



115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

TO: RPL Board of Trustees
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director
DATE: January 26, 2022
SUBJECT: Monthly Report – January 2022

Action Items

RPL FY21 Audit (Harrison)

The Library's auditors, Freed Maxick CPAs, have completed their audit of the 2020-21 RPL fiscal year and met with the RPL Board Finance Committee on January 18, 2022, to review their findings. The Board Finance committee members will provide their summary and recommendation to the Board, with the attached management report and financial statements.

Board Action Requested: Accept Freed Maxick's audit of the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Grant Acceptance, Business Insight Center (Uttaro)

The Rochester Economic Development Corporation (REDCO) has been awarded a \$1M Federal Small Business Administration Resource Partner Enhancement Program (RPEP). RPEP is a two-year peer learning cohort program designed to increase the cultural relevance of services and resources offered by local entrepreneur support organizations. The Business Insight Center will be part of this second REDCO grant cohort.

Staff will be assigned an organizational coach who will assist with the development of evidence-informed enhancement plans as well as piloting new programs and resources. They will attend annual convenings, participate in an Undoing Racism® Workshop, and collaborate with cohort peers. The total amount awarded to the RPL is \$90,000, which will be split across several fiscal years given its January 2022 start date. The amount to be accepted for the current fiscal year is \$22,500; the remaining grant will be incorporated in the FY23 and FY24 budgets.

Board Action Requested: Acceptance of a REDCO grant award of \$90,000 for the purpose and activity described; amendment of the Central Library budget for \$22,500 of the total grant award through June 30, 2022.

MCLS-RPL Service Agreement (Uttaro)

The agreement between MCLS and the Rochester Public Library (RPL) that outlines the services to be provided by RPL to MCLS and its members expired on December 31, 2021. Typically, this has been a 3-year agreement; in 2021 we recommended shifting temporarily to a 1-year agreement due to re-negotiation of the MCLS Document of Understanding. However, there are changes to some of the state aid categories that will occur in 2022 and 2023, so we again are recommending a 1-year agreement to expire on December 31, 2022. See the report item below for details on these changes.

This agreement specifies the primary system and support services to be provided by RPL to MCLS members. It provides the same flexibility from previous agreements between MCLS and RPL and maintains the ability to increase operational support for system services.

Board Action Requested: Approval of an MCLS-RPL Services Agreement for the period January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022.

Request for Hours Modification - Sully & Lincoln (Lewis)

The Sully Branch requests a change in their hours of operation to begin March 7. The new hours will better serve patrons who work during the day.

Current Hours	Proposed Hours
Monday - 9 am – 5 pm	Monday - 9 am – 5 pm
Tuesday - 9 am – 5 pm	Tuesday - 9 am – 5 pm
Wednesday - 10 am – 5 pm	Wednesday - 11 am – 6 pm
Thursday - 10 am – 5 pm	Thursday - 11 am – 6 pm
Friday - 10 am – 4 pm	Friday - 11 am – 5 pm
Saturday - 10 am – 2 pm	Saturday - 10 am – 2 pm
Sunday - Closed	Sunday - Closed

The Lincoln Branch requests to return to pre-Covid hours by restoring Saturday service, also effective March 7.

Current Hours	Proposed Hours
Monday - 10 am – 6 pm	Monday - 10 am – 6 pm
Tuesday - 10 am – 6 pm	Tuesday - 10 am – 6 pm
Wednesday - 10 am – 6 pm	Wednesday - 10 am – 6 pm
Thursday - 12 pm – 6 pm	Thursday - 12 pm – 6 pm
Friday - 12 pm – 6 pm	Friday - 12 pm – 6 pm
Saturday - Closed	Saturday - 12 pm – 4 pm
Sunday - Closed	Sunday - Closed

Board Action Requested: Approve hours changes for Sully and Lincoln branches as proposed.

Family Search Digitization (Uttaro and Brennan)

After voting on August 25, 2021, to approve an agreement with FamilySearch for the digitization of certain public domain materials from the RPL collection, several Board members expressed concern and undertook additional research about the LDS church and its affiliation with FamilySearch. At the September 22, 2021 Board meeting concerns were raised again about the former and current policies of LDS. A motion was made and unanimously passed to hold the execution of the agreement pending further discussions. At the October 27, 2021 meeting the Director confirmed that a meeting would be scheduled for Board members to meet with representatives of FamilySearch to ask questions and obtain clarifications about FamilySearch's relationship with the LDS church and other questions about FamilySearch's policies. The Board meeting on November 17, 2021, included additional discussion, a motion was made and failed to revoke the prior approval to the FamilySearch agreement, and a committee of Board members and RPL staff was established to meet to further discuss the issue. The committee met on December 16, 2021, and offer the following resolution of this issue for the Board's consideration:

- All categories of RPL documents already in the public domain to be provided to FamilySearch for digitization, i.e., City Directories, yearbooks, newspapers, will be identified by RPL staff and the list of these document categories will be provided to the Board for approval. In addition, if any new document categories are to be provided to FamilySearch, the Board will be notified and the new categories submitted to the Board for approval. RPL Local History Division will provide monthly reports of documents given to FamilySearch for digitization.

Board Action Requested: Motion to remove the September 22, 2021 hold on the execution of the agreement and to amend the August 25, 2021 approval to execute the agreement with FamilySearch by adding the above procedures to the process for implementation of the agreement.

Report Items

RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

Recommending Read/Viewing

- Rochester Regional Library Council Annual Report - <http://bit.ly/RRLC2020-2021>
- Want to Secure Our Democracy? Stand with Librarians - <https://www.wgbh.org/news/commentary/2021/11/29/want-to-secure-our-democracy-stand-with-librarians>
- Rochester Public Library Youtube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/c/RochesterPublicLibraryNY>
You will find all sorts of videos recorded for public consumption in the channel, from the Local History programs Christine Ridarsky writes about to the Arts/Lit Division craft programs, to the Business Insight Center's Cannabis Meetups.

Edge 360 Benchmark Testing

RPL was selected by the Urban Libraries Council to join 18 other libraries in testing and evaluating a new set of Edge Benchmarks on the topics of Anti-Racism and Digital Equity. The Edge benchmarking system was designed initially to help libraries measure their effectiveness in relation to technology. RPL and MCLS participated in the early Edge benchmarks and used those resources for the Central Library Reorganization and Branch Facilities Review. A team from ULC has developed new benchmarks to help libraries measure their action and effectiveness of anti-racism and digital equity initiatives. The RPL Equity Team reviewed the benchmarks and submitted their feedback to Uttaro, who submitted a compilation of feedback to ULC for further testing and revision. It is expected the final benchmarks will be made available to ULC members later this year.

RPL Strategic Plan Revision

Uttaro met with President Benjamin and Trustees Futch and Salluzzo in late November to review the RPL Strategic Plan and determine how to revise it. Given the last 2 years of the pandemic affected the ability to complete some of the work, and given the uncertainty of how the pandemic will affect the next couple of years, the committee recommends that the board adopt a 1-year "recovery" plan in place of a formal strategic plan. The committee is working through the draft of that plan and expects to deliver it to the board in February.

NYS Library Trustee Handbook Book Club – 2022 Dates & Topics

This series of online training sessions for NYS library trustees proved so popular that a new round of sessions is scheduled for 2022!

The Trustee Handbook Book Club series is kicking off the new year with a bonus session: The THBC After Party! We received so many great questions across the first three sessions that we tacked on an extra 45-minute recording to ensure we got to them all. This recording is now available for your viewing pleasure, along with the recordings of the first three sessions at <https://midhudson.org/trusteebookclub/>

2022 Trustee Handbook Book Club Schedule - All Tuesdays, all from 5:00 - 6:30 pm

- January 18 | Topic: Budgets & Finance
Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_h-O8JVTXTbax4XJ8EUxgLQ

- February 22 | Topic: Facilities
Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KacE2TMZTaqrnDIdS3_ljQ
- March 29 | Topic: Policies & Risk Management
Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JiOsYwV9TxiHeuWmJq8v8w
- April 19 | Topic: Ethics & Conflicts of Interest + Intellectual Freedom, Censorship and Privacy
Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TFxfAFS9Rz-OSk--iswhQw
- May 3 | Topic: Planning & Evaluation
Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1JWbEj6VTdehLvoal6sd7w
- June 14 | Topic: PR & Advocacy
Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0EUGOkzIQ3uDPK-qjyOXFA

Governor Hochul Vetoes Ebooks for All Legislation

Governor Hochul vetoed this bill in late December, ending months of advocacy by library representatives, patrons, and legislators to create a law in NYS that would require publishers to end the discriminatory and damaging practice of elevated pricing on e-books purchased by libraries. Below is a statement issued by ALA President Patty Wong:

"The bills had passed the New York state senate and assembly with overwhelming bipartisan support in June 2021.

"Governor Hochul's decision to veto S2890B / A5837B is unfortunate and disappointing. Protecting New Yorkers' access to digital books through the library is critical to ensuring equitable access to information for all. We are grateful to the New York Library Association and New York library workers, advocates, and partners in the legislature who helped develop and champion this bill, and we will continue to work toward a solution that puts equitable access first."

The governor's claim that federal law ties the hands of state lawmakers is incorrect in response to publishers' unreasonable attempts to discriminate against public libraries. "

The problem is clear: For popular trade ebooks, libraries often pay \$55 for one copy that expires after 2 years (or \$550 for one copy for 20 years). Meanwhile, a consumer will pay about \$15 for perpetual use. By comparison, libraries can purchase hardcover books for around \$18-20. The challenges don't end there: non-price terms are similarly problematic, such as the ability to archive and preserve works or develop versions for people with disabilities. From the library user's perspective, change is necessary.

ALA will continue active engagement toward more reasonable access to digital books for libraries. While direct negotiation with the industry – with whom most of the decision-making and authority on library digital book pricing and access rests – is preferred, ALA will also work at the state and federal levels to extend some of the rights that libraries have in the print world to the digital environment.

Too much power rests with publishing companies and their large multinational parents. ALA firmly believes libraries need to have more of a voice in the digital book market. America's communities deserve to be heard and served through their libraries. Library groups, library advocates, and friends of libraries will not cease our efforts to ensure fair pricing for libraries despite this disappointing outcome."

I expect there will be renewed advocacy and work on this issue in the coming months and years.

NYS Releases Digital Equity Portal

Working in partnership with Community Tech NY (CTNY) and Cornell University's New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR), the New York State Education Department (NYSED), the New York State Library (NYSL) and The John R. Oishei Foundation (JROF) have launched the New York State (NYS) Digital Equity Portal. The NYS Digital Equity Portal is an interactive, online data mapping tool for communities across the state seeking data on New Yorkers' ability to access the internet to advance digital equity.

The development of the portal draws on existing digital equity work, including the NYSED's "Achieving Digital Equity in New York State: An Outline for Collaborative Change," (<https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/DigitalEquityNY.pdf>) and feedback from digital equity advocates across the state to create a resource that is clear, comprehensive, and user-friendly.

Recognizing that access to broadband in and of itself is a limited measure of the digital divide, the NYS Digital Equity Portal allows users to generate interactive snapshots of connectivity, population/demographics, speed and cost of broadband, and other digital equity resources from selected geographies across NYS. Users can analyze the data based on geographies such as congressional districts, zip codes, census tracts, and the New York public library system. The project team plans to develop more data layers through continued research and collaboration with digital equity advocates in New York State.

The NYS Digital Equity Portal reveals barriers to internet access and this data will help communities develop digital equity strategies based on an understanding of digital equity needs, gaps, and priorities.

The NYS Digital Equity Portal is an expansion of the Western New York Digital Divide portal, an online resource created with the support of The John R. Oishei Foundation in late 2020/early 2021. The portal is supported in part with federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds allocated to the New York State Library by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The NYS Digital Equity Portal can be accessed here - <https://blogs.cornell.edu/nysdigitalequity/home/> . Technical development of the NYS Digital Equity Portal is led by Dr. Russell Weaver, Director of Research, ILR Buffalo Co-Lab.

Social Media

November & December	RPL Twitter	MCLS Twitter	Facebook	Facebook Calendar	Facebook Groups	Instagram	YouTube
Profile/ Page Visits	1,214	816	555	110	19	48	-
New Followers/ Page Likes	16 (2,048)	6 (2,215)	20 (5,476)	-	21 (806)	22 (2,029)	22 (322)
Engagements	116	62	2,558	114	292	458	114
Check In/ Mentions	38	40	-	-	-	20	-
Post Reach	10,477	5,443	30,585	2,358	-	12,035	37,411
Video/Story Views	-	-	844	-	-	83	2,612
Saves/ Actions on Page	-	-	5	-	-	23	-

Central Library Updates

Please note: these reports cover November and December 2021.

Central Marketing Team Update

- The Sibley Square building was willing to accept one library brochure from us, so 290 “Welcome to the Rochester Public Library” brochures were delivered to them. In addition, 25 complete “Hello Neighbor” bags were delivered to the University Place apartment building. Going forward, there are two buildings so far that are willing to forward our monthly Central e-newsletter to their tenants.
- The 2022 RPL calendar was finalized and sent for printing. Calendars are being sold for \$5 each at Central and some branches. All branches received 10 calendars to be given away. Branch Supervisor Maria Heeks-Heinlein wrote: “Everyone loves them here. They are very well done!!”
- The team met twice in November to brainstorm targeted marketing ideas for the downtown area. Jen Lenio began drafting a marketing plan and received input on it from the Marketing Team and Adam Traub. The draft plan was submitted to Director Uttaro who is reviewing it as part of the RPL Strategic Plan revision process.

Patron Services Manager, Cynthia Dana reporting

- Central Circulation Supervisor Chad Cunningham and Cynthia Dana were invited to Irondequoit Public Library by IPL Assistant Director Matt Krueger to talk with staff about Handling Difficult Patron Situations for the IPL Staff Day. The staff were very engaged and had good questions and comments. Cunningham and Dana offered tips and tricks for handling customer service interactions. They have offered this training at several libraries and the discussions are always interesting and highlight the ways library staff throughout the county have the same issues in different ways. Irondequoit director Greg Benoit told Cunningham that

this presentation was the highlight of the day for most of the staff. There were also fresh, homemade bagels, so it was a highlight of Cunningham's day as well.

- Dana coordinated the collection of donations for Person Centered Housing Options and Mothers in Need of Others. The staff was very generous, bringing toys, personal hygiene items, and cleaning products. Veronica Young, representing Person Center Housing Options was incredibly pleased with the two book trucks we were able to fill.
- Monroe County Health Department hosted a tabled event to spread awareness of the opioid crisis. They trained 13 people on the use of Narcan and provided them with kits. They also were able to replace all our expired kits with new ones.
- Dana worked with Mary Royce to create a form for Central Staff to share their areas of expertise. There are many staff at Central who are experts in certain topics and who are available to give presentations and talks at member libraries. Once compiled, this information will be compiled into an online catalog to be shared with MCLS staff.

Anecdotes

- Dana shared the following patron story from Flo Morris. Morris often goes the extra mile to assist patrons and is very compassionate. Dana heard staff talking about "their student" so she asked Morris for her description of the relationship they have built with this patron. This patron is a student from Bryant and Stratton in his second semester. He worked during the COVID shutdown to obtain his high school diploma in 2020. He started doing his schoolwork, using his laptop, in the Science Division, working for several hours each day. He shared that he had a 4.0-grade average and felt that the library played a crucial role in his success, as he felt comfortable in a nice quiet environment. Even though his grades slipped a bit in the fall semester as the courses became more difficult, he still attributed his success to being able to use the Central Library most every day. He would love to have the library available on Sundays; he traveled to Irondequoit on those days and found it very welcoming. Central is most convenient as he relies on public transportation. Most often, he simply works independently; however, if he has technical questions or difficulty then he would see the staff in the Central Library's Technology Center. He made it known that he found all the staff here on the third floor to be most helpful and pleasant.

Arts/Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting

Programs

- Rochester Writes classes continued with two new series, Writing to Heal and Basics of Writing a 10-minute Script. We also had our first in-person writing class of the year, a short memoir writing class led by author Gail Hosking. One of the participants mentioned that they appreciated the safe atmosphere that Ms. Hosking created and the way everyone's story was valued.
- The six-part series Writing to Heal, taught online by Anais Salibian, ended in December. Participants who filled out the class evaluation survey had positive comments, including:
 - "I would not be writing or publishing if I had not taken these wonderful classes only recently offered at the Rundel. Thanks."
 - "Its accessibility made it possible for me to attend. Anais...drew the group, mostly strangers to me, together, which allowed us to support one another with ease."
 - "I love the community that Anais created in the Writing to Heal Trauma class. Anais gave us concrete tools on how to navigate trauma through writing."

- The class Basics of Writing a 10-minute Script taught by Hilary Bluestein-Lyons was packed full of information and chances for sharing works in progress. One student commented “High-caliber instructor-approachable, knowledgeable, made the content accessible...” and another said “I love what Monroe County Library does for the writing community...” (Education & Engagement)
- Wreath making--This is a fun annual class that is done by Kathleen Rullo from Jardin Terrariums. Rullo brings her love of plants, nature, and teaching to her classes. She brings a variety of evergreens and berries for patrons to create their wreaths. Wreaths can be pricey when bought so our library patrons learn the craft of adding these seasonal plants to a wire frame and using wire to hold them in place. Patrons reconnect with nature with a fun hands-on project. After learning this craft, they can take what they have learned to create their own for the next holiday time and other seasons as well. One student said, “I really enjoy these classes and the comradery they bring to us in the classroom. Please keep having more classes.” A class like this is where patrons learn a skill they can use, and it connects us to Priority #1 in our Strategic Plan and Priorities, under Education and Engagement, to promote learning, provide fun and deliver creative and innovative educational experiences for our diverse populations and to expand our visible presence in our communities.
- The Arts and Literature Division has a new theater club called Drusba. Patrons who joined Drusba have created original short plays. This program is for both the experienced and novice thespian. All participants helped to write, read, act, direct and produce this short play. Other plays were read for inspiration to create their first original production. Also in the works: short theatrical adaptations of Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and adapting one of Daniil Kharms' short, absurdist pieces.
- Reconnect Rochester and the Arts and Literature Division presented Introduction to Winter Cycling. Rochester has made great strides in recent years in becoming a more bikeable city. Jesse Peers, Cycling Manager for Reconnect Rochester, talked about how to make cycling a viable transportation option year-round in one of the world's snowiest cities. Patrons learned how to extend their riding season and learned what kind of bike is needed to ride once the snow arrives. Peers has been car-free for 8 years.

Business Insight Center, Jennifer Byrnes reporting

Statistics – November and December

- The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted: 6 in person, 33 by email, 2 by mail, 5 by phone
- Patent Virtual Assistance Center: 0
- Webpage views: 95
- Hours of in-depth market research: 79
- Tracy Jong appointments: 5.5 hours, 7 individuals served

Database Use – November and December

- Frost & Sullivan: Downloads 19; Value: \$109,000
- IBISWorld: Page Views 81; Value \$60,410
- InnovationQ: Logins 28; Searches 369
- PitchBook: Logins 21
- Statista: 593 visits, 291 studies viewed (data not available for December)

Programs

- How to Get and Find Grants (Part I of 2, virtual). This program was in partnership with Just Cause, the Center for Urban Entrepreneurship, and the Urban League and was led by Margit Brazda Poirier of Grants for Good. Part 2 was 12/01/21 in person at the CUE and involved hands-on assistance for nonprofits who are currently writing grant applications.

- Business First Wednesday: How to Batch your Content: A Guide to Managing Social Media for Business confirmed! Presented by Anthony Darand, business advisor for the Small Business Development Center.
- Cannabis Industry Meet-Up Information Session: This program outlined what participants can expect from the group that will meet monthly starting in January 2022.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Jennifer Byrnes met with Chad Rieflin of Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Rochester and Agustin Rodriguez of Ibero-American Investors Corporation to discuss a FINRA Investor Education Foundation (Financial Industry Regulatory Authority)/American Library Association grant that is due in March 2022. They will propose financial literacy counseling in Spanish as well as business support to current and aspiring tenants of La Marketa. Separately, she met with Angela Rollins from the City's Office of Community Wealth Building to discuss the grant. She met with new FFRPL Director Donna Borgus and staff of the EFPR Accounting Group to discuss their participation in "Check-In with an Expert."
- Byrnes attended an Urban Libraries Council Global Entrepreneurship Week celebration call on that brought together the ULC Small Business and Entrepreneurs Action Team and the ULC Strengthening Libraries as Entrepreneurial Hubs Cohort to share accomplishments from the last year.
- Byrnes and Kate Meddaugh attended the NYS Innovation Summit where they learned about economic development, disruptive technologies, and trends in critical industries. The Summit also focused on commercialization, innovations in quantum mechanics, and ways for entrepreneurs to utilize accelerators in the state. They established partnerships with the following organizations: Center for Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, both part of the University at Buffalo, the Central New York Biotech Accelerator, and the Empire State Development's Division of Science, Technology and Innovation (NYSTAR).
- Byrnes had multiple meetings regarding the new Small Business Administration (SBA) grant the division has received for \$90K over two years. Byrnes met with attorney Jason Klimek to discuss his required pro bono hours to be spent at the Business Insight Center.
- Sam Marrazzo, Chief Innovation Officer for the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, invited Meddaugh and Byrnes to speak at the Product Confluence conference. Also, they were invited to speak at the monthly meeting of the Urban Libraries Council's Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses Action Team to discuss resources and best practices of the Carlson Center and BIC.
- Byrnes presented to an English as a second language class at Monroe #1 BOCES on business resources available at the library. Students were from China, Turkey, and Colombia. They found it fascinating that conversations with a librarian are confidential.
- Melissa Cobo attended Financial Projections for Small Business Owners sponsored by Start Small Think Big and Supporting Formerly Incarcerated Individuals with a Fresh Start @ Your Library sponsored by the Public Library Association. She also attended Blockchain and Cryptocurrency: a Primer for Small Business, sponsored by the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), and Finding Grants that WANT to Fund You, sponsored by NextCorps.



Anecdotes

- At the Innovation Summit, Byrnes and Meddaugh will be remembered as the two women zipping around the exhibit hall on a robot made for factories. Byrnes was filmed by the local news demonstrating how to get in and out of a Swift Rail car, a future mode of transportation.
- A person from Alabama attended December's First Wednesday program and a resident of Saratoga Springs attended the cannabis meet-up program.
- Meddaugh was contacted by a gentleman in Los Angeles, CA for intellectual property help with his inventive idea. Kate politely told the gentleman of the Patent and Trademark Resource Center in Los Angeles, to which he replied, "Ok, good. But I would like to remain in touch with you, also. The resources you offer are amazing!"

Children's Center, Tonia Burton reporting

Talking Is Teaching - "Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing" is a national program from Too Small to Fail, an initiative from the Clinton Foundation. It is an action campaign designed to encourage parents and caregivers to engage in language-rich interactions with their young children to boost their early brain and language development. Families are critical to supporting children's early development but may not realize the powerful role they play and may have questions about how to engage with their children. Tonia Burton was introduced to the materials at a meeting with New York State Child and Family Services staff and has been encouraging our community partners to join the effort.

With support from The Florence M. Muller Foundation, Children's Services will expand programming to promote coordinated change at the community level through the three proven Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing strategies:

- Training trusted messengers
- Providing high-quality materials and
- Built environments

We will begin with an established group of partners in the MCLS/RPL early childhood network, and then work to cultivate additional relationships. The project will begin first with MCLS member libraries then the Child Care Council, Nazareth College, WXXI, and Children's Institute's Get Ready to GROW program. Other organizations that have already asked for more information are Hillside Parents as Teachers, ABC Head Start, and Hipocampo Books.

Programs

- Throughout November Children's Center celebrated Dinovember! There were Take & Make crafts, booklists, displays, and dinosaur hunts which culminated in the Dinolympics. WXXI staff joined with a Dinosaur friend of theirs who greeted children. Many shrieks of joy were heard. It was a beautiful sound! The dinosaur costume arrived early in the month and the staff had some much-needed fun with the costume. One of our new staff members, Taylor Coonelly created a silly TikTok with Katie Powell: <https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdYQmHLX/>. The humor was needed after a long and stressful past few months and was just what everyone needed to get into the dinosaur spirit. included is a picture of the Dinosaur getting a kiss from patron Collins (daughter of librarian Lauren McCormick). (Both are masked)



- Children's Center and Arnett Library offered a live music performance and craft at both locations with Five By Five, an artist-led Rochester NY-based ensemble with a mission to engage audiences in the collaborative spirit and creativity of today's chamber music. Five by Five received a grant to create musical pieces based on toys from the Strong Museum, and some of these pieces were performed. Families were so happy with this program and the amount of interactivity was great. Five by Five has funding to offer more of these free programs and will be working with other branches for spring 2022.
- Jardin Terrariums offered a virtual succulent terrarium planting class. The class was moved from an in-person program to a virtual program. Patrons picked up their planting kit before the program. Families enjoyed the planting activity, which was accessible for a variety of ages.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Burton offered two professional development opportunities as part of the Family Literacy Grant. The first training, Making Your Collection Count, was presented by the librarians from Awful Library Books, Holly Hibner and Mary Kelly from Plymouth District Library in Plymouth, Michigan.

The second was presented by Amy Shema, Ph.D., an instructor in the Department of Education and Human Development at SUNY Brockport. This was held at the Irondequoit Library and the goal was to give library staff a chance to consider books from the past and what we should consider when selecting books for our communities. Attendees were given the challenge to choose books from the shelves that represent various points of selection.

- Burton and Miranda Hazen visited World of Inquiry School #58, issuing library cards and checking out books in their parking lot.



Raising A Reader

This month we focused on how to do a Picture Walk using the book *Maisy Goes to the Library*. Sites were given a packet with information and fun activities that corresponded to a video that was sent through each site's Seesaw account. The packets also included library card applications and a listing of libraries and locations.

Anecdotes/Other

During the Dinolympics suncatcher activity, a grandmother came in with her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter who were visiting from Puerto Rico. Margarita Chaves was able to get to know them and communicate with them in Spanish. The grandmother (who is local) bragged about how great the Central library is and how much she enjoys all that Central has to offer. The father came in to join the rest of the family in making suncatchers. It was a great conversation and the whole family became involved!

Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting

Statistics – November and December

- Curbside Pickup Appointments – 7
- New Borrowers – 178
- RRLC Access Cards Issued – 8
- Notarial Acts – 173

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Chad Cunningham went to the Mendon Public Library to offer training and clarification of circulation policies and procedures. The Mendon staff were very engaged, had many interesting questions, and gave Cunningham some new ideas to think about.
- Cunningham participated in a Zoom presentation to Office of Adult and Career Education Services students that focused on how to get a library card and information about the Rochester Public Library and the Monroe County Library System.

Anecdotes/Other

- Cunningham and Jeanne Slocombe from the Central Tech Center waited with an elderly patron after hours until her cab arrived to take her home. The patron had been trying to arrange transportation for several hours and the friends she contacted never showed up. Security Guard Antoinette Davis called the patron a cab and Cunningham and Slocombe made sure the patron was safely on her way.
- Stephanie Penns had a phone call from a patron who was trying to use her library card to borrow e-books through Libby. The patron couldn't get her card to work. When Penns asked her for her library card number she realized that the patron's number was not a Monroe County Library System card from our area but was from one of the other Monroe County library systems in the U.S.
- A patron was talking to Penns and told Penns that she didn't have money to get a cup of coffee from Foodlink. Penns took her to Foodlink and bought her a meal. Penns bought another person a meal when he asked if the library had gift cards to purchase meals.

Local History & Genealogy, Christine L. Ridarsky reporting

Programs

The Local History & Genealogy Division hosted three programs in the library in November, all of which were live-streamed, recorded, and available to view on the library's YouTube channel. The division did not host any programs in December.

- The Ashes of Attica was the second of two programs commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Attica prison uprising. Co-authors Deanne Quinn Miller and Gary Craig discussed Miller's recent memoir, *The Prison Guard's Daughter: My Journey Through the Ashes of Attica*, in which Miller shares her discoveries of events surrounding her father's death during the 1971 prison uprising. To view, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK5Ehr_zlBk&list=PLzEBIzX1XFJLebwaUF-QZ_xJAtgdz_HN&index=28.
- The monthly *Rochester's Rich History* series featured a talk by Dr. Laurence Guttmacher and Robert Riley titled "From Almshouse to Psychiatric Center: Mental Health Care in Rochester," exploring the evolving approach to psychiatric care in Rochester, and the nation, from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. The talk was based on articles they and others authored for forthcoming issues of the *Rochester History* journal (publication date TBD). To view this talk, visit:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hR0xLvO6xFM&list=PLzEBIzX1XFJLebwaUF-QZ_xJAtgdz_HN&index=30.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- In November, Brandon Fess was interviewed by University of Rochester students working on the *Hear UR* podcast. He spoke about researching the prisoners of war held in Rochester during World War II, how they are remembered in the community and the historical record, and personal memories of them shared by his grandfather. Listen here: <https://hearurpodcast.wixsite.com/hearur/episode-3-in-the-shadows-of-cobb-s-hill>.
- Christine Ridarsky was interviewed twice by local media about the City Council's plan to rename a park that honors one of Rochester's founders who was also a slaveowner and trader and her research to identify other public spaces named for slave owners: <https://www.whec.com/news/council-urges-city-to-continue-work-identifying-parks-and-streets-named-after-slaveholders/6324665/> and <https://13wham.com/news/local/city-council-passes-proposal-to-change-names-of-parks-named-after-slaveholders>.
- Fess presented on the division's special collections to two groups in November. The first was a virtual field trip for an Introduction to Museums & Collecting class at the Rochester Institute of Technology (via Zoom). The second was an in-person presentation at the Rochester Genealogical Society's monthly meeting at the Irondequoit Public Library.
- Ridarsky continues to meet with Evelyn Bailey, local LGBTQ+ historian and founder of the Shoulders to Stand On program, about her plan to establish an endowed fund with the FFRPL to create a staff position for LGBTQ+ collections and outreach. The endowment campaign launched in December. For information or to make a gift, visit: <https://ffrpl.libraryweb.org/shoulders-to-stand-on-endowment-fund/>. Bailey also plans to transfer her Shoulders to Stand On initiatives to the library in the future. Learn more about STSO here: <https://outalliance.org/programs/shoulderstostandon/>.

Special Collections

- Fess accessioned one new collection in November and two in December. The David Kyle collection consists of Rochester ephemera, postcards, and serials collected by its namesake; the Grenell Family Grocery Ledgers consists of two ledger books recording the transactions of an unnamed Rochester grocer between 1858 and 1860; the Greater Rochester Rose Society Records consists of meeting minutes, newsletters, event programs and other records of the namesake organization, which has been a part of the Rochester community since 1919.
- Fess finished describing and organizing the division's extensive map collection in December, bringing this herculean project to a satisfying conclusion, save for a handful of maps that require conservation work and oversized items that require special storage and workspace solutions. The project took more than 30 months to complete, with the result that nearly 2,600 maps are now fully inventoried and can begin to be cataloged. This work greatly increases the discoverability and accessibility of the map collection.

Digital Projects

Lisa Buda, the consultant for our 2021 Rochester Regional Library Council Technology Grant project, completed her work in December, paving the way to upload seven of the eight library collections that are in Rochester Images to the *New York Heritage* digital archive by early Spring, significantly improving discoverability. The eighth collection (postcards) cannot be uploaded until substantial additional metadata is created, either by a library cataloger or another project-based consultant.

Rochester Voices

A new collection featuring a representative sample of *The Frederick Douglass Voice*, the longest-running Black-owned newspaper in Rochester, was added to the *Rochester Voices* website in November. This addition came at the request of our partners at the Rochester Museum & Science Center, who was, in turn, responding to a request from Joan Coles Howard, former *Voice* editor, and daughter of the newspaper's founder, Howard W. Coles. Howard, who donated the Coles collection to the museum in 1998, wanted to commemorate her father's birthday on November 12 with a press release announcing the online availability of the paper, which the museum recently digitized. Although the museum intends to mount all 350 issues of the paper on its website and *New York State Historic Newspapers*, it was not able to do so in time for the birthday celebration. Instead, Finn worked with the museum's Archivist & Librarian, Stephanie Ball, to mount 18 issues of the paper in a newly created collection on *Rochester Voices*, turning the project around in about a week. This collection can be explored at http://www.rochestervoices.org/collections/frederick_douglass_voice/.

Social Media

- The entries posted on the *Local History ROCs!* blog in November were "General Railway Signal: A Good Place to Work," by Dan Cody, and "Hi-De Home pt. 2: The Mystery Surrounding Cab Calloway's Birthplace," by Emily Morry, who also edits the blog. December's post was "Relocated in Rochester: Japanese Americans in the Flower City," by Morry. In addition to these posts, readers revisited 137 previously published posts in November and 145 in December. The most popular posts were "'A Good Guy: The Life & Death of Salvatore 'Sammy G' Gingello" (225 views), "Kool Things: The History of the J. Hungerford Smith Company" (87 views), and "Time of the Season: Sibley's Toyland" (79 views). All posts can be read online at www.rochistory.wordpress.com.

Anecdotes

Morry's November blog post on Cab Calloway uncovered the fact that the Rochester house in which the jazz legend is born (until now thought to have been torn down) is still standing. The post garnered several comments commending her research efforts, including the following:

"Ms. Morry, fantastic job of research. So glad there are folks like you who have the time and talent to do this kind of research and "get to the bottom of it". Thank you!" -Steve Moore

"Ms. Morry, what a great detective story! It was like reading an episode of "finding your roots" with Dr. Gates on PBS. I am glad you are keeping Rochester's history alive and accurate for the future of Rochester. Great work. Thank you." -Paul Deeth

"Bravo Ms. Morry! This is wonderful research, very useful to jazz historians!" -Jeff Pitet (author of a website dedicated to Cab Calloway)

Cab Calloway's grandson, Joshua Langsam, also lauded Morry's research and indicated he and the Cab Calloway Foundation would like to work with Morry and Ridarsky to obtain a historical marker for the former Calloway house and support other local history projects in the community.

Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

Programs

In November & December RMC held 6 programs:

- First Friday Films program showed *First Cow*.
- See It First Saturday Matinee program showed *Jungle Cruise*.
- Two Brown Bag Book Discussion programs (one in-person and one via Zoom) were about the book *Leave the World Behind*.

RMC performed 47 A/V setups for programs in Central Library's auditoriums & recorded 2 BSI programs for transfer and upload to our YouTube channel.

Statistics – November & December

RMC rented 25 pieces of equipment, loaned 632 Mi-Fi units in addition to the regular collection, for a total of 8771 items. When adding in the RMC items that circulated at other libraries, RMC circulated 17,492 items.

Database Use

Hoopla

- Circulation - November
 - Movies/TV – 357
 - Audiobooks – 908
 - Music – 77
 - eBooks – 311
 - Comics – 124
 - Total – 1777
- New Users – 33
 - Total users – 445
- Cost
 - Total \$3,366.23
 - Per item –\$1.90

- Circulation - December
 - Movies/TV – 292
 - Audiobooks – 864
 - Music – 67
 - eBooks – 295
 - Comics – 114
 - Total – 1,632
- New Users – 29
 - Total users – 467
- Cost
 - Total \$3,367.78
 - Per item - \$2.06

Science and History, Darlene Richards reporting

Programs

- Renee Kendrot and Darlene Richards hosted Simple Strategies for Detoxification presented by Cindy DeCarolis, Certified Health Coach. Cindy is passionate about educating people and helping them heal naturally.
- Gabe Pellegrino hosted So Much More than a Headache: Understanding Migraine through Literature. The in-person program, based on the book of the same title, was presented by Monroe Community College English Professor Kathy O'Shea and Physical Therapist-migraine specialist Jen Tuller. Pellegrino recorded some of the readings and will post them on the Library's YouTube page.

RPL Board Director's Report – January 2022 (Continued)

- Kendrot hosted Gifts from the Kitchen by Michele Conners. Michelle demonstrated how to make grainy mustard and dried garden herbs with salt. She also discussed which jars were best for home gifts and provided recipes for the holidays. (Education & Engagement)
- Kendrot/Richards co-hosted Give Yourself the Gift of Self Care This Season during which Barb Klein guided participants on how to develop a self-care practice, looked at what is getting in the way of self-care, and identified strategies to use right away.
- Lily Anthony and Kendrot did a program for the 80th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Mark Sample from Monroe Community College discussed the events leading up to the actual attack. Comments from attendees included: *"Mark Sample provided a thoughtful, unique perspective on the tragedy of Pearl Harbor. His presentation was engaging and informative. I learned a great deal. I would attend another of Mark's historical presentations!"* *"The professor did a great job. It was a ton of information in a short period but conveyed in a very easy to understand manner."*
- Gabe Pellegrino hosted First Impressions: Four Travel Vignettes, featuring author/travel writer/journalist David Mold. In this program, David discussed his experiences in India, Bangladesh, and Madagascar. This program was chosen to complement the ongoing India Heritage Museum exhibit: *Punjab: Land of Five Rivers*. There was a very lively discussion, with many of the attendees sharing their own stories of travel mishaps and adventures.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Anthony had one in-person grant session and one session on Zoom and worked to find possible Foundations for grants for others. Types of organizations included the environmental workforce, refugee services, and documentary filmmaking.
- Richards also assisted two different patrons with grant seeking. The first was from a nonprofit that needed grants for disaster relief. The second patron was someone newly hired in grants development at Roberts Wesleyan College. They just reinstated the Foundation Directory online and he was looking for any tips and or resources that might be useful. Richards provided him with information on training, useful websites for grant seeking and introduced him to Maya Temperley, who facilitates the Grant writers' network meetings.
- Our CHIC (Distinction in Community Health) medical student Gregory Matos set up a flu clinic with the Monroe County Department of Health. Thirteen people received flu shots. Another clinic is in the works.
- LROC – There were about 25 people this month. Many people have been asking for the service and the P.A. announcements in the Bausch & Lomb Building are very effective in reminding people that the service is available.
- In December Matos resumed his health clinic in the Health Central booth, where he checked weight, heart rate, blood pressure, and blood sugar. Matos is attempting to bring another flu clinic and perhaps a COVID clinic to the Library. He also created an HIV/AIDS informational flyer for the Library. A second CHIC student, Basil Kasi, shared a total of ten informational flyers on popular medical topics, including chronic kidney disease (CKD), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Type II diabetes, and cholesterol control. His work was researched and adapted from work done by several reputable medical organizations. Both students received excellent reviews.

Technology Center, Jay Osborne reporting

Programs

- The Technology Center has begun hosting an open Dungeons and Dragons program on Saturdays. Most of the players are infrequent library users and this opportunity seems to be drawing some new users to the library. Some of the recent joiners suffer from some significant anxiety issues and it is to the credit of Pedro

Nunez's management style that this has quickly become a refuge for some of its members. Some are homeless, non-binary, or face personal challenges, but all have found a safe space and a growing sense of community. The therapeutic aspects of this environment are underscored by the feedback Nunez has received from the parents of some of the attendees. They express their appreciation for the library's willingness to provide a welcoming environment that provides an opportunity for self-expression and personal growth.

- In December, after in-person programming was halted, a few of the participants of the Saturday Dungeons and Dragons program still came just to meet and talk to each other. Nunez continues to maintain contact with them and is optimistic that this program will successfully reboot when in-person programming resumes.
- Brian DiNitto continued to hold technology classes until his last day in the Technology Center. We anticipate continuing these classes in some form when we can resume in-person group meetings. DiNitto has moved to the Maplewood Community Library as RPL's New Americans Librarian.
- Several patrons that were regular attendees of the classes are making good progress through one-on-one tech help sessions. These appointments are more efficient in many ways, and this appointment service model will continue even when in-person classes are possible again.

Anecdotes/Other

- The vacancy DiNitto's departure has created is to some degree ameliorated by the filling of the part-time Library Assistant position. Kovar began working in the Technology Center in the last few days of November and is off to an amazingly quick start. He has a great deal of customer service experience and also experience in graphics, illustration, and film making. The addition of his skillset to the Technology Center may create some previously unimaginable possibilities for programing and patron education.
- Patron Stan lost his job in computer support in the economic contraction that was part of the pandemic. He lost his income. He left his apartment. He had to leave most of the rest of his life behind when he went to stay in a homeless shelter. He did not, however, leave his high-end laptop behind. Most days he hauled his gear to the library and set up shop in a quiet corner. Nunez remembered him from our Dungeons and Dragons program and asked if he needed a secure space to work. We set him up in one of our lockable rooms and Stan has been a fixture here for several weeks. He is at the library between four and six hours a day every day and is patiently rebuilding his life. Determined not to have history repeat itself, he is doggedly re-learning calculus, among the other subjects he needs to retool for a new career in technology. We can't help him prepare to test out of Calc I directly, but we can provide a supportive environment, access to services like Udemy, and secure space to work.
- A patron needed help filling out an online application for a position as a driver for a medical transportation service. The process was complicated and frustrating and was completed over a few days. Four of five available staff worked with her to upload many documents, Excel spreadsheets, and forms. On the second day, after about six hours of working on this project, she was ready for the final step: pressing the Enter key, but she wouldn't press it until all the people that helped her get to that step were there to bear witness. With mock ceremony, she swung her arm in a long slow arc to "Press ENTER to Submit." A small cheer rose in celebration of one individual's victory over the Rubik's Cube school of user interface design.

Teen Central, Shetora Banks reporting

Programs

- The *Learn to Code* program has been very successful, so in light of COVID restrictions, it will be continued virtually. The use of RPL Google Drive has helped with providing access to course content to participants. The course content will be available to access on the RPL YouTube channel soon.
- The first Sewing Class was also successful. We will advertise again when it is safe to do in-person programming. The subsequent sewing classes were fully booked but canceled due to the pandemic.
- The Crochet 'n' Chat events attract a few interested teens. They seem to enjoy socializing and crocheting when they join the event every week. There are always one or two Zoom participants as well.
- In November Jeff Bostic was able to do several different things on photoshop. Offering caricatures, face swaps, and touchups will continue as the youth learn new skills.
- Professional graphic designer Adam Lenio ran a successful logo animation class. With a huge turnout, Lenio was able to show teens how to keyframe (put into motion) the ImagineYOU logo in Adobe After Effects.
- There was a week this month preparing people for the new year by creating new profile pictures for them. Check out these two teens:





- The Glowforge was a major contributor to Christmas for many visitors this month. Several family photos were made into pieces. Here is a batch of inside joke pieces that one kid made for his closest friends for Christmas:



- This month Glowforge also made its first wristbands:



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Fae Jahanshiri assisted at the Maker's Faire.
- Banks attended the Volunteer Circle at School Without Walls where information was given about the ImagineYou Lab and opportunities to help create book reviews, book lists, and other learning opportunities.
- Jahanshiri watched the recording of From Diversity to Inclusion: How to Audit Your Collection and Why on YouTube this month. This was a great learning opportunity and provided especially useful information about how to do a diversity audit for your library collection. The presentation provided helpful insights with resources and data-driven strategies.
- Banks attended the National Summer Programming Symposium and learned strategies for advertising Summer Reading and making connections with families through our summer programming options.
- Banks met with Sergeant Marquis D. Jean-Francois, Marine recruiter, and learned about the path to leaving high school and joining the Marines. Jean-Francois would like the opportunity to make a presentation and answer questions for youth who are interested.
- Banks met with Nafisah Janan from Mind and Body Movement to plan a vision board and guided mediation program that will be rescheduled when in-person programming resumes.



Anecdotes/Other

- The ImagineYou Lab was able to promote the classes and what the lab has to offer in Central's monthly e-newsletter. Several teens participated in taking the promotional pictures. The flyers for Saturday classes have also been made. Here is the newsletter <https://conta.cc/3FRtcS0>
- CASL made a business card with us:

CASL: GATES-CHILI
Community Advocates for Struggling Learners

Community Advocates for Struggling Learners

Family Led Support & Advocacy Group

casl.gateschili@gmail.com

CASL: Community Advocates for Struggling Learners

Scan QR code to complete the CASL inquiry/intake form

- Several teens were certified for the Music Studio in November and December. We also had a bonus certification when Ian, from Wicked Squid, was able to certify a teen during his visit to the lab. One group of teens made a music video for the song they made in the studio. Check out some of our certified teens and part of the music video below:



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Community Library Updates

Melanie Lewis, Deputy Director reporting

Please note: these reports cover November and December 2021 combined.

As November arrived, branch staff continued to see increased foot traffic, circulation, and engagement in library activities. Comfort levels of staff and patrons participating in-person increased, programs were expanding.

Due to the rising COVID-19 rates and the Monroe County State of Emergency, in-person programming was suspended in December. Beloved programs such as Kwanzaa, scouting, senior hour, and Teen Café were, and continue to be, interrupted. In addition, December presented a host of staffing issues. Vacancies, illness, and vacations made keeping each branch operating a challenge. The staff has been committed to keeping the branches fully open. Staff volunteered to work extra hours, alter schedules, and work at different locations. There has been a lot of last-minute pivoting and asking staff to go above and beyond during this challenging time. Everyone is rising to this occasion beautifully.

Arnett Branch Library, Bruce Tehan reporting

Programs

- The Monroe County Health Department COVID-19 vaccine clinics continue to be the most popular programs at Arnett. Literacy Volunteers tutoring, computer classes, and a financial workshop were popular with adults as well.
- Arts and crafts programs by Prudence Anderson-Leusch and a story time program by the George Eastman Museum were hits with children.

Community Meetings/Outreach

- Nancy Cholewa offered story times at the Action for a Better Community Head Start Hart Street Center.
- Arnett staff volunteered at a local COVID-19 clinic to distribute children's books.
- Arnett staff made several deliveries of books to families in COVID-19 quarantine.

Anecdotes/Other

- The new Safe to be Smart team member came on board mid-month. Ms. Laquanda Fields will fit into the Arnett family very nicely and will soon be a favorite with teen patrons. She has upbeat energy. Fields has worked with the Arnett staff in the past as a part of her Master of Library Science studies. She spent some time shadowing Arnett librarians and hosted a program.
- Ginger Brewer created a display in honor of the Thanksgiving holiday focused on being thankful for family and blessings. DVDs on display included TV sitcoms centered around families such as Modern Family, Diff'rent Strokes, Family Matters, and All in the Family. The display also featured books from the adult and children's collections. Quotations were the highlight of the display with sayings such as: "There is always something for which to be thankful" and "Be kind. Be thoughtful. Be genuine. But most of all, be thankful." Many of the DVDs and books circulated at a rapid rate and the display had to be restocked twice. It's exciting to see items circulate so much!



Charlotte Branch, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

- Giver Quartet Book group: Two family groups came to the library because University of Rochester researchers inquired about meeting with both parents and children to complete research. The families met and discussed *The Giver*. It was a really special meeting. Cherelin was incredibly impressed by the level of introspection from 10- and 12-year-olds. The intense involvement of two of the moms had a dramatic effect on the third mom. She had been skeptical of our story but decided to become more actively involved by checking out the books that her daughter had already read so she could participate in and more fully understand the youth discussions since they were so interesting and meaningful. It was also sweet to see that certain readers who were farther along than their peers took the time to either encourage their peers to continue with their reading or guide one another. The intense level of introspection, the ability to make inferences, connect meaningful similarities and differences between the stories and our society today, are all astounding.

- Cherelin led dramatic storytelling of *Stone Soup*, attended by three families. It was interactive and Cherelin asked for constant repetition of the refrains she had written from the book by Heather Forest. It was nice to see the oldest participant who was seven, build his self-confidence as his parts grew during the story. He had chosen important vegetables to be placed into the stone soup, which included an action along with a short refrain or reading part, which Cherelin made into a refrain for storytelling instead.

Anecdotes/Other

- One of our daily computer users shared some happy memories of Charlotte: “My mother used to bring me here. I remember going up these steps with her. I used to always see a *Curious George* book. I loved coming to the library.”
- Heather Sessler reports that a gentleman came in to work with Dennis Williams on self-publishing a book of poetry. He returned on a day Williams was at Lincoln and was worried that he couldn't do it without him. Sessler sat down with him and step-by-step helped prepare the manuscript and cover art to publish online with Amazon. Upon completion, with tears in his eyes, he said that he'd been waiting for twenty-three years to finish his book. It was an emotional moment for everyone.
- An elderly gentleman came into the Charlotte Branch stating he hadn't been to a library in fifteen years. He said that his wife passed away last year, and he tried to recreate her stuffing for Thanksgiving, but it had been a failure. He thought that the library might have a cookbook to help him improve his performance for Christmas dinner. Heather Sessler and the man sat on the floor in the cookbook section thumbing through several books to find the perfect recipe. They settled on Irma S. Rombauer's *The Joy of Cooking* and her basic bread stuffing recipe. It had variations on the standard recipe in case he was feeling adventurous. He left full of excitement and gratitude. A week or so later he came inside to return the book and Sessler asked how his stuffing came out. He exalted, “Let's just say I was the life of the party!”

Frederick Douglass Community Library, Evanna DiSalvo reporting

Programs

- Evanna DiSalvo presented a citizenship lesson in the evening with Brian DiNitto (Maplewood New Americans Librarian) in attendance. DiSalvo is planning to share the PowerPoint lessons used in the Zoom citizenship class so that DiNitto has a head start for continuing the program.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- DiSalvo met with Katie Trepanier, the new principal of Anna Murray Douglass School #12. They discussed the use of the shared space and a variety of ideas for collaboration. DiSalvo had the chance to see the library's green roof and Trepanier visited the library as part of a tour of the shared facility. The children in the library were very happy to see her.

Anecdotes/Other

- Isaac Lewis and Lauren DelGaizo met with a group of sixth-graders from the Nativity School on Gregory Street. The young people were appropriately dazzled by staff knowledge of and expertise in the field of manga and graphic novels. The sixth graders will be visiting every three weeks and we anticipate that seventh graders will begin visiting soon as well. [Visits suspended until COVID state of emergency is lifted.]
- When DiSalvo signed out a stack of books from the hold shelf to one of our regular young readers he was very excited to see them and said, “You saved my life!” Everyone loved that reaction.
- The H boys, who are regular patrons, used milk cap "currency" to buy book sale items. They wanted some books and had milk caps in their pockets so there was a trade.

Lincoln Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

- Jasmine Santiago organized a Turkey Bowling and Storytime Program this month. [Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan Priority: Education & Engagement]
- Liz Kurz hosted a movie night showing *Princess Mononoke* (1997). Posters for this program were posted around the library and at the School of the Arts in advance. Despite a great amount of vocal interest from patrons and students about the movie, there was no attendance at the program itself. There is still hope for future movie nights at the library (both in-person and virtual).
- Seidel and Tashara Martinez continued posting a “Toy of the Week” on Facebook to promote new and old toys, games, and puzzles.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Kurz has been in communication with Kelvin Sanchez from the Ibero-American Action League about starting a chess club at Lincoln Branch. Sanchez came for a tour of the library space and an action plan was made to start a chess club starting in January of 2022. [Dependent on COVID programming requirements]

Anecdotes/Other

- RIT provided wonder art kits for the children of the Lincoln Branch’s community. 100 bags were given out this month!
- Attempts are being made by Kurz to connect with teens coming into the library to encourage a social-emotional connection between the library and the teens. This is both in an attempt to encourage repeat visits because of comfort over convenience, as well as encouraging teens to disclose information that they may otherwise be uncomfortable with sharing (specifically regarding coming into the library outside of school hours). The goal of this is based on intersectional approaches to educational practices to create deeper and more direct connections to encourage healthy emotional displays and connections and to remove barriers between figures of authority and youth. There have been a few different teens that have become routinely interested in speaking with Kurz about the collection and upcoming programs in the library including some tweens who are looking for content that better suits their interests. This has been beneficial in building relationships with kids in the area as well as making plans for future outreach, programming, and purchasing that can be made to suit the exact target audience of the teen collection.

Lyell Branch Library, Shamika Fusco reporting

Programs

- Drop-In Storytime: Sherry Stanton read stories with children who dropped in throughout the month. Stanton did a turkey fingerplay song, read the book *Turkey Trouble*, and afterward, children stayed and played with a variety of toys and manipulatives.
- Hindu Festival of Diwali (Education & Engagement): The Lyell Branch celebrated Diwali this year by doing an array of activities. Diwali is the celebration of good over evil and the victory of light over darkness. During this festival, people clean their house or paint it to get rid of the negative energy and then decorate their house. This also includes putting up



lights inside and outside of the house. Candles are lit. A Rangoli design was drawn at the back entrance of the library. Materials were given to patrons to make paper lanterns. Finally, families have prayer time, take blessings from older people, and exchange gifts. In the end, everyone eats sweets and enjoys fireworks.

- Adult Storytime & Craft: The clients from Mary Cariola came in for story time and a craft. Stanton pulled books for them, and Shamika Fusco read them a story. They also watched Charlie Brown's Thanksgiving movie and listened to music.
- Children had fun making so many holiday crafts! They made gingerbread houses, boys, and girls, Santas and reindeer, and Kwanzaa Kinaras. Some were made in the library and others took their home to work with their families.
- Teens stopped by the library after school and took a screen break by playing tabletop games such as Connect Four and Uno.
- Teens were invited to decorate their Christmas tree with customized ornaments made at the library. They were provided with an assortment of pony beads, silver string, word beads, and a bell. Some of the participants wore the ornaments on their clothes.



Anecdotes/Others

- Miss Anne, one of Lyell's regular patrons, donated brand new socks to give away during the holiday season. Lyell also bagged up some of the branch pantry's nonperishable items to gift to families in need during the holidays.
- A mom came into the library to fax documents and her three-month-old baby began fussing and crying. Stephanie Lane, our clerk, sang to him and asked if she could take him out of his car seat so that he could look around the library. Lane walked around with him and he was visibly happier. Stanton read him three stories and sang three simple songs. The baby was engaged, and the mom seemed pleased at all the attention her baby was getting. They were encouraged to come back and visit again, and she said she would!



Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran reporting

Programs

- The highlights of the Maplewood children's programs involved Thanksgiving. There were origami turkeys, paper bag turkey puppets, a thankfulness tree, and thank you cards. Some of the paper bag turkeys were very creative using cut paper, and one was turned into a character from the Netflix show Squid Game. Some of the older children are learning to play Scrabble which has been a great challenge.

- Some of the children raked leaves to help get them ready for pick up. The children like to help as they consider the Maplewood Community Library as their library.
- The Monroe County Department of Health vaccinated 57 people during Maplewood Community Library's November clinic.
- The children's programs are take-and-make crafts. While this doesn't allow for large events, it does seem to increase participation because a craft or experience is no longer limited to one small timeframe. The children designed holiday bags this December. The bags were a place for children to leave each other messages. This idea allowed children to communicate with children they used to see daily, but may not have seen in some time since patrons come more sporadically to the Maplewood Community Library now. To fill the bags, the children learned how to fold a self-sealing letter. Throughout December, there were twenty bags filled with hundreds of letters to friends, patrons, and staff. Patrons created dozens of paper snowflakes to decorate the windows and doors. There was a take and make snow globe craft before Christmas break (courtesy of Tonia Burton). The final craft was take-and-make gingerbread houses. This activity was requested by the youth themselves as this was a yearly tradition.



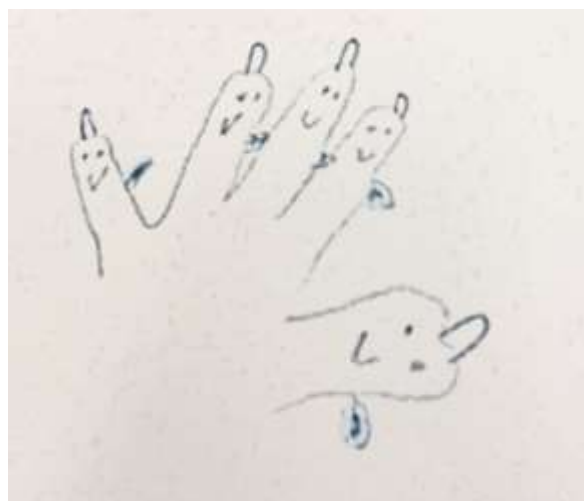
Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg reporting

Programs

- Rebecca Hudson conducted one-on-one computer classes for patrons who wanted to learn the basics of internet use, email, and word processing.
- Matthew Hoople organized an outdoor program called "Autumnal Explorers" on November 18th, where participants conducted a scavenger hunt to find and identify a variety of leaves in Cobb's Hill Park.

Anecdotes / Other

- After reading to the second class at St. Paul's Daycare, Matt Hoople carried his things to his car. When the kids from the first class who were now on the playground saw him, they pressed up against the fence to scream "BYE BYE LIBEAWIAN!" in unison.
- At the Center for Youth during the hand-trace turkey craft, one child misunderstood which finger was 'supposed' to be the turkey's head. In addition to a beak, she also gave her turkeys smiley faces, creating an H.P. Lovecraft monster with five heads and ten mouths.
- In a creative method of encouraging patrons to take out 'free books,' Hoople and Jeanie Coley wrapped select free books and DVDs in wrapping paper and placed them underneath the tree in the children's room. Each wrapped free book/movie came with a tag that said, "For a child who likes [topic of book] from The Library." This made many children very enthusiastic, and at least 20 free items went out!



- A patron called and spoke to one of the staff about renewing some of his library items. During the conversation, he said he was a musician and was not currently playing due to COVID. He stays home and listens to music CDs he gets from the library. He plays his drums while listening to the CDs. He is bored with watching television and takes books out of the library too. He wanted us to know how grateful he is to the library.
- A patron stopped in the library and told a staff member that she had lived in the neighborhood for over 30 years and had never visited this branch. She is very happy about what she had finally discovered. She also loved looking at the architecture of the building. She left the library with a book!

Sully Branch Library – Maria Heeks-Heinlein reporting

Programs

- Jennifer Nesbitt has been working with the Literacy Aides to run a sight word Bingo program. A photo of the program was posted on the Sully Facebook page and it was shared with the Beechwood Neighborhood group. A John James Audubon School #33 teacher saw the photo and replied “a couple of my students are there! Thank you for doing this for them!”
- Jacob Bigelow continued to run his weekly chess club for all ages. Though turnout remained low, several repeat participants expressed their appreciation for the club. Bigelow feels that chess is an important game for growth and mental development and is proud that he can share his love of the game with his patrons.
- Bigelow also ran a Pokémon Society in celebration of a newly released Pokémon game. Participation was quite strong, and participants happily discussed their favorite Pokémon and previous adventures from the other games. Bigelow hopes to be able to incorporate video games into more events in the future once COVID restrictions lift. Positive video game experiences teach good sportsmanship, teamwork, and the importance of having fun without worrying about winning or losing. (Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan Priority #1B: Education and Engagement)
- We had another successful annual Gingerbread House program in December. Jennifer Nesbitt assembled 100 take-and-make gingerbread house kits for families to take home. We extend much gratitude to our Americorp volunteers, who helped tremendously by cutting house shapes out of graham crackers. Kids and their families were excited to have this festive activity to help celebrate the holidays.

Anecdotes/Other

- A woman came into the library to ask if her card was still good. We could not find her in the system, so staff told her she could apply for a new card. The woman did apply for a new card and during the process, she told us that she and her husband wanted to start coming back to the library. She said they used to come into the library together and they would each pick out a book to read to the other, and now they wanted to start doing this again. The woman said her husband would be in soon to check on his card.
- One day a young female patron of about ten years of age was sitting quietly reading a book. A nine-year-old male patron, who was watching the young lady for a little bit, walked over to where she was sitting and said in an impressive conversation starter voice, “So, you’re reading books now?”
- Sully had an unexpected visitor in December. The GRINCH surprised everyone by visiting the library, and the children enjoyed seeing him here – even when he tried to steal the Christmas tree.



- The grandmother of a former patron came into the library to talk to Heeks-Heinlein. She said “Your boy, [name] is doing very well. He is 18 now and he graduated. He received a four-year scholarship at Roberts Wesleyan College for Music. You guys at the library need to get some of the credit because you all worked with him too!”

Phillis Wheatley Library, Lori Frankunas reporting

Programs

- Sheilah Murphy held an adult book club event at the Episcopal Senior Living Apartments at River Edge Manor on Mt. Hope Ave. This re-establishes a pre-pandemic connection and reflects Rochester Public Library Strategic Priority #1: Education and Engagement.
- Suzanne Kolodziej from the George Eastman House came to do a gingerbread storytime. The children made gingerbread people puppets afterward. This follows Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan Priority #1: Education and Engagement.
- Sheilah Murphy held a take-and-make craft event where discarded book pages were turned into paper wreaths for the festive season. Above is a wreath created by one of our patrons. [RPL Strategic Priority One: increasing use and support of our libraries, promoting learning, providing fun, and delivering creative and innovative educational experiences for our diverse populations]
- Alexandra Haehn had gingerbread house take-and-makes provided by the George Eastman House. One family brought their finished projects in to show staff. [RPL Strategic Priority One: increasing use and support of our libraries, promoting learning, providing fun, and delivering creative and innovative educational experiences for our diverse populations]



Anecdotes/Other

- Patron Jerry Wolf sent this message through Facebook:
“Many years ago I commented to a very nice Librarian about the unusual plant at the library, and she asked me if I’d like a few leaves to put in water and grow my own plant. This lady has since retired, and I wanted to share the results of her kindness. This is now a “Mother Plant” and I have given leaf cuttings to many friends that have admired this plant. I also have smaller versions around the house. All our family, and especially our guests, just love seeing this spectacular plant. It was so nice of her to pass along this beautiful plant as it has been loved and is obviously loving us back.”



The plant is a *Rhizmatous Begonia* plant that sits at the circulation desk at the Phillis Wheatley Library. Many people comment on what an unusual plant it is, and we have given away many cuttings for people to start their own plants. There are several plants at Phillis Wheatley, and some others that have had cuttings given away include spider and monstera plants.

Winton Branch Library, Kathy Wolf reporting

Programs

- For November's Adult Book Discussion, the group read *Uncommon Type* by Tom Hanks. This discussion proved much calmer than last month's discussion although there was a debate as to whether Tom Hanks was a good writer; most participants felt the answer was yes. The group enjoyed debating whether some of the featured stories were taken from Hanks' life or were purely fictional. Overall, the group enjoyed the book and gave a positive review on this satisfying group of short stories.
- Patricia Finnerty hosted a Zoom program entitled Broadway: From Back Row to Backstage. The presenter talked about the history of the Playbill, how to see Broadway shows for under \$50, and how Broadway is continuing to face challenges due to the Covid pandemic. All those who attended the program learned a lot and enjoyed talking about favorite Broadway shows. (Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan Priority 1)
- Patricia Finnerty provided the first adult take-and-make craft and it was a resounding success! Finnerty used discarded paperback books folded to look like a Christmas tree. People were taking two and three kits at a time to make during the holidays. The kits included directions, a paperback book, and pom-poms for decoration. Finnerty is already planning the next take-and-make project after seeing how popular this program was. (Priority 3, Stewardship and Curation)

Anecdotes/Other

- A patron called to let the staff know that he was unable to pick up the book he had on hold before the hold end date and asked if they could hold it longer. Since other people were waiting for the book, they could not extend the time. After further discussion, he revealed that he had tested positive for COVID and would have to be homebound for ten to fourteen days. Wolf volunteered to drop the book at his house on the way home from work and ring the doorbell after the book was in his mailbox. Wolf was back in her car when they came to get the book from the mailbox. He was grateful to have the book to read during his recovery, and the Winton staff were glad to be able to provide the service. (Priority 2, Sustainability and Resources)
- The Winton Branch Library has been using the outdoor sandwich board sign to great advantage. Each month there is a new humorous sign displayed that is building quite a lot of attention on social media. This month Celebrate City Living Rochester posted some pictures of the Winton Branch Library as part of their Library and Literacy theme. The photo caption read:
"If you've walked or driven by the Winton Branch in the [@northwintonvillage](#) neighborhood, it's highly likely their signs have made you chuckle. Inside, it's a cozy space with friendly staff who are happy to assist folks! They've got a great teen area, a children's section with toys to play with, and plenty of books, DVDs & more. Outside, they also have a Little Free Food Pantry to help out neighbors in need. Thanks for following along with Winton's Libraries & Learning theme! Did you visit any new libraries after seeing a post about them? Tell us in the comments below!"
(Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan Priority 1)

Derrick Coley, Youth Services Coordinator reporting

The Arnett site

Laquanda Fields started onboarding and training on November 15.

The Phillis Wheatley site

- Michele Saccente reports many of the teens that come to the library are becoming friends. They ask each other their names and what school they attend. They've enjoyed laughing together and helping each other with school assignments. On one of the evenings, they decided to play UNO, which went from two teens playing to a group around the table playing. Saccente observed their behavior going from lighthearted to competitive. It was a wonderful evening watching them enjoy each other's company. In late November a few of the teens asked if they could create Thanksgiving cards for their families. The teens also wrote on leaves that adorn the front of her desk, things that they were thankful for. The teens wrote that they were thankful for laughter, books, and their families.
- Saccente was invited by the Rochester Public Library and attended the annual 'Latinas Unidas' luncheon. It was their 38th-year luncheon in which they recognize Latin women for their inspiration and or work in our community.
- Many of the teens that came to the Safe to Be Smart Program during December spoke about fights and conflicts that continue to occur daily in their schools. The teens share how they find the fights to be disturbing to their studies and their daily routine. Saccente listens to them then asks them how they think a specific situation could have been handled differently. There are a few rules that need to be followed during these conversations: one person speaks at a time, no foul language, and no one's answer or opinion is wrong. The teens appear to find these conversations helpful. Saccente will continue to keep these discussions open and the hope is they will begin to understand that fighting with each other is not the answer.

The Maplewood site

There is an open STBS position. Applications are being taken for testing from December 7 through December 20. The exam is to be scheduled.

The Lincoln site

- Vera Haygood assists teens with internet sign-on, employment applications, and job search skills.
- Haygood had a student that was very excited to share that he is on the honor roll this marking period. The student is an 8th grader at School #8.

The Sully site

- George Carter runs the STBS Teens Club and teaches teens how to play chess at The Sully Branch Library while remaining masked. They learn chess and practice various strategies. Chess lessons help to support the growth of a higher level of thinking such as problem-solving, decision making, critical thinking, planning, and even creative thinking.
- Carter created a Roblox competition of only two teens. Before the end of the day, the competition began to slowly grow from two to six or more. To keep the teen space safe from the spread of Covid the competition had to be limited for the day.
- Carter assisted a teen with an employment search, a 14-year-old male looking for employment at Sully Branch Library. He expressed that he did not want to become a statistic and desperately wanted to find employment.

Teen Central site

A teen that was barred from the library for his behavior and temper had recently been allowed back. This teen had been mentored and shown tough love so he could understand the importance of consequences and the importance of learning from one's mistakes. Mrs. Williams had noticed that this teen's coat was too small, tattered, and barely zipped up. Understanding that it was very cold that day, Mrs. Williams bought a coat and gave it to this teen. That gesture has helped this teen understand that there are people who care and are willing to help. This teen has since been on his best behavior and has made a complete change for the better.

Other

- Derrick Coley was contacted by Thomas Cuyler a former mentee. Thomas shared his new employment position with the Levine Center to End Hate at the Jewish Federation and asked if STBS has any viable teen candidates in the 9th through 12th grades for employment.
- Coley participated in two group meetings with incoming Mayor Evans "Youth Agenda - Youth2Work" with Nancy John Price, Volunteer Coordinator.
- Coley attended a Meet and Greet with the RCSD New Executive Director of Health and PE, Cameron Johnson
- Coley toured the Community Sports Complex with Eric Rose
- Coley met with former mentee Unique Fair, a recent R.I.T/ MFA graduate. Unique tutors for high school students during out-of-school time.
- Fathers Initiating Restorative Engagement (FIRE). Contacted old friend, Rickey Frazier of RCSD Office of Community Partnership about recruitment criteria.
- Met with former mentee Justin Cox, a delivery service business owner. Justin is seeking ways to give back

Selected Meetings & Outputs

***RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting
November 13, 2021 – January 21, 2022***

Standing Meetings

City Senior Management Team (weekly)

RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)

MCLS Associate Director, Melanie Lewis, Brie Harrison, Ana Suro, Tonia Burton, Christine Ridarsky – one-to-one meetings (monthly)

FFRPL Executive Director Donna Borgus

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 Chief of Staff Tamara Mayberry (monthly)

Urban Libraries Council Executive Director call (weekly)

MCLS Directors Council (monthly)

Other Meetings

RPL Board President Benjamin

MCLS A to Z Presentation at St. John's Brickstone

NYS Trustee Handbook Book Club

Vivian Pallodoro, Dr. Seanelle Hawkins (Urban League) and Kate DaBoll-Lavoie (Nazareth College)

Reynolds Library Board Meeting

RPL Board Director's Report – January 2022 (Continued)

AFSCME Steward Kevin Beard
Monroe County Legislature Rec & Ed Committee
Western NY Library Council grant reading
Edge 360 Benchmarks Pilot Kickoff call
FFRPL Board President Benjamin and Vice-President Hamilton re: Tummonds Fund
City of Rochester Budget Director Chris Wagner – Budget MOE
Monroe County Legislature Ways & Means Committee
NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council meeting
City Staff on PlayWalk Maintenance
MCLS Board President Stockman and County attorney liaison Don Crumb
RRLC Executive Director Osterhaut and FFRPL Executive Director Borgus re: Hacker grants
Monroe County Legislature meeting
City Councilmember Patterson re: temporary relocation of Lincoln services
Press Conference – Mayor-Elect Evans
FFRPL Board Meeting
Exit Interview, Associate Director Traub
BJ Scanlon re: Monroe County bicentennial
Dr. Cephas Archie
Incoming City Senior Management Team Orientation (twice)
Parent Leadership Training Institute student Jessica Milan re: library services for challenged readers
MCLS Associate Director Selection Committee
CSEA representatives
Patron meeting
RPL Audit Review
ULC Small Business Calculator Launch
MCLS Associate Director Interviews (5)

Email Activity

November 2021

Display Name	Send Count	Receive Count	Read Count
Uttaro, Patricia	566	3918	5628
Traub, Adam	411	1872	1697
Lewis, Melanie	156	1410	1463
Harrison, Brie	271	2098	2299
Suro, Ana	637	3061	3982

December 2021

Display Name	Send Count	Receive Count	Read Count
Uttaro, Patricia	559	3197	4948
Traub, Adam	245	1216	1115
Lenio, Jennifer	508	1946	1349
Lewis, Melanie	197	1291	1848
Harrison, Brie	229	1573	1876
Suro, Ana	580	2569	4066