about Lyell branch services and other resources throughout the community like curbside market, Senior discounts Tuesday at Tops Food Markets, and the Rochester Public market as well.
- Lyell Branch library in partnership with WXXI created Back to School bags for the students transition to in person learning. Families could make a curbside appointment for pickup. The bags included, scissors, crayons, glue, pencil sharpeners, eraser, pencils, books, colored pencils and “Libraries Rock” bandanas. The principal at #54 school reached out to Shamika Fusco, to receive bags for a few of their students. Supplies were limited and each student received 1 bag. Target age for participation was K-3rd. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Sustainability and Resources)



**Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran reporting**

Programs

- The Maplewood Community Library's English Language Learning classes and citizenship classes are well attended on Zoom.
- The manga and anime club called the Genshiken Club meets online and posts reviews of anime or manga series. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)

**Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg**

Programs

Rebecca Hudson created a January Take-and-Make Craft - a snowflake ornament. The craft was very popular with patrons. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)



Anecdotes/Other

- The masks supplied by the City are still proving to be very popular with our patrons, especially now since people are starting to double mask!
- Meals from Monroe: This collaboration with Andy Carey is still going strong. Andy is picking up 6 meal bags every Thursday.

**Phillis Wheatley Library, Lori Frankunas reporting**

Programs

The most popular virtual program in January was “Dove Origami Fun” on Facebook. People appreciate a fun, easy activity that they can create with materials they already have in the house. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Lori Frankunas is participating in the Out of School Time Community Advisory Group in conjunction with the Greater Rochester After-School and Summer Alliance. Community Advisory Group members are being recruited to provide informed guidance and support as an ally and advocate in our efforts to ensure a comprehensive review of our current community Out of School Time landscape and what is needed for the future for a sustainable, coordinated, equitable, high quality out-of-school time system. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Sustainability and Resources)

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

Programs

Jennifer Nesbitt, Maria Heeks-Heinlein, and Jacob Bigelow participated in Sully’s first Zoom Book Talk program. Heeks-Heinlein and Nesbitt discussed the book *Punching the Air* by Ibi Zoboi, and Bigelow discussed the book *Dandelion Wine* by Ray Bradbury. It was a successful first effort that staff plans to build upon. The hope is that patrons will enjoy participating in discussions or watching the video afterwards to get some good suggestions on what to read, watch or listen to. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Heeks-Heinlein was able to attend the Beechwood Neighborhood community meeting via Zoom. She talked about the origami contest that will be held in February. It was a bittersweet meeting, because all participants were able to say some wonderful things about Nancy Johns-Price, who retired from the city after 36 years of service. Johns-Price has been a supporter of the Sully Branch Library and was able to assist the branch with many things such as providing contacts to secure

trucks for the truck show; Johns-Price was able to get tools to clean the outside of the building and assisted with programs such as Family Arts Day, play walk, and a job fair. She will be missed.

#### Anecdotes/Other

- Nesbitt and Darlene Saunders displayed Origami books and the origami contest flyer in the windows facing the R-Center. One of the regular teenage patrons, who also participated in Sully's last origami contest a few years ago, was very excited to see the display in the window when he visited the learning lab at the Thomas Ryan Community Center. He said that he remembered the last contest and he wanted to do something for this contest. He was scheduled to travel out of town to visit family for a little while and was worried that he would not be back in time to submit an entry to the contest, so he asked if he could submit his entry before he left town. Within a few days, he brought two origami fish to submit to the contest. We strive to set up programming that has a lasting positive impact on our patrons' lives. Having a patron remember a past program, and having happy memories from that program, is just one more example of how libraries can improve the lives of people.
- Sully's floors were stripped and waxed this month, and they look brand new. Staff at Sully are grateful for Kifa Hendrix for the outstanding job he did with the floors. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Stewardship and Curation)

#### **Winton Branch Library, Kathy Wolf reporting**

#### Programs

- The day before the inauguration, Winton Branch staff hosted via zoom a very successful political program titled: "Divided We Fall: how to build bridges and engage in politics in 2021." The speaker was political science professor Dr. Timothy Kneeland from Nazareth College. Kneeland spoke about the polarization of politics and what we can do as a society, and specifically in Monroe County, to improve this reality. The attendees were very engaged and asked questions for close to 30 minutes. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Education and Engagement)
- Kathy Wolf and Patrick Pittman developed a series of take-and-make crafts for programming to supplement the larger virtual programming offered by Winton. The short-range plan to include physical programs will help expand the range of community members reached by the Winton Branch through inclusiveness and acknowledgement of multiple learning styles.

#### Anecdotes/Other

- Staff has begun posting photos of new and popular items on social media sites. The effect was almost immediate; there were multiple phone calls within an hour of posting a picture of *Ready Player Two*. This has also been an effective strategy letting the community know about new Children's material. Staff gave out two incentive prizes for borrowing our Raising a Reader bag in two days after we posted the flyer. This use of social media with targeted materials encourages more effective readers' advisory and highlights diversity within the collection. (RPL Strategic Plan Priority: Stewardship and Curation)
- Pittman reached out to a patron to ensure the cataloging of new DVDs on CARL created an efficient and user-friendly experience for patrons.

- Wolf was privileged to sit on the interview committee for the new Deputy Director. The experience gave her insight to the management of the library as a whole as well as the opportunity to voice her opinion.

## ***Selected Meetings & Outputs***

### ***MCLS Director Patricia Uttaro reporting***

***January 23, 2021 – February 19, 2021***

#### Standing Meetings

City Senior Management Team (weekly)

RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)

Adam Traub, 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

Kearstin Warren Brown, parent leader

MCLS REJI Team Meeting

Jumpstarting ROC Team

Assemblyman Josh Jensen (toured Central)

City Labor Relations attorneys

City Council Committee Meeting

RPL Equity Team

Roc the Future Convener meeting

Laura Osterhaut, RRLC (phone call)

Luticha Doucette, Catalyst Consulting

Senator Jeremy Cooney

City Council Meeting

#### Email Activity

January 2021

<b>Name</b>	<b>Send Actions</b>	<b>Receive Actions</b>	<b>Read Actions</b>
Uttaro, Patricia	774	4295	6763
Traub, Adam	427	2119	4154
Harrison, Brie	368	2168	3107
Suro, Ana	590	2268	2977