



115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

TO: RPL Board of Trustees  
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director  
DATE: April 28, 2021  
SUBJECT: Monthly Report – April 2021

## ***Action Items***

### **Agreement, A/V Services (Uttaro)**

As part of the Secret Room renovation, the Library shall retain the services of an audio-visual firm to support the design, installation, and training of new systems in the Secret Room. The project architect developed a preliminary scope of work for the basis of services, which will be refined and developed in conjunction with Children’s Center staff. The solutions under design include ceiling projectors, speakers and projection screens, controllers, wireless display, wireless microphone, DVD player and interactive software for projection. Diversified is recommended based on their experience with body motion detecting interactive display utilized at higher education locations. The Children’s division seeks to continue scheduled programming such as movies and storytimes, as well as enabling interactive screen functionality for open play during regular library hours. Services will be funded through the Play Everywhere grant and current year operating funds and will be completed by September 30, 2021.

Board Action Requested: Approval of an agreement with Diversified, for an amount not to exceed \$29,000, for the services described.

### **Acceptance of RRLC Technology Grant (Uttaro)**

The Local History and Genealogy Division at the Central Library has been awarded a Rochester Regional Library Council Technology Grant in the amount of \$2,400. The funds will be used to hire a contractor through a professional services agreement to upload approximately 600 digital images to the statewide New York Heritage digital collections website. The pilot project will result in development of an efficient process that ultimately will be used to transfer Rochesters Images and other content to New York Heritage to increase discoverability of the library’s digital collections, which currently are only accessible through the library catalog.

Board Action Requested: Accept the RRLC Technology grant in the amount of \$2400.

### **Acceptance of RRLC Marketing Grant (Uttaro)**

The Local History and Genealogy Division has been awarded a Rochester Regional Library Council/Causewave Marketing Grant in the amount of \$3200. The LH/G Division will work with Causewave Communications staff to develop a long-term vision for the Division which will help them prioritize projects and use staff more effectively under the umbrella of the Rochester Public Library strategic plan.

Board Action Requested: Accept the RRLC/Causewave Marketing Grant in the amount of \$3200.

## Report Items

### RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

**Mobile Library Service** – The Branch Facilities Plan identified three top-tier libraries for action: Lincoln, Maplewood, and Lyell. Lincoln was recommended for a full interior renovation; Maplewood for a new building; and Lyell to reconsider as a hub for a set of mobile services. Several months ago, Kearstin Brown-Warren, a local parent enrolled in the Parent Leadership and Training Institute, decided to make revival of bookmobile service in Rochester her PLTI project. She conducted research, spoke to multiple local organizations and leaders, and eventually met with me to discuss her vision. We spoke at length about the various forms of mobile services, from the traditional RV-style bookmobile to the smaller mini-vans now being used in many communities. Deputy Director Lewis and I met again with Brown-Warren this month to discuss next steps, which will include engaging the full staff at Lyell to explore this idea and determine if mobile service is a fit for the Lyell neighborhood and for the City in general. If there is interest, I would like to ask Ms. Brown-Warren to visit a future RPL Board meeting and deliver her presentation on bookmobile service. I think you will find it interesting and informative as we continue to explore the service possibility.

### Social Media

| March 2021                   | RPL Twitter | MCLS Twitter | Facebook   | Facebook Calendar | Facebook Groups | Instagram  | YouTube  |
|------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Profile/<br>Page Visits      | 410         | 245          | 487        | 39                | 0               | 14         | -        |
| New Followers/<br>Page Likes | 4 (1,986)   | 3 (2,199)    | 30 (4,896) | -                 | 14 (723)        | 15 (1,858) | 15 (233) |
| Engagements                  | 70          | 13           | 1246       | 101               | 376             | 264        | 30       |
| Check In/<br>Mentions        | 39          | 19           | -          | -                 | -               | 1          | -        |
| Post Reach                   | 10,100      | 3,434        | 8,084      | 1,064             | -               | 4,984      | 21,350   |
| Video/Story<br>Views         | -           | -            | 514        | -                 | -               | 0          | 1,107    |
| Saves/<br>Actions on Page    | -           | -            | 6          | -                 | -               | 4          | -        |

## Central Library Updates

### Arts/Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting

#### Programs

- Rachel Betts, Community Project Manager of Connected Communities, gave a virtual presentation about the many ways that her organization is being a “community quarterback” in Rochester’s EMMA and Beechwood neighborhoods. It was a fascinating program that covered topics such as the four pillars of holistic neighborhood revitalization, toxic charity, and getting residents involved. This program coincided with the Community Design Center of Rochester’s “Reshaping Rochester” lecture series. (Education & Engagement)

- Delores Radney from WOC, Women of Color Arts Collaborative, taught a group of enthusiastic patrons how to create a beaded bracelet and French wire earrings. Patrons are grateful that these classes can continue virtually. This was the first class Radney taught for Central; she was friendly, enthusiastic, and patient. There was a lot of fun and laughter in this class. She engaged patrons in telling personal stories about beading and being creative. One student said, “I love learning new creative skills and I enjoy being able to talk about my experiences with beading and art with others.” Staff and patrons look forward to having Radney back to teach papermaking and batik.
- Librarian Nanci Nugent likes to bring attention to nature and animals, either through her stuffed animal programs or by creating items that help animals. Patrons enjoyed picking up supplies to make pinecone peanut butter ornaments. Many patrons cannot afford to buy any extras, such as birdseed, so the staff was happy to supply the required materials. Birds love these hanging ornaments, where the pinecone is covered with peanut butter and then rolled in birdseed. Feedback included, “I was glad to make these to help birds and another said, “I never heard of these ornaments, I will try and make more.”
- Rochester Writes featured a new four-part writing class: “Using Community to Nurture Your Voice.” Instructor Anais Salibian taught students a unique way of listening to and providing feedback to fellow writers, based on the book by Peter Elbow, *Writing Without Teachers*. Below are two comments made by students in the follow-up evaluation:
  - “Anais’s emphasis on this process was what set this apart from many others, and I strongly applaud it. It helped me to do what I always try to do, and I believe it raised the level of responses to my own writing compared to what I’ve gotten in other writing workshops.”
  - “Anais chooses workshops with more uncommon content, and she’s both supportive and no-nonsense, which I greatly appreciate.”



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

Statistics

- The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted: 15 in person, 22 by email, 0 by mail, 7 by phone
- Patent Virtual Assistance Center: 0
- Webpage views: 40
- 3D Printer: 0
- Hours of in-depth market research: 46
- Tracy Jong usage: 3 appointments, 1 hour 45 minutes total

Database Use

- Frost & Sullivan: Downloads 10; Value \$30,050
- IBISWorld: Page Views 51; Value \$17,865
- InnovationQ: Logins 15; Searches 190
- MarketLine: Downloads 5; Value \$3,200
- PitchBook: Logins 5
- Statista: Logins 34; Value \$4,316
- ValueLine: Logins 213; Searches 4,590; Downloads 1,526

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

As part of Start-Up Week, Kate Meddaugh and Jennifer Byrnes were on a panel consisting of local resources that provide help and guidance to start-up companies of all sizes at Nextcorps titled: “Regional Resources that Can Help You Build Your Startup.”

***Children's Services, Tonia Burton Reporting***

Outreach/Community Contacts

- Katie Powell shared information on library services and resources with pediatric residents from the University of Rochester Medical Center's Pediatric Links to the Community Program.
- Burton is participating with regional early childhood organizations to expand the Talking is Teaching program in Monroe County. The New York State Office of Child and Family Services has been purchasing billboards, television ads, bus wraps, and providing content to childcare providers. Monroe County Library System has been using the materials for a couple of years in small ways, this will be expanded to fit the county and city adaptation of the Talking is Teaching: Talk - Sing - Read campaign. The goal is to have libraries, health care offices, childcare sites, parks, the Seneca Park Zoo, all using the same campaign materials, so parents and caregivers gain recognition of the materials through seeing them used by multiple trusted resources. Burton is discussing the possibility of working with the Seneca Park Zoo on incorporating signage into their exhibits.
- Burton and Powell worked with community readers to create storytime videos for the Rochester Chapter of the National Association for the Education of Young Children for April which is the Month of the Young Child. Burton organized the stories and readers and Powell edited the videos and worked with an ASL interpreter for some of the videos.
- Burton worked with Beatriz LeBron from Common Ground Health to host three community focus groups to gather ideas for the Secret Room project. Adults, educators, and children gave input on what they wanted in a reimagined Secret Room. Nook seating was a big request, as was the theme of multi-use. Families are looking for space where they can bring kids of different ages and offer something for each age and interest level. The Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library donated Wal-Mart gift cards to each person who participated to thank them for their time. The input was shared with Kelly Jahn, Interior Architect & Designer. Jahn has fused the community input with the designs we selected from last year's HyperSpace project and is proceeding with the work. We hope to reopen the Secret Room sometime later this year.
- Summer programming is moving along. This month Burton led community partners to plan Pop-Up Park Programs. Community partners will join us for programs in parks around the county and city. The planning team consists of members from WXXI, Monroe County Youth Bureau, Seneca Park Zoo, City of Rochester Recreation, NYS Department of Conservation, and Woods and More. Burton also met with Kim Avery, Children's Institute, to discuss ways the GROW Screening bus can partner with library programs this summer.

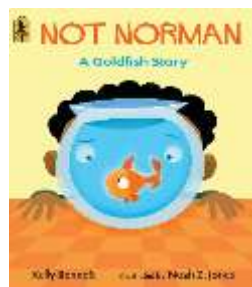
Programs

- The Spring Tween Book Club began reading and discussing *Maya and the Rising Dark* by Rene Barron. The program is facilitated by Burton and students in Nazareth's Service-Learning Class and meets Mondays at 6 pm. Each participant was given a copy of the book.
- The March Activity Bag designed by Miranda Hazen and Tonia Burton was Small Moments = Big Memories Puppet show. This activity was a huge success for break week. The Children's Center received multiple requests for bags from home childcare providers. In one day, the Children's Center staff with help from Circulation staff prepared 200 Puppet activities to meet the request.
- Burton joined families in the Destiny at Wilson Commencement Park Program for a virtual Small Moments = Big Memories Puppet show. Families listened to two stories, talked about how to create their own story based on the stories they heard or stories they created, and then made their puppets.



Raising a Reader

Burton is working with Lisa Sykes' Occupational Therapy class to give the students experience serving families in the public. Some students are placed at Arnett Library and others at Central. The Central students planned activities that relate to the Spring At Home Storytime books that will be given out to Raising A Reader families and sites. Each week the students create kindergarten-ready activities based on the book of the week. Families participate in the Reading Garden and when they complete all the stations, they receive a copy of the book and a sheet with a QR code that links to a web page and QR code where families can access the activities and continue exploring the stories at home. Alla Levi is assisting with the program which is held on Monday and Wednesday morning for children ages 4-8. It will continue through April.



**Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting**

Statistics

- Curbside Pickup Appointments – 52
- New Borrowers – 46

- RRLC Access Cards Issued – 0
- Notarial Acts – 56

#### Anecdotes/Other

- Kathy Sochia helped a patron who needed to print out a medical report that ran to hundreds of pages. Sochia set the patron up on a computer that could print directly to the printer, helped the patron access her e-mail, and made sure everything went smoothly.
- Patrons have been asking about the Friends and Foundation Bookstore since the library re-opened. They are ecstatic that the Bookstore is now open.
- Patrons continue to use Curbside Pickup service, albeit in significantly reduced numbers. Patrons who use the service enjoy the convenience of being able to call in or use the online form to have items pulled for them.

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

The Local History & Genealogy Division continued to provide in-person service by appointment in March and began planning how to reopen for walk-in service as COVID-19 restrictions ease

#### Programs

- The Local History & Genealogy Division co-hosted “*Finding Your Roots* Virtual Screening and Chat” with WXXI (via Zoom). Featuring clips from the popular PBS series with Henry Louis Gates, Jr., this presentation focused on African American genealogy and included a conversation with local panelists, recruited by our staff, who have extensive first-hand knowledge of the topic from their own family history research. Ridarsky facilitated the session, and Koehler served as a panelist.
- The season’s last installment of the popular *Mourning in the Morning* series, presented in partnership with the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, featured Marjorie Searl’s talk, “Emily Sibley Watson: Rochester’s Quiet Philanthropist” (via Zoom). This educational presentation explored Watson’s life and legacy beyond her well-known role as founder of Rochester’s Memorial Art Gallery and the Hochstein School of Music. The program is available to view online: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtrhcAaFgYY&list=PLzEBIzX1XFJLebwaUF-QZ\\_xJAtgdz\\_HN&index=23](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtrhcAaFgYY&list=PLzEBIzX1XFJLebwaUF-QZ_xJAtgdz_HN&index=23).
- The March Rochester’s Rich History series featured a talk by renowned historian Louis DeCaro, Jr. on his recent book, *The Untold Story of Shields Green* (via Zoom). Green, a sometime Rochester resident, was an associate of Frederick Douglass who joined John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry. His life is the subject of the 2020 film *Emperor*. This talk shed an educational light on this important yet little known figure from Rochester’s—and the nation’s—civil rights history. The program is available to view online: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcly\\_aJwgIY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcly_aJwgIY).

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Cody gave an interview to *Democrat & Chronicle* reporter Marquel Slaughter about the social and economic conditions of Rochester during World War II. The article is expected to be published sometime in April.
- Finn presented “From Flour to Flower: How Rochester Got its Nicknames” for residents of the Leisure Care senior living facility in Greece, NY (via Zoom). This educational talk explored the development of two 19th-century industries that not only earned Rochester its homophonic monikers but also helped the city earn a global reputation.
- Fess attended the Empire Archival Discovery Cooperative Information Session, sponsored by Empire State Library Network (via Zoom). This meeting was a valuable information session covering the current state of

the Empire Archival Discovery Cooperative, a major initiative to provide a single access point for special collections finding aids from institutions across New York State. The Local History & Genealogy Division became involved in this project at an early point in its development (around 2015), but the project stalled for several years over technical issues. These issues have been resolved, and the division will be working with the Empire Archival Discovery Cooperative to provide access to all our finding aids through this discovery tool.

- Ridarsky and McDonald hosted a meeting of the library's internal advisory team for the planned archive of Black history and culture. Morry, a member of this team, also attended. The team reviewed and approved the proposed team charter and then assessed the Local History & Genealogy Division's Collection Policy using adapting the principles set for by UCLA Library Science professor Michelle Caswell for Dismantling White Supremacy in the Archives.
- Ridarsky, Finn, Fess, and McDonald met to discuss how the library can support the development and dissemination of new anti-racism curriculum being developed by BOCES and local teachers. This effort overlaps the Community Webs program that Ridarsky, Fess, and McDonald are engaged as well as the library's partnership with the Clarissa Street Reunion Committee's community archives project.
- Finn and McDonald attended Shane Wiegand's webinar, "Racism & Resistance in Rochester and the Anti-Racist Curriculum Project," sponsored by the Rochester Regional Library Council (via Zoom). Wiegand, a local fourth-grade teacher and co-leader of the Pathstone Foundation's Anti-Racist Curriculum Project, provided an informative overview of the institutionalization of racist housing policies in Rochester and what local residents have done and are doing to resist this racism historically and today. This work ties in with other anti-racism projects spearheaded by the Local History & Genealogy Division, including the planned development of an archive of Black history and culture.
- Ridarsky met (via Zoom) with the director of RIT Press and faculty from RIT's History Department to flesh out details of a Memorandum of Understanding for a partnership for joint publication of the *Rochester History* journal.
- Finn continues to attend classes for the 10-week supervisor leadership development and skills training course, "LeadOn: From Engaged Employee to Effective Leader," sponsored by the City of Rochester. Facilitated by staff from the City's training office and consultants from The Jackman Group LLC, classes run twice a week, three-hours each session, until April 15 (via Zoom).
- Ridarsky participated in two sessions at the National Council of Public Historian's 2021 Virtual Conference. She served as a discussant as a member of a working group on "Challenging White Public History from Within" that is adapting the principles set for by UCLA Library Science professor Michelle Caswell for Dismantling White Supremacy in the Archives to apply more broadly to the field of public history. She also facilitated a session sponsored by the Committee for Government Historians, of which she is a member and former co-chair, entitled "Working in Government: Creative Solutions to Political Constraints."

### Special Collections

- Fess continued to process materials for the pamphlet file and completed finding aids for six special collections this month: the Geraldine Kingsbury Genealogy Collection (genealogical information on several prominent Jewish Rochester families), the John Fenyvessy – Family Theatre Papers (records of the life and work of a Rochester theater manager), the Helen Martin Scrapbook (a decorative scrapbook of circa 1890s Rochester trade cards), the Julia Sauer Papers (personal papers of a noted Rochester children's author and longtime Rochester Public Library employee), the H. F. Huntington Autograph Book (collection of autographs from notable Americans of the late 1850s), and the Rochester Arts & Lectures Collection (brochures, programs, ephemera and audio recordings from the namesake organization). Fess also updated two existing finding aids—those for the Music Score Collection and the United Services Organization Records—due to additional materials being located.

- Fess accessioned and processed two donations of artwork this month: a drawing of Earl's Grill (a Corn Hill institution for decades) and a 1927 Immaculate Conception School 8th grade class photograph.

### Digital Projects

March saw continued activity in the partnership between the library and the Clarissa Street Reunion Committee's community archives project. Fess continued to oversee and train the Teen Empowerment interns who are digitizing and describing historic materials (primarily photographs) from the community. Finn met twice with University of Rochester history professor Molly Ball to advise on how oral history content from the project can be added to the library's *Rochester Voices* website.

### Social Media

- Staff from the Local History & Genealogy Division contributed content for 21 social media posts in March: 11 on Facebook and Instagram, four (4) Facebook Events, four (4) on Twitter, and two (2) blog entries on *Local History ROCs!* ([www.rochistory.wordpress.com](http://www.rochistory.wordpress.com)). These posts reached 5,434 people: 3,961 on Facebook and Instagram (posts and events), 1,412 on Twitter, and 61 on our blog.
- The blog entries posted this month were "500 Norton Street, Pt. 4: Reflections on the End" by Dan Cody and "Time after Time" by Emily Morry, who also edits the blog. In addition to these posts, readers revisited 138 previously published posts this month, the most popular being "'A Good Guy: The Life & Death of Salvatore 'Sammy G' Gingello,'" which garnered an impressive 235 views!

### Anecdotes/Other

One of the regular participants in Koehler's Weekly Genealogy Meet-Ups took it upon herself to add the meet-ups to an online community calendar that she runs. She, and the calendar, lives in Maryland. This speaks not only to the value, but also to the reach of the meet-ups, which continue to be one of the library's more popular online offerings inspired by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

#### Statistics

In March, RMC rented 9 pieces of equipment and 185 Mi-Fi units in addition to the regular collection. Their door count for March averaged 113/day, up from 89/day in February.

#### Database Use

##### Hoopla

- Circulation
  - Movies/TV – 406
  - Audiobooks – 827
  - Music – 69
  - eBooks – 373
  - Comics – 147
  - Total – 1822
- New Users – 48

### Anecdotes/Other

In the last 13 months, RMC totaled 1958 Mi-Fi circulations. A patron wanted to share that the staff at Central "do a great service" and that "they all deserve raises."



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

Programs

- Renee Kendrot and Alaikia Miller hosted a cooking demonstration program called “Homemade with The DiGrazia Family” featuring the dishes caponata and penne alla crab. The program was demonstrated by Luigi and Susan DiGrazia and presented by Hannah Davis, folklorist and faculty member of Rochester Institute of Technology School of Individualized Instruction. There were many positive comments and a lively conversation in chat. (Education & Engagement)
- Gabe Pellegrino hosted a Borders of Our Minds talk, presented by David Mould, Professor Emeritus of Media Arts and Studies at Ohio University. The discussion centered around ways that lands have instituted borders, and how those might conflict with resident communities as well as people’s perception of borders. (Education & Engagement)

Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Pellegrino and Richards attended a Zoom meeting with staff members from the Community Outreach, Engagement, and Disparities group at Wilmot Cancer Center at the University of Rochester Medical Center. The meeting was with Arlette Chavez Iñiguez and Arturo and Dora Ponce to discuss a smoking cessation program. As part of our partnership, a table will be set up in the Science division for patrons to meet with team members for interviews and treatment programs. This table will be set up every Monday 10 am-1 pm, starting April 5; counseling will be available in English and Spanish.

Anecdotes/Other

- Renee Kendrot finalized a draft of an online job search toolkit that will be uploaded to the library’s website. Kendrot combined the job search resources from the MCLS and Central Library’s web pages into one document. She included other helpful online resources such as occupational outlook guides and websites for guidance to write cover letters and resumes.
- Florence Morris contacted a patron about a new book that had been ordered and received this reply:  
“Thank you so much! Our public library system has been going the extra mile during COVID times and I appreciate it enormously and hope all the funding you need will be coming in.”  
“Thank you again. Our library system has been a saving grace during COVID and an essential component of our educational system always!”

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

Anecdotes/Other

- The overall rate of use in the Technology Center has increased. The impression of staff is that Monday has been very busy. Though the February statics indicate that Thursday and Friday were the busier days, Mondays are the days when patrons have more complicated tasks to complete and require more staff time. Staff fielded more questions about navigating the New York State and the Internal Revenue Service websites and questions about vaccine appointments.
- Pedro Nunez has proven to be an outstanding addition to our team. He has added to our team’s ability to assist our Spanish language community. His technological competency has been on display in the last several weeks, and his patience and calm demeanor mesh very well with the rest of the team. He has also contributed some valuable ideas for some new programming opportunities that may draw more patrons to our space when we reopen more fully.

- Several staff members collaborated to assist an insurance adjuster complete the paperwork for the re-certification of her professional license. This patron has been coming to the library to deal with this annual headache for a few years. Though her first language is French, having immigrated from Haiti, she was able to communicate her needs to the Technology Center staff. Navigating the website was a different matter: this poorly designed website's links continually redirected the user to opportunities to purchase other certifications. The final hurdle required the user to contact user support whose only contact number could be found in the patron's impeccably organized paperwork. At the end of the project, the patron was able to print 80+ pages of required certification documents and will be able to continue in her profession.

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

#### Anecdotes/Other

West Irondequoit and Brighton High School students planning to enter St. John Fisher College visited RPL with two of their teachers. Their assignment was to complete worksheets and conduct research on NCAA teams included in the March Madness college basketball tournament. Jennifer Cherelin assisted them with their research, providing them with useful books to borrow. They plan to return soon to conduct further lessons and research here. (Education & Engagement)

### ***Branch Library Updates***

#### ***Melanie Lewis, Deputy Director reporting***

Charlotte, Sully, Lyell and Wheatley re-opened for in-person service for the first time in a year. The managers at these locations reported that it got off to slow start, but by months end the word got out and they are now seeing an increased flow of traffic, especially with youth. (Priority #3C Stewardship and Curation: Provide access to an evolving variety of collections, programs, services, and technologies based on community needs.)

#### ***Safe To Be Smart Update, Derrick Coley reporting***

The Arnett site: STBS has hired Kendra White for the youth services position recently vacated by Shetora Banks. Kendra has been through orientation, meeting staff and branch tours. Kendra is putting her personal touch on the teen space with decorations and rearrangements. Kendra reported youth traffic has been minimal.

Most of the STBS youth workers continue to telework as youth traffic has been minimal since the branches re-opened for reduced hours.

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

#### Programs

- In-person programs this month included: Prudence Anderson-Leusch's take-and-make kid 's craft kits and an all-age picture and frame take-and-make project arranged by Cholewa.
- A seed giveaway program facilitated by Ginger Brewer-Bennett was very popular. Grow Green Rochester donated seeds to the Arnett Library to be passed along to library visitors. Many patrons took a variety of seeds and used library resources to gain more knowledge about gardening. (Strategic Priority: Education & Engagement)

Anecdotes/Other

Brewer-Bennett provided the following report: This month's display is dedicated to Women's History. Featured on the display are women who have made a positive impact throughout history. The display includes all nonfiction books and DVDs from the children and adult collections. There are women of all races, ethnicities, political backgrounds, walks of life, etc. who have had a major influence on life as we know it. Books from the adult collection include *Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom* by Catherine Clinton, *If You Ask Me* by Betty White, *More Than Petticoats* by Antonia Petrash, *Ella Baker: Freedom Bound* by Joanne Grant, *Mother Teresa* by Anne Sebba, *Not For Ourselves Alone* by Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, and many more. Books from the children's collection include *Who Was Rachel Carson?* By Sarah Fabiny, *Who Was Clara Barton?* By Stephanie Spinner, *Who Was Queen Elizabeth?* By June Eding, *Who Was Amelia Earhart?* by Kate Boehm Jerome, *Who Was Harriet Beecher Stowe?* by Dana Meachen Rau, and many more. DVDs included: *Free Angela and All the Political Prisoners* and *Harriet Tubman: They Called Her Moses*. The display also has a collage of a variety of women and a quote that reads, "The world needs strong women. Women who will lift and build others, who will love and be loved. Women who live bravely; both tender and fierce. Women of indomitable will." Many patrons admired the display and borrowed materials. A patron visiting from Illinois stated, "I think this display is awesome. I have never seen this type of thing at any other library I visited. Good job!"



**Charlotte Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting**

Programs

A story walk featuring *Hosea Plays On* by local author Kathleen Blasi was held during Spring Break week on a very chilly Wednesday March 31. Blasi was at the library to answer questions about Hosea and her writing process, and participants were given wooden flutes, craft kits and new books. It was extra special that Hosea's family, including his twin grandsons, were able to join us. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

With lovely weather forecast for March 24, Kim Whittemore reached out to the pre-school teachers at Holy Cross to ask about scheduling an outdoor story time visit. Four days later, the morning was rainy. Happily, the principal agreed to allow Whittemore to come in and do story times in the classrooms!

Anecdotes/Other

- Heather Sessler was welcomed to the Charlotte Branch as the new Library Assistant.
- Whittemore dashed off some notes during a conversation with a particularly animated patron with comments on Overdrive. Taylor R. said Whittemore could quote her: *“If I didn't have Overdrive I would probably have to go to the funny farm. I wish everyone would use the app. It's always lovely to have a book on your phone when you're stuck waiting in line or in an office.*

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

Programs

- Sarah Ngo hosted two Zoom story times for Rochester Childfirst Network.
- Lauren DelGaizo and Emily Kleykamp have been putting reels on Instagram for new books and movies that have been very popular. We now have 146 followers!
- 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. (Strategic Priority: Stewardship and Curation)



Anecdotes/Other

- Douglass Library opened for in-person appointment-based services on Monday, March 22. As more patrons learn about appointments, the service usage is increasing but curbside remains the more popular option. We plan to continue offering curbside pickup even after things normalize.
- Erin Clarke joined the CARL Reports Team led by Jen Lenio and the MCLS Plan of Service Team led by Patty Uttaro.

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

Programs

- The Children's Services team (staff from the children's section and Toy Library) worked together to create an Irish Harp themed Take'n'Make craft for March.
- Jasmine Santiago has started a new program called World Wide Wednesdays. The topic for March was Africa. The program is meant to cover many topics such as culture, science, and crafts.
- Lincoln Library staff collaborated with the Joseph Ave Arts and Cultural Alliance and Ted Baumhauer to create a successful 'Boomerangs and Breakfast' program. Patrons could pick up a kit with instructions and cereal boxes from the library. Ted Baumhauer created a video explaining how participants could use the cereal boxes (after enjoying some breakfast) to make their own boomerangs at home. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

Anecdotes/Other

- Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School second graders have improved significantly in their chess-playing since the Toy Library's chess education program began and expressed their love of the game to their teachers.
- This month Jasmine Santiago met with Tianna Manon of the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School to discuss promoting the library as well as outreach opportunities.
- The Toy Library and Children's Services team received dozens of kind thank-you letters for a video tour they gave in January 2021. (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)

**Lyell Branch Library, Shamika Fusco reporting**

Programs

- Lyell Branch Take-and-Make craft activities for the month of March were Dr. Seuss "Put Me in The Zoo" create your own zoo animal and a St. Patrick's Day magic treasure bag with magic wand bookmarks and gold coin chocolates. Dr. Seuss video shorts were also played in the library throughout Read Across America Day.
- This month's edible craft recipe included supplies for chocolate covered raisins. Kits included: a box of raisins, chocolate, as well as a California Raisins coloring page to celebrate Chocolate Covered Raisins Day on March 24.
- Lyell's Facebook page was very busy this month. Many of the posts were centered around the celebration of Women's History Month. Trivia questions, famous quotes and facts were posted several times a week to engage patrons. The trivia book prize was a new copy of *Who Was Susan B. Anthony?* By Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso.
- Holi festival, also known as "Festival of Colors," is one of India's most significant celebrated holidays. During Holi, nontoxic powders are thrown through the air and onto one another. Traditional foods such as Gujiyas are served. In honor of the Indian traditional festival Holi, Lyell branch played videos to create awareness of this cultural celebration and gave out Ziplock bags of throwable colors. Pictured below are Shamika Fusco and Manju Sharma tossing colors into the air! (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)
- In celebration of National Crayon Day, patrons were invited to contribute to a community paper mural. It will be displayed in the Lyell children's room.



Anecdotes/Other

Lyell's Little Chef Cooking Club is up and running! In celebration of Peanut Butter Lover's day, Lyell staff passed out jars of peanut butter, cheerios, and a quick simple recipe. The peanut butter was provided by Cameron Street Ministries. Pictured below is patron Zoe W, cooking at home and licking the spoon after stirring the melted peanut butter and honey. Cameron Street Ministries is honored to partner with us. They also provided the green beans for Whatcha' Fixin' Friday Instapot edition. (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)



**Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran reporting**

Programs

- Maplewood is starting to see a daily dose of children. The number of children is still substantially lower than the pre-pandemic count. While Maplewood is still not having in-house programming, the young patrons are falling into the rhythm of coming in, reading, getting on a computer and then finding an outdoor activity to do (when the weather is nice). Chalk, hula hoops and jump ropes are getting well used.
- English as a New Language students participated in a Zoom Spring Party. Students suggested a movie club which can be tied into the book club. Once a month the students will watch a movie on their own and come to a meeting to discuss it. The first movie will be *The Time Traveler's Wife*. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)

**Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg**

Programs

- Rebecca Hudson provided the March Take-and-Make Craft, which was a leprechaun bookmark made with craft sticks, green pipe-cleaners, and googly eyes. 20 kits were taken by patrons. (Strategic Priority: Education & Engagement)
- The Branch's annual seed bank has been organized and will be ready to start on April 19. The Teen Librarian did up an inventory of all the seed packets for distribution. Due to supply, the Branch will be limiting the number of seed packets to two per patron. This may increase depending upon the popularity of this program and the supply of seed packets.



Community Outreach

Monroe staff has been periodically donating materials to the Cobb's Hill Manor on Monroe Avenue. Brandon, the Wellness Manager, told Mary Clare Scheg that the residents really enjoy magazines. We recently donated a few boxes of discarded magazines to Cobb's Hill Manor. Brandon was very excited to get this donation.

**Phillis Wheatley Library, Lori Frankunas reporting**

Programs

The Phillis Wheatley Library has started a Food Shelf. This is a cabinet in the library where community members can take anything they need. When staff looked at the Rochester free food stands, we noticed a lack of food stands in the 14608 area. We have already had to refill the shelf several times since we opened it in mid-March. Community members drop off food to the circulation desk and staff members also donate non-perishable goods. Alexandra Haehn has a tote of craft projects under the cabinet for families to take. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)



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

#### Programs

- Sully's Origami Contest wrapped up this month. We had contestants in each category, and many wonderful entries. The winner of the YA category just happened to enter the R-Center with his mother as we finished tallying the votes. Both mother and son were very happy that he had won, and it was nice having his mother here while he received his prize. The winners of each category won prizes, including a trophy that Jacob Bigelow printed on our 3d printer.
- Jen Nesbitt had a successful month of creating a special Take-and-Make craft kit for Easter. The Peep houses were a big hit. Seventy kits were made and all of them were given out to families. Khajari Marshall-Hosier and Maria Heeks-Heinlein made a model Peep house video to provide instructions on how to build the house. The video was posted on our Facebook page for patrons to review as they made their own houses. This was a fun and successful program, and one that we may put into our annual rotation going forward. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)



#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

Maria Heeks-Heinlein attended the virtual Beechwood Neighborhood meeting and was able to talk to community members about the library reopening. (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)

#### Anecdotes/Other

- A young patron came into the library with her mom. They live in one of the towns but visited Sully to look at our Anime and Manga collection. When the librarian brought them over to that area of the library, the young girl told her mother "I have died and gone to heaven! I don't ever want to leave here."
- An adult patron came into the library to use the computer. Staff asked him if he wanted some Take-and-Make craft kits to take home. On this day kits for the Peep House project were being passed out. When staff brought the kits over to the patron, he called someone on his phone and said, "You're not going to believe this. My librarian gave me some craft kits to work on with the kids at home. They are going to love working on these!!" When the patron left the library that day, he thanked the library staff for giving him the craft kits to take home.
- When an adult patron came into the library, Carmen Gonzalez immediately started interacting with her. Gonzalez assisted the patron with faxing an item, and she made sure the patron had that week's take-and-make craft. The patron then asked if she could share a story with staff, and staff said yes. The patron said that when she was a child she lived in the neighborhood and her teacher at School #25 gave her an assignment. Her mother told her she better get to the library to pick up a book she would need, so she walked down to the Sully Library (at this point it was on Bay Street). She was able to get the book she needed, and after that day, she went to the library almost every day after school because she loved the library so much. She just moved back to the neighborhood as an adult and said that she is back and she will now start coming back to Sully in the new building.
- An adult patron visited the library to have some copies made. While library staff was helping her, she said that she used to be at this library all the time. She said she remembers the Spelling Bee held at the library several years ago, and that she still has her plaque from the event. The Spelling Bee was planned and run by George Carter from the Safe to be Smart program. She went on to say that she has two children now, and she wishes we did not have to deal with COVID because she wants her kids to grow up at Sully like she grew up at Sully.

- Our 3D Printer has been the talk of the library as of late. Jacob Bigelow has been manning its operation, making chess sets to show the community. Bigelow's knowledge of the game and its history have inspired several patrons and community members to take up playing the game again and have asked about getting a set printed by the library. Bigelow hopes to start a Chess Club at the library once it becomes safe to host in-person events again. People of all ages will be welcome to learn and play.

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

#### Programs

- For this month's Adult Book Discussion, the group read *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. This was another positive read and the book was enjoyed by the group. The group drew many parallels between the pandemic and being sequestered in a Russian hotel at the turn of the century! Patricia Finnerty received a handwritten note from one of the book discussion regulars: *"I probably don't say it often enough but thank you for all you do, especially during the pandemic, despite all the challenges. Winton patrons have been served well!! There's always a great selection to choose from and all of the staff are always very friendly and helpful. I really look forward to our book discussions. You keep us on track and give us interesting relevant information."*
- The book bundles program launched by Patrick Pittman at the end of February went into full swing in March. The bundles consist of three common genre books. Two books have a similar theme and elements, one does not. Pittman requested the teen patrons read the books and identify the "imposter." The books have enough similarities and differences that an argument could be made for any book as an "imposter." The bundles intersect first books in a series, persons of color as protagonists and/or authors, female identifying leads, and LGBTQ+ positivity. The diversity and inclusion should open young readers to a variety of ideas and alternative perspectives. Four of the six bundles have gone out as of the end of March. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)
- Another huge success for our branch was the online program, "Growing Up in a Frank Lloyd Wright House". Finnerty received positive feedback after the program and people were delighted to learn about not only the Wright house in our City, but other Frank Lloyd Wright houses throughout the country. The speaker, Kim Bixler, lived in the Rochester house for 17 years and grew up coming to the Winton branch.

#### Community Outreach/Meetings/Trainings

- Pittman began liaising with area high school librarians at School of the Arts, East High (Rochester City School District), and Vertus High School to develop cooperative relationships. Pittman would like to offer community service credits to high school students in several areas of the library. These include a teen-driven redesign of the Teen Space in the library, the gardens outside the library, and the creation of a teen advisory board. Pittman received responses from the schools and hopes to solidify plans before the summer reading kickoff. (Strategic Priority: Sustainability and Resources)
- Pittman completed the Young Adult Library Services Association's live online training Transforming Teen Services in March. The series brought new ideas that Pittman hopes to implement over the coming year to facilitate engagement. These include projects such as the aforementioned teen advisory board, as well as the establishment of a Winton Discord server to encourage non-traditional engagement with teen patrons. Pittman hopes to continue with additional training opportunities as they come available. (Strategic Priority: Education and Engagement)



## **Selected Meetings & Outputs**

**RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting**

**March 13, 2021 – April 16, 2021**

### Standing Meetings

City Senior Management Team (weekly)

RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)

Adam Traub, Melanie Lewis, 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 Deputy Mayor James Smith (monthly)

Urban Libraries Council Executive Director call (weekly)

### Other Meetings

Finger Lakes Kids Are Alright presentation

NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council quarterly meeting

FFRPL Board meeting

MCLS New Directors Roundtable

Wade Norwood, Dina Faticone, Erick Stephens, Common Ground Health leadership staff

Sokol Committee Meeting

City Budget Director Chris Wagner, budget review

WePlayChat event on Twitter

Kearstin Warren Brown & Melanie Lewis on a mobile project for RPL

New Trustee Orientation for Rev. Mack Smith

MCLS Plan of Service Revision Team

Sully Library Staff

Alicia Reinhardt – REJI discussion

MCLS Trustee Training – MCLS Finances Explained

Roy Allen, Max Scheible – regarding Goethe statue

Todd Butler, Causewave Community Partners regarding MCLS Plan of Service surveys

### Email Activity

March 2021

| <b>Name</b>      | <b>Send Actions</b> | <b>Receive Actions</b> | <b>Read Actions</b> |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Uttaro, Patricia | 731                 | 4271                   | 6594                |
| Traub, Adam      | 746                 | 2449                   | 3661                |
| Harrison, Brie   | 352                 | 2210                   | 2746                |
| Suro, Ana        | 589                 | 2526                   | 3326                |
| Lewis, Melanie   | 325                 | 1836                   | 1182                |