



115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

TO: RPL Board of Trustees
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director
DATE: March 30, 2022
SUBJECT: Monthly Report – March 2022

Action Items

Tax Consulting Services Agreement, Business Insight Center (Uttaro)

As part of the REDCO Resource Partner Enhancement Program grant, the Business Insight Center has expanded its support of entrepreneurs in the regional cannabis industry. In addition to market research and policy research, retention of tax advising services is recommended given the operational challenges present in this industry (<https://www.bakertilly.com/insights/irs-finally-issues-guidance-for-the-cannabis-industry>).

Under the proposed agreement EFPR Group will provide consulting on compliance, bookkeeping, and tax implications for businesses working with BIC staff. The firm was selected given specific cannabis tax experience from a member of the firm. Services will be charged based on hourly rates of specified CPAs. The amount shall not exceed \$13,000 and shall be paid from the FY22 and FY23 allocations of the REDCO partner program grant budgets. The agreement shall expire on June 30, 2023.

Board Action Requested: Approve an agreement with EFPR Group, CPAs, for the services described, for an amount not to exceed \$13,000 and a term ending June 30, 2023.

Amendatory Agreement, Intellectual Property Consulting (Uttaro)

The Board approved legal services from the Tracy Jong Law Firm in August 2021, supporting income-restricted client referrals from the Central Library Business Insight Center. As the program is still new, a lower funding amount was established to determine the level of interest. Based on current utilization an additional \$3,000 is recommended through the end of the fiscal year, bringing total compensation to \$10,000. Funding is from the Business Insight Center operating budget, a portion of which is underwritten by the FFRPL.

Board Action Required: Approve an amendatory agreement with the Tracy Jong Law Firm, PC, for the services described, for additional compensation of \$3,000 with a total amount not to exceed \$10,000 through June 30, 2022.

Temporary Modification of Public Hours for Douglass (Lewis)

In restoring operations to pre-covid crisis levels, the Douglass branch has faced unique challenges. There have been significant staffing issues due to retirements, transfers, and resignations. Hours of operation have been 9-5 with substantial support of substitute librarians, Branch Administration, and extra hours for a Library Assistant who has now transferred. During March, a seasoned staff member was transferred to Douglass, and the Literacy Aide was promoted. Two new clerical workers have been hired, in addition to a new Site Supervisor. The volatility of the staffing at Douglass has resulted in the need for some concentrated time to address training and teambuilding, none of which has been possible while the library has been open 9:00 am - 5:00 pm with no non-public time for branch training, team building, or uninterrupted instruction.

To facilitate success for this team where all members are in new roles and positions, we request closing one morning per week during April and May. This time will be used for team building, training, and leadership development. The plan is to open fully, including Saturdays in June.

Some topics to be covered:

- Clearly defined job roles, duties, responsibilities
- Communication protocols, best practices
- Branch procedures: Cash handling, finance office requests, FFRPL, statistical reporting, CARL functions, collection development, budgeting, scheduling.

Board Action Requested: Approve closing the Frederick Douglass Community Library on Fridays from 9-11:00 AM for training and development during April and May of 2022.

Agreement, Tutoring Services (Lewis)

The Board approved tutoring services at the Wheatley branch in summer 2021; this previous contract was ended for performance and in-person services were suspended through the winter. New tutoring services are recommended with Lisa Singletary for the same terms (\$29 per hour) for up to 12 hours per week through the end of the fiscal year.

Board Action Requested: Approve an agreement with Lisa Singletary for a total amount not to exceed \$3,915 through June 30, 2022.

Library Fund Appropriation, Lincoln Branch Renovation (Harrison)

Construction bids were received for the Lincoln renovation project (four prime contracts) in early March, with the low-bid vendors approximately \$389,000 over cost estimates and budget (excluding contingency). Analysis from the consulting architect does not demonstrate any particular cost item or work scope overage, just consistently higher prices across all materials as being seen from other construction bids as a hedge for continuing inflation. Upon consultation with the design team and City architectural services, we do not believe the cost to re-scope the project and bid again would necessarily result in savings, and there is not a clear area of work scope reduction that would not negatively impact the entire project. Timelines are also a concern as this project is funded from a NYSED library construction grant, which has both starting and completion requirements that necessitate moving forward with the project.

As a result, we are recommending an appropriation from the Library fund balance to cash capital to enable the award of the project. Given the current timeline for the Rundel HVAC project (design RFP in process, services will not commence until July), we would not need Library fund appropriation for construction until the next budget cycle and may also opt to apply for NYSED construction grant to support this work, dependent on the volume of applicants and NYS funding level. This frees available funding at this stage for Lincoln, and we recommend appropriation of \$500,000 to support contingency as well as the award of alternate work (removal of former garage bay door in Toy Library). The current fund balance, including FY22 support of operations, leaves a balance of \$1.46 million. As a reminder, our budget request would utilize \$175,000 for FY23. With the proposed operations and capital appropriations, the fund balance would be estimated at \$780,600 before the fiscal year-end. We will revisit fund balances as part of the fiscal year-end review and Capital Planning in fall 2022 with the Board.

Board Action Requested: Approve appropriation of \$500,000 of the Library fund balance as cash capital to support the Lincoln Branch renovation project

RPL Strategic Plan, 2022-2024 (Uttaro)

The Board Strategic Planning Committee has reviewed the 2016-2020 strategic plan and made recommendations for a modified plan covering the years 2022-2024. As we emerge from two years of operating

within a pandemic, the committee recommends a continuation of the former plan with modifications focusing on re-engaging our community members, re-focusing our staff, and re-imagining our programs and services in a post-pandemic environment. The 2022-2024 plan keeps the same mission, vision, values, and format. The goals and objectives change slightly to reflect work that was completed and new work added. Specific strategies and tactics will be developed with each Central Division and Department and with each Community Branch. The Committee recommends this plan as part of the library's recovery from the pandemic and in preparation for the retirement of the Director in 2025. Progress on the plan will continue to be reported in the monthly board packet.

Board Action Requested: Approval of the 2022-2024 RPL strategic plan.

RPL Collection Development Policy Revision (Uttaro)

RPL policies are being reviewed and revised as part of a long-term project. The Collection Development Policy guides library staff as they build and curate the collections of materials stored in our 12 buildings. The purpose of this policy is to serve as a blueprint for our collections by guiding staff in selection, management, and preservation. It also identifies responsibilities for collection development and guides staff in developing budgets and allocating resources. Finally, it informs the public of the principles guiding our collection development and establishes our commitment to intellectual freedom. The policy was last revised in 2012. This revision includes new language under Confidentiality of Records, Selection Criteria, Collection Maintenance and Evaluation, and Central Library Closed Stacks; outdated language has also been removed and updated.

Board Action Requested: Approval of the RPL Collection Development Policy Revision.

Grant Acceptance from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation (Uttaro)

The RPL has been awarded a grant of \$1,140 from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. The funds will be used to purchase a historic marker from Sewah Studios to be erected in Rapids Cemetery in Rochester's 19th Ward. The cemetery is one of the oldest in the City of Rochester.

Board Action Requested: Accept a \$1,140 grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation for the procurement of a historic marker.

Discussion Items

Library Statistics

Debi Mansour has been working on streamlining the processes for gathering and presenting library statistics for both MCLS and RPL. We are at a point where we would like input from trustees regarding the statistical data they find most useful, data they would like to see which is not currently presented, and the frequency they would like to see certain data sets. Please carefully review the statistical data pages included in the board packet in preparation for a discussion on this topic.

Central Library Division Accessibility

Two Central Library Divisions have asked about having open hours different from the entire library. Specifically, can these Divisions not staff their areas during Monday and Wednesday evening hours. As discussed previously with the Board, the traffic flow of patrons on Monday and Wednesday evenings has been very low. We continue to monitor door count now that Central re-opened for evening hours on March 7. The argument presented by the two Divisions is that staff resources are better used during peak times, which are typically between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm daily. This requires some discussion with the Board regarding the accessibility of services and

programs at Central. Do we allow Divisions to hold different open hours to best serve the majority of their patrons? We would like to hear from the trustees on this issue.

Report Items

RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

Advocacy Update

Thank you to all the trustees who participated in the Library Advocacy Day meetings and in the in-district meetings in December and January. News reached us recently that both the Assembly and Senate included additional library funding in their one-house proposals. The Assembly has recommended library aid be increased to \$106.5M and construction aid increased to \$35M. The Senate has recommended library aid be increased to \$123M and construction aid to \$45M. I have asked the City to include support for increased library aid in the agenda for their lobbyist. Either proposal will be a great help to the system and our members. If there is an additional advocacy push, you will be notified and asked to participate.

Facility and Capital Updates

This spring will see many activities for the RPL with multiple construction and design projects underway. Several project updates are as follows:

- Rundel North Terrace Reconstruction: After a winter pause, construction will begin later this month, with Chevo Studios art installations as the final step to complete this project. The delay to spring 2022 was due in large part to order delays for granite seating areas, which are now arrived and stored off-site. Anticipated construction completion is in June and the City will be coordinating an opening ceremony given the project's *ROC the Riverway* funding. More information on this event will be shared when available.
- Arnett Roof Restoration: Design is complete; the project was bid in late February, with anticipated construction beginning in July. The work includes the replacement of insulation, restorative coatings, new flashings, and roof drain reinforcements, which will enable the manufacturer to issue an extended 10-year warranty. This is a NYSED-funded project.
- Lincoln Branch Library Renovation: Design is complete; the project was bid in late February with four prime contracts; as a result of awarding multiple contracts, we do not anticipate construction beginning before mid-August. The Lincoln branch will close for an approximate five-month period for renovations; a subsequent Board meeting will document details for services and staffing plans during this transition period as well as closure approval. As a reminder, this is a comprehensive renovation including relocation of children's, teen, and adult spaces; restroom renovations, exterior renovations, and establishing connections between the main library and Toy Library. This is a NYSED-funded project.
- Rundel Masonry & Window Restoration: The City is finalizing recommendations to consolidate all phases of this project as a single project, utilizing federal ARPA funds. In this scenario, the current design firm (Bero Architecture) would continue with design and construction documents for all facades of the building, made possible given their scope of work originally included evaluating each phase with estimates of probable cost. The removal of phases will save significant funds with respect to cost escalation, construction administration, as well as DES and Library staff resources; however, it will push the full bid of the project from spring 2022 to spring 2023. We anticipate confirming this approach by the Board meeting in April.

- **Rundel East Terrace:** If the above ARPA funding moves ahead, the RPL recommends that the remaining debt previously allocated for the masonry project be re-appropriated to begin design for structural repairs for the remaining terrace structure and building entry. Deterioration due to prolonged water infiltration has led to interim shoring repairs of the emergency exit from the link tunnel to the Rundel entrance, currently underway with City term contracts. Additional funding will be required and this project may be a candidate for NYSED construction grant application this cycle.
- **Bausch & Lomb HVAC:** LaBella is underway with design; bid in fall/winter 2022 is a priority to enable completion of this work before and in coordination with upcoming BLB roof replacement (funded in FY23). This is a NYSED-funded project.
- **Rundel Air Intake:** City Architecture & Engineering staff is in the process of soliciting proposals for design services; Library Finance and Facilities staff reviewed the draft RFP. The project follows a 2020 indoor air quality study to evaluate options given the currently limited air exchanges in portions of the Rundel stacks, second and third floors. A reminder that this project, once cost estimates are better defined, will require a partial appropriation of Library Fund balance as previously approved with the Library Capital Improvement Program submission.
- **Maplewood Renovation & Expansion:** City Architecture staff is in the process of soliciting proposals for design services; Library Finance staff reviewed the draft RFP. The Library and City Real Estate have been in negotiations with a private building owner for the acquisition of a parcel to support project expansion; these negotiations are nearing conclusion and we anticipate Board action for consideration of parcel purchase and a funding award in April. The expansion project is the Library's branch ARPA submission.
- **Technology Updates:** The FY23 round for the Federal E-rate program includes proposal solicitation for network switches. Member libraries could option to participate in the network switch bid, and all RPL locations have done so. Replacement of switches, which are currently between 7-8 years old, will occur in summer 2022.

Central Library Updates

Patron Services, Cynthia Dana reporting

Cindy Dana joined Alicia Gunther and Margaret Paige outside Rundel on a cold windy afternoon to “decorate” the front of the building with snow critters. They used molds to make dinosaurs, penguins, snowmen, snowballs, hearts, and cubes. Passersby noticed and had positive comments. A patron approached, along with her young daughter who asked if she could help. Soon she and her mom were both involved in creating cute penguins. The family is new to Monroe County, so Dana took the opportunity to share some highlights of the Central Library.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Dana was contacted by the Monroe County Health Department requesting to do a tabling event to share the services they can offer residents. Details will be firmed up and the first event will take place on March 24.
- Ron Freitag, a staff member in Tech Services, approached Dana to talk about his frustration in trying to assist patrons who arrive at the computer center. They are often sent from the Department of Social Services to apply for online services, such as unemployment. Most online activities involve going through the lengthy process of ID.me. This allows people to prove their legal identity online. To do this, the person must present certain identification. The issue was that many arrive without everything required to complete this process. Dana called DSS, had an enjoyable conversation with a supervisor, then was sent to her supervisor. This resulted in Randy Scott wanting very much to work with us on this. Ron was able to contact him via email and work something out so that clients at DSS are well-informed before they arrive at the library.
- Annette Ramos, Board of Elections, reached out to the library for assistance in getting the word out that they are seeking people interested in working at the polls on election day. Dana, Alicia Gunther, and Melanie Lewis were able to meet and agreed to share flyers and posters throughout the system. Dana invited Ramos to table here at Central, which she has done twice so far.

Anecdotes/Other

- Dana heard from a long-time library user who wanted to speak specifically about the service Flo Morris has provided. He explained that he is 86 and can no longer get around as much, but Flo has kept his contact information and sends him tax forms every year. He misses coming in person but is incredibly happy to hear from Flo and appreciates all the information she has provided him with over the years.
- Dana was passing by the Circulation Desk in BLB when she overheard a patron asking how to get across the street with the overhead projector she was borrowing. It was a snowy day and she had parked in front of Rundel. Dana retrieved a book truck and made the trip over with the patron. En route, the patron shared that her kids had asked for a Ghostbusters party, but she could not find any decorations. She got the idea to

trace them and remembered that the library had an overhead projector she could use. As she said, “anything to keep the kids happy.” This was during February break. She asked questions about when each building was built, and Dana was happy to answer.

Arts/Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting

Programs

- Beginner Drawing: Form, Value, and Shadow--Our patrons have expressed an interest in drawing classes, so we have had several of them. Fair-Smith taught students composition and shading by using pencils. He used a simple skull to explain how to create shading and how that shading brings dimension and proportion to a drawing. He was very friendly and open with the students, allowing questions throughout. Fair-Smith was appreciated by patrons and there were all positive comments:

“I loved being able to learn and expand my skill set with a very knowledgeable and skilled teacher. It is so convenient to be able to do it at home.”

“He's a very good artist. I love the free Zoom classes the library gives us!!!”

“The teacher completely changed my perspective on what it means to draw, how to approach drawing, and how to improve my skills. I really loved the class and would love it if you offered more classes with this teacher. I also thought he did an amazing job of making it a very useful experience over zoom. The instructor was engaging and responsive to the individuals in the class.”

- African American Abstract Art in New York during the 1960s and 1970s—To celebrate Black History Month, Cynthia Hawkins spoke about abstraction in the United States among African American artists and the problems they had showing their work in galleries. The artists discussed included Norman Lewis, Mel Edwards, William Majors, and others who came from all corners of the United States to New York City. They were sculptors and painters who worked at the Printmaking Workshop founded by the renowned African American master printer Robert Blackburn. Hawkins discussed the artists, their work, and their influences. Patrons very much enjoyed this discussion, and some comments were, “thank you for the wonderful presentation,” and “Very interesting and informative historical overview of and introduction to African American Abstract Art movement, artists and their work, and very good images of artists and some of their work.” “I learned about artists I had not known about, and Hawkins provided a good insight into art programs for diverse neighborhoods.”

Anecdotes

Like most departments, Art/Lit collects comments from patrons using Project Outcome. The comments have been very positive and have made us all so proud to be part of RPL. Listed below are two of our favorites.

“[I] LOVE the Rochester Public Library. I could go into any one and easily stay for hours just browsing and exploring what is available. The RPL always seems to be offering new services and programs. The library now is not like what I knew growing up, it has expanded to also be a “help center” of sorts where we can gain access to other resources. I really appreciate that we have all of the free benefits of the library. For example, when I got my new cell phone some years ago (around 2018), I was intimidated by it but I took a short course at the library on how to use an Android phone and what the bells and whistles were. I left feeling more confident on how to use my phone. If I need help with anything, I'll always check the library first and see if instruction is offered. Please continue to offer the writing classes.”

“I am new to Rochester and am unfamiliar with all it offers. I have moved many times, through different

countries, and the local libraries were often my home base and lifeline. I am so grateful.”

Business Insight Center (BIC), Jennifer Byrnes reporting

Statistics

The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted: 7 in person, 39 by email, 0 by mail, 3 by phone

Patent Virtual Assistance Center: 0

Webpage views: 52

3D Printer: 3

Hours of in-depth market research: 68

Requests Outside Greater Rochester Area: 2

Tracy Jong appointments: 3.25 hours, 4 individuals served.

Database Use

Frost & Sullivan: Page Views: 7; Value \$26,650

IBISWorld: Page Views 135; Value \$43,590

InnovationQ: Logins 13; Searches 154

PitchBook: Logins 21

Statista: Visits 164; Downloads 51

Programs

- Business First Wednesday: Legal Considerations for Starting a Small Business, presented by attorney Jon Lazenby.
- Cannabis Industry Meet-Up: Cultivation. Presented by Paal Elfstrum, CEO of Wheatfield Gardens.

Community Outreach/Meetings/ Training

- Byrnes toured Columbia Care, a medical marijuana dispensary, with Mayor Evans and his team. She had a total of ten meetings about cannabis.
- Byrnes and Melissa Cobo had multiple meetings for the Small Business Administration/REDCO Resource Partner Enhancement Program (RPEP). This grant allows Cobo to transition to full-time from part-time.
- Byrnes met with Denny DeLeo, head of Venture Jobs Foundation, to see how BIC and VJF can work together. They discussed Byrnes being added to one of their boards.
- Byrnes and Kate Meddaugh met with the horticulture faculty at Finger Lakes Community College to discuss presenting at their cannabis incubator events on March 25th and 26th.
- Byrnes spoke at Tuesday Topics about BIC for F&FRPL, which resulted in two new clients for BIC. She also presented at the joint RPL/MCLS board meeting to discuss the Business Value Calculator; a tool created by the Urban Libraries Council to help libraries communicate their value around entrepreneur support to stakeholders. To learn more go to: <https://urban-libraries-council.involve.me/biz-value-calculator>
- Byrnes and Cobo attended “The Promise of Social Equity in the Cannabis Industry,” presented by Cornell University’s Department of Industrial and Relations. Cobo and Meddaugh attended “Patent Public Search: An Overview,” from the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office and training on updates to the InnovationQ database.

Children's Center, Tonia Burton reporting

Programs

Take Your Child to the Library Day, a national day created to encourage families to visit and advocate for their public library was turned into Take Your Child to the Library Month. Halima Abukar created The Library Olympics, a fun, family activity for in-library participation or home play. Throughout the month families created small moments together by making and racing paper airplanes, balancing books on their heads, locating the hidden flags of the world, and just enjoying the library together.

Community Outreach/Meetings/ Training

- Tonia Burton offered Talking is Teaching Orientation training for staff at Hipocampo Bookstore, United Way Home Visiting Program, and staff at University of Rochester Hoekelman Center.
- Burton hosted a training by Dr. Betsy Diamant Cohen for all MCLS children's services staff. Dr. Diamant Cohen presented an Introduction to Storytime, brain development, and strategies for creating an engaging storytime.
- Burton attended Writing a New Chapter: Advancing Diversity in Children's Books. Panelists discussed the state of diversity in children's books, why diverse representation is critical for identity development.
- Burton and Katie Powell met with the local Month of the Young Child Committee. Burton and Powell are organizing guest readers to record videos of themselves sharing a children's book. Mayor Evans graciously agreed to participate:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Spu9DN8fAV7NoyG2QwNsmDsB5hCzsmAq/view?usp=sharing>

Anecdotes/Other

As we begin seeing more families using our space, we have been working to assist caregivers with showing their children how to use the library, share toys, use appropriate behaviors, and make friends. Many of our youngest patrons have been born during the pandemic or have no memory of pre-pandemic life. It is evident that the pandemic has affected social and emotional learning, school readiness, and family relationships.

Raising A Reader

Margarita Chaves created and sent presentations focusing on different literacy skills to all Raising a Reader sites to better support families. The presentations were based on books already in rotation. Chaves then spent the last two weeks of February delivering activity bags containing extension activities based on the books from the shared presentations. The Ibero site shared a preview of what was in the activity bags.



Circulation/Information, Chad Cunningham reporting

Statistics

Curbside Pickup Appointments - 6
New Borrowers - 128
RRLC Access Cards Issued - 2
Notarial Acts – 166

Anecdotes/Other

- Melisa Miranda took a phone call from a deaf patron who was using a relay interpreter. The patron was having trouble making an appointment with CASH. Miranda brought up the online registration form, scheduled an appointment for the patron, made sure an American Sign Language interpreter would be present and waited until the patron received the confirmation e-mail.
- Jim Montione helped a patron who needed to write a school paper. She had all the information and resources that she needed, but she didn't know how to start writing the paper. Montione spent some time with her and talked about the steps to writing and formatting a paper. She thanked Montione for helping her understand how to organize her information and present her points.

Local History & Genealogy, Christine Ridarsky reporting

Programs – Priority #1: Education and Engagement

- The Local History & Genealogy Division hosted two programs via Zoom in February, both of which were recorded and are available to view on the library's YouTube channel.
- The monthly *Mourning in the Morning* series, presented in partnership with the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, featured a talk by Sally Millick, "Seldens Seldom Remembered: A Family of Groundbreakers & Innovators," about a 19th-century Rochester family whose contributions included the formation of Western Union and the invention of the gas automobile. To watch, visit https://youtu.be/rNifi_1cZB8.
- The monthly *Rochester's Rich History* series featured a talk by Cheryl Sampson on "Rev. Thomas James: The Most Well-Known Abolitionist Preacher in 19th-Century America," highlighting the life and legacy of this remarkable Rochesterian whose historic contributions included building schools and churches, integrating public transportation in Boston, assisting in the release of the Amistad captives, and freeing 2,000 enslaved people in Kentucky after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. To watch, visit <https://youtu.be/T7oKsBrxFyg>.

Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Brandon Fess was asked to visit City Hall to assist in evaluating the historical value of law books dating back to the 1880s that were being considered for deaccession by the City's law library. Fess also provided some general advice on evaluating old books.
- Christine Ridarsky and Emily Morry continue to meet regularly via Zoom with representatives from the Rochester Institute of Technology (Tamar Carroll and Rebecca Edwards) to discuss the future operation of the *Rochester History* journal under a new RPL-RIT partnership set to begin later this year (pending board approval). As part of this partnership, the library and RIT will be co-hosting an academic conference in Fall 2022 around the theme "Mid-Sized Cities." A selection of papers presented at the conference will be published in future issues of the journal.
- Ridarsky continues to represent the Monroe County Library System on the County Legislature's Frederick Douglass Greater Rochester International Airport Renaming Advisory Committee and to co-chair (with Kathryn Murano Santos of the Rochester Museum & Science Center) that body's Education Subcommittee. The Advisory Committee met in February intending to reset the process, which has been somewhat disorganized since the committee was established last year. The group adopted a new organizational model and guiding principles. Ridarsky and Murano have drafted a charge and charter for the Education Subcommittee and submitted them to the full committee for review with the hope they the committee will adopt it at the March meeting. The Education Subcommittee has postponed its next meeting until it is provided an approved charge and charter.

- Ridarsky continues to serve as the regional coordinator for the ConsidertheSourceNY.org Diversity and Community Knowledge Project, sponsored by the NYS Archives Partnership Trust (APT) and funded by the Institute of Museum & Library Services. In February, she met with the Wayne Historians Organization to discuss the project and recruit participants. She and the other local organizers (Laura Osterhout of the Rochester Regional Library Council and Toni Stevens-Oliver of the Pittsford Central School District) met with Jordan Jace of the NYS APT to discuss plans for an educational institute we are hosting in Geneseo on May 5. For more information on the project, visit <https://considerthesourceny.org/diversity-and-collaborative-knowledge-network>.
- Ridarsky continues to represent the City on the Rochester Museum & Science Center's Collection Committee, which dealt with two significant issues in February. First was the on-air announcement in January by radio host "Brother Wease" that he had property stolen from the museum in 1967 when it was still operated by the City of Rochester. Museum records indicate that the handcrafted Native American vest, created as part of the early 20th-century federally funded Indian Arts Project, had been removed from a mannequin along with several other items. According to Wease, his ex-wife had received the stolen item from a friend and wore it to Woodstock in 1969. The item has been returned to the museum (in a rather poor condition); the museum staff is hoping to be able to recover some of the other items that were stolen at the same time. If you are interested in learning more, you can listen to the two episodes of Wease's podcast that mention it: <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/471-brother-wease-show-28229881/episode/stolen-vest-91741308/> and <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/471-brother-wease-show-28229881/episode/native-american-vest-91788771/>. Spectrum News also reported on it after it was returned: <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/rochester/news/2022/01/27/vest-stolen-from-rochester-museum-and-science-center-in-1967-returned>.

Special Collections

- Fess accessioned three new collections in February: the Ellen Swartz Papers on Public Art Projects (records of Swartz's involvement with the Austin Steward bust for the Riverside Hotel and the Amy and Isaac Post frieze for the Hochstein School of Music); the Cynthia Howk Collection of Ephemera from the Campbell Family and Victor E. Carr (East High School yearbooks from the Campbell family and World War II discharge papers from Victor E. Carr); and the Invitation and Calling Card Collection (event invitations and calling cards from numerous Rochester sources, 1848-1963).
- Fess completed a finding aid for the Ellen Swartz Papers and continued processing the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester Collection on Holocaust Survivors in Rochester and the Mortimer F. Delano papers element of the Montgomery & Angell Family Papers. Fess continued in-house conservation work on damaged and/or fragile items from the map collection.
- Ridarsky met with local photographer David Emert to discuss his plans to donate some of his collection of 10,000–20,000 photographic negatives to the library for inclusion in its archive of local LGBTQ+ history. The collection documents Rochester's gay scene from the 1980s through the early 2000s, including photographs of social gatherings in bars, house parties, and parks. Emert is currently digitizing and cataloging the images and plans to donate both the physical and digital collections. Ridarsky and Fess will be working with Emert over the next several months to work out logistics and funding for the management and preservation of such a large collection.
- Ridarsky made a site visit with representatives from Teen Empowerment and the Clarissa Street Reunion Committee to the Flying Squirrel Community Center on Clarissa Street to assess approximately six boxes of records of the Elks Lodge #91 Flower City Chapter and Eldorado Temple #32 Auxiliary that were found in the building basement. The predominantly Black lodge occupied the building from 1906 until the early 2000s. The records date to the lodge's founding several years before it moved to the site. The materials are

expected to be donated to the Clarissa Street archives at the library once the Flying Squirrel's board approves.

Digital Projects

- Fess continues to work with Ryan Hughes of the Rochester Regional Library Council on uploading *Rochester Images* content to the *New York Heritage* website. In February, Fess shared content from the City Hall Vintage and Rochester Photo File collections, which should be mounted on *New York Heritage* in March.
- Ridarsky, Fess, and Finn continue to participate in the Empire State Digital Asset Management project, a statewide effort led by the Rochester Regional Library Council and the Northern New York Library Council to create a digital asset management system using the Archipelago software developed by the METRO NY library council. The team uploaded a small sample of items to the system in February and attended a meeting to provide feedback on the process and to receive training in batch uploading. The team's input on the test uploads will be used to hone the software to ensure it will be useful to repositories seeking accessible and affordable solutions to digital collections management.

Rochester Voices

- *Rochester Voices* was one of the main resources used to research content for "Black Radio Rochester," a new podcast series about Rochester's first African American radio personalities, Howard Coles and Alma Kelso. Published in celebration of Black History Month, this four-part series was produced by RCTV and WXIR Community Radio and supported by a Historic Preservation Grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation. The podcast is hosted by local high school students who interweave Coles' and Kelso's stories with their perspectives on Black history, social change, music, and media representation. To listen, visit <https://www.rctvmediacenter.org/blackradiorochester>.
- New content was added to *Rochester Voices* this month. The final two lessons developed for the Erie Canal for the Classroom unit for fourth graders were added to the Classroom Connections section, completing the unit, which now contains 13 lessons and two teacher guides. It can be viewed at <http://www.rochestervoices.org/lesson-plan/erie-canal-for-the-classroom/>.
- Finn also added a new collection to the site: 19th Ward Oral Histories, containing 13 recorded interviews with neighborhood residents. The collection was developed in partnership with the 19th Ward Community Association and researchers at the University of Rochester Linguistics Department. The interviews cover topics ranging from childhood memories to present-day reflections on the neighborhood and Rochester more broadly. The neighborhood association considers the collection a work-in-progress and intends to increase the number of interviewees to better represent the diversity of the neighborhood. To view this collection, visit http://www.rochestervoices.org/collections/19th_ward_oral_histories/.
- Another oral history collection is being augmented through a partnership with a Rochester Institute of Technology history class. Ridarsky used the library's TheirStory application to create autogenerated transcriptions of several interviews in the Phyllis Wheatley African American Oral History Collection (<http://www.rochestervoices.org/collections/african-american-oral-histories/>); RIT students have been reviewing and correcting the transcripts. Currently, the only way to engage with the interviews on *Rochester Voices* is by listening to them. The transcripts will make it easier for users to identify relevant material within each interview.

Office of the City Historian

- Ridarsky, archival consultant John Elsbree, and SUNY Brockport intern John Ryan completed a comprehensive inventory of urban renewal records in the Municipal Archives/Records Center. The project was funded through a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to the University at Albany as part of a statewide initiative. Elsbree expects to submit his final report in early March. Ridarsky will work with City

Communications to make the inventory and supporting materials available on the City's website in the coming months.

- Morry developed and submitted two applications for the first stage of the William G. Pomeroy Foundation historical marker grant. The sites for the markers, if approved, will be Cab Calloway's former home on Cypress Street and the former headquarters of Martha Matilda Harper's beauty business on East Main Street.

Interns/Volunteers

- Volunteer Kaye Knoll continued processing the Burroughs Audubon Nature Club records. Knoll contributed 4 hours in February.
- Volunteer Noeme Liestman completed inventorying the division's Ephemera (posters and prints) collection. She will begin working with photographic collections in March, starting with the identification and sorting of negatives in the Roger B. Smith collection. Liestman contributed 7 hours this month.
- Linda Lopata continued to volunteer with the City Historian's Office, rehousing and cataloging items collected from Susan B. Anthony's gravesite on Election Day 2016. Lopata contributed 9 hours this month.
- Intern Zachary Vila (SUNY Geneseo) continued arranging and describing what has now been officially named the Invitations and Calling Cards collection. He underwent training in ArchivesSpace and has begun to create a finding aid for the collection, which should be completed in early March. He also began sorting boxes of concert programs, which is the first step in his next project. Vila contributed 48 hours in February.

Anecdotes

Jim Memmott from the *Democrat & Chronicle* read Morry's January blog post about blind freedom rider Norma Wagner and added Wagner to his list of Remarkable Rochesterians in his article "These Icons wandered off the beaten path, arrived in Rochester, challenged the status quo," published on February 4, 2022. Memmott complimented Morry and provided a link to Morry's post in his article: "In a terrific profile in the most recent edition of Local History Rocs!, a Rochester Public Library blog, Emily Morry wrote about a local activist who joined the national struggle for civil rights in the 1960s."

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/local/columnists/memmott/2022/02/04/rochester-ny-history-shaped-wanderers-who-challenged-status-quo/9312519002/>

Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

Programs

In February RMC held 2 Brown Bag Book Discussion programs via Zoom, talking about the book *The Other Black Girl* by Zakiya Dalila Harris. The first was on 2/23 and another on 2/25. RMC provided 6 A/V setups for programs in Central Library's auditoriums.

Statistics

In February, RMC rented 7 pieces of equipment, 249 Mi-Fi units in addition to the regular collection, for a total of 3,972 items or 37% of the Central Library's total circulation of 10,831 (before renewals from Catalog Plus, Classic Catalog, and Telephone are added). When adding in the RMC items that circulated at other libraries, RMC totaled 8,944 circulations.

Database Use

Hoopla

- Circulation
 - Audiobooks – 880
 - Binge Pass – 18
 - Comics – 132
 - eBooks – 324
 - Movies/TV – 304
 - Music – 57
 - Total Circulation – 1715
- Users
 - New users – 46
 - Total users – 450
- Cost
 - Total \$3,223.44
 - Per item – \$1.88

Science and History, Darlene Richards reporting

Programs

- Gardening Basics: Indoor Seeding Preparing for Next Season's Harvest was presented by Jarmila Haseler from the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County. The program focused on planning and preparing for the future harvest before the growing season begins. (Education & Engagement)
- Exploring India's Northeast was presented by David Mould, who has proven to be quite popular. The program was well-received, and David's knowledge was respected by the group, who also quizzed him on his thoughts regarding the current conflict in Ukraine.
- This month's Got Health program, in collaboration with the University of Rochester Medical Center's Center for Community Health & Prevention, was titled: "Getting Right to the Heart of the Matter." The heart health program was a tie-in for American Heart Month.
- Mark Sample, History Professor from Monroe Community College, led Exploring the Friendship of Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali. Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali came together through the Nation of Islam, an Islamic and Black National Movement. Malcolm X was already part of the movement and was elated to become a mentor to Ali.

Community Outreach/Meetings/ Training

- LROC (Library Resource Outreach Center) served 40+ people this month and has added a day and is now in the library three days per week.
- Gabe Pellegrino and Darlene Richards met with Lori O'Brien and Lourdes Mercado Stokes from Legal Assistance of Western New York intending to resume free legal assistance at the library.

Technology Center, Jay Osborne reporting

Programs

- The Technology Center's in-person programming has gone on hiatus until the 7th of March. The online participants of the Saturday Dungeons and Dragons program are eager to meet together again. Pedro Nunez

reached out to all the participants from the last nine months and the response has been robust.

- The Technology Center is reconfiguring its education programs to match our patron demonstrated needs. Going forward this unit's technology tutoring will be more directed at one-on-one appointments with the staff member best able to address the specific needs of the patron. Weekly classes on specific topics will still be offered, but for many patrons, appointments with staff members are a very attractive option.

Anecdotes/Other

- Several months ago, we helped an older gentleman navigate the process of filing for unemployment, a thing he never thought he'd have to do. He came back again this month with a problem he needed to solve. He shares with staff he's never used a cellphone. He doesn't have a television. He says, "I'm old school, and I mean old." He is over 60 years old and has worked almost exclusively on loading docks his entire life, and after a few uneasy months of unemployment, he needs to get back to work. The Technology Center staff helped him look for work on Craigslist and submit some applications online. We have not seen him in several weeks, so we don't know if he got the job he wanted. He's not someone we see unless he needs help. His predicament serves to remind us that even a single trip to the library may be the only chance we will get to make a difference for a patron.
- Cindy, one of our regular patrons, came in one afternoon looking a bit feverish and tired. Jeanne Slocombe has been working with this patron on various projects over the past few months and approached the patron to see if she was alright. Cindy wasn't alright. She had just gotten out of Strong's emergency department after complications from recent surgery and hadn't eaten since the previous day. Slocombe was surprised to learn that Cindy had no food at home. Cindy is a graduate student, barely making financial ends meet as she builds a future for herself. Slocombe got Cindy to the café in the Bausch and Lomb Building, where the manager comped Cindy's lunch. Later, Cindy went home with a second meal in her backpack that Slocombe had gotten for her. Cindy has since gotten in touch with Slocombe to thank her and to assure her things are getting better.

Teen Central, Shetora Banks reporting

Programs

- Switching to Zoom for the Coding program still attracted several users. The engaged learners are using the Library Coding Program Google Drive. In addition to reviewing the course content, they contribute code and share information and resources with other learners.
- Craft 'n' Chat program—this has proven to be a good way to encourage youth to talk about various topics while they work. They are quite proud of what they have made. Hopefully, pictures can be shared soon.
- Teen Book Talk—Books discussed were *All the Days Past*, *All the Days to Come* by Mildred Taylor, and *What's the Deal with Addiction*, leading to a discussion on good life choices.
- African American Trivia: One fact a day was presented to Teen Central. The participating youth with the most correct answers won a Walmart gift card.

- The Glowforge had some of its most thoughtful use this month. Here you can see Valentine's Day gifts a little girl had made for her class, as well as a birthday sign:



- The library is now registered with the North American Scholastic Esports Federation. We are going to begin building our Esports team and designing our team website. Here is an example of one of our teens streaming this month from imagineYOU:

Anecdotes/Other

- Fae Jahanshiri received an email from Code4Lib that she won the diversity scholarship to attend this year's conference in Buffalo, NY.
- Pre-production has begun on the Krakow-Rochester Sister Cities Urban Storytelling Project. Carnell Jones, our teen who produced Art in the Loop and other projects for the library, is going to produce it. Carnell also used the library this month to update his YouTube channel. The video he produced at imagineYOU has amassed more than 2,300 views. Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnPekvw80PVWAhgRvV1QK7Q>
- This month imagineYOU also helped out all over the library. We were able to produce photos for the Children Center's new display and secret room. Additionally, 11 hours of footage was hyper-lapsed into a 1-minute video of the secret room shelf construction. Check out some of that content here: https://mclsny-my.sharepoint.com/personal/jeffery_bostic_libraryweb_org/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fjeffery%5Fbostic%5Flibraryweb%5Forg%2FDocuments%2FSecret%20Room%20in%2060%20Seconds%2Em



[p4&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fjeffery%5Fbostic%5Flibraryweb%5Forg%2FDocuments](https://mclsny-my.sharepoint.com/personal/jeffery_bostic_libraryweb_org/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fjeffery%5Fbostic%5Flibraryweb%5Forg%2FDocuments%2FSecret%20Room%20in%2060%20Seconds%2Em)

- The music studio continues to be in constant use. Episode 5 of the Selden Files podcast was recorded this month. One teen, who attended our beat-making seminar months ago, continues to practice and will be entering a beat into the Media Festival. Check out one of his latest beats here: [aryon's beat.wav](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aryon's_beat.wav)

Community Library Updates

Melanie Lewis, Deputy Director reporting

Anecdotes/Other

During February, branch staff continued to find creative ways to stay engaged and connected to patrons despite the pause in in-person programming. There was a spark of enthusiasm amongst staff when the announcement was made mid-month that programs will resume in March. There is currently a flurry of planning, scheduling, and arranging outreach activities and programs. Some previously existing programs will reappear; attempts will be made on new initiatives and ideas. This spring should be an exciting time.

Arnett Branch Library, Bruce Tehan reporting

Programs

- Black History Month was celebrated with numerous online storytimes, through many of the library Book Spine Mural panels, and by many nice displays created by Bruce Wilbur, Ginger Brewer, Nancy Cholewa, and Lyell Branch Page Caliesta Clary.



Community Outreach/Meetings

- Bruce Tehan met several times with students and staff from iZone University of Rochester Libraries to help them get a feel for the neighborhood and library as they work alongside 540WestMain to create a garden play space for the community.
- Tehan also participated in an online discussion entitled “Urban Libraries” about the meaning and value of libraries with urban community residents from around the continental United States. The discussion was facilitated by the Libraries and New York State Librarian Office of Cultural Education, New York State Education Department.

Anecdotes/Other

- During a Facebook chat about seed library programs with the director of the Jaffrey Public Library, she kindly made these comments about Arnett:

“This is Julie at the Jaffrey Public Library in New Hampshire. I visited a couple of years ago because my daughter is one of your patrons and she was excited to share her library. I love your library so much. I took so many pictures! thank you for being such a great library for my daughter...and her family.”

Charlotte Branch Library, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs

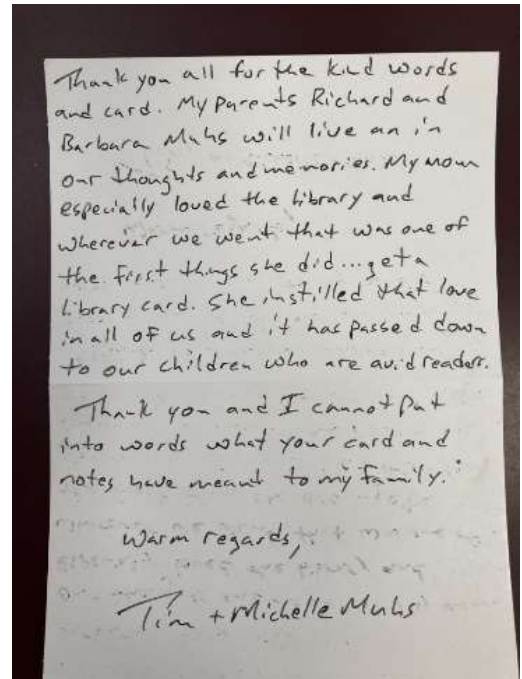
- Jennifer Cherelin began meeting with her homeschooled book group family and the group is now 1/3 of the way through the first of the three-book *Crispin* series by Avi. Dawn and her two children Gabbi age 10 and Gage age 12 are participating via Google Meets.
- New student Mhyshaun joined the Google Meets book group this month.



- Dennis Williams and Karen Duff reported a successful First Thursday Local History series program which ended February 3rd, a little after the library had closed due to weather. It was about the Charlotte trolley and was well attended.

Anecdotes/Other

- “Oh, hey Kevin!” Barbara would say as she saw Dennis Williams sitting at the reference desk. “Oh, my!”, Dennis would reply. “Nancy is back. What trouble are you in this week?” Dennis smiled. She’d smile, widely. That glint of a truly healthy sense of humor always there. Her wavy, whitening hair accented her free spirit. “You’d better be staying out of trouble, young man,” she’d counter.
“Pffff,” Dennis would reply, and wave her off. Barbara often shuffled in due to ailments with her legs. She was pushing eighty years of age. She always carried a Wegman’s bag filled with books and DVDs. Return everything and fill the bag back up every week. She was one of the first patrons to come back into the library after reopening. Heather fell in love with her, and before she left each week, they would tell each other “I love you.” Then she’d always turn to Dennis and squint her eyes or shake a finger admonishingly. “Oh no!” Dennis would yell as the elevator opened and Barbara stepped out. Staff would be snickering. Everyone in the library would look over to see what was happening. If Dennis wasn’t quick enough, she’d be the one yelling, “There’s trouble!”, or something extremely witty, which always showed off her deep intelligence and sense of character. Everyone wanted what Barbara had: that open rapport where there were no boundaries but that feeling of being home. It was magical. Dennis is a better person for having gotten to know Barbara Muhs. In early January, completely unprompted, Heather Sessler began scrolling through the Democrat & Chronicle online obituaries. As she was scrolling, she saw an obituary for Barbara and Richard Muhs who passed away on 12/25 and 12/27 respectively. Barbara was a regular patron at Charlotte; it wasn’t a Thursday until she came in. She always had a story and a laugh to share. If you were lucky, you’d get a hug and an “I love you!” as she left. Barbara’s passing was a shock to the staff, many of whom had known Barbara for years. They passed around a card to share condolences and memories of Barbara and Richard with the Muhs family. A few weeks later the branch received a card from the family.



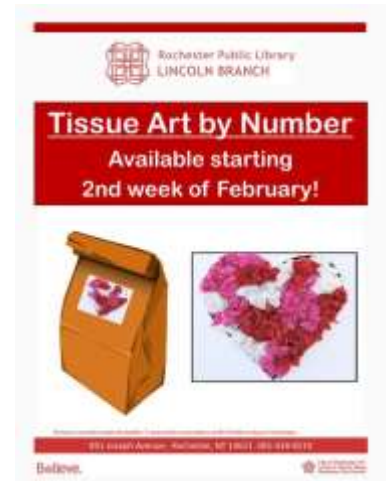
Frederick Douglass Community Library, Evanna DiSalvo reporting

The Douglas Branch is undergoing a major staffing transition and most activities are on hold.

Lincoln Branch Library, Sarah Lehman reporting

Programs

- Matt Seidel and Tashara Martinez planned summer reading events with Jasmine Santiago and finished putting together new backpacks full of toys for children with disabilities.
- Lincoln Branch provided a Tissue Art by Numbers Valentine's Day take-and-make kit program.
- Instead of a traditional program due to COVID precautions, Elizabeth Kurz Michel held a Blind Date with a Book. This resulted in patrons becoming interested in guessing titles and being engaged with the collection. Out of the 19 books wrapped for this, 7 were circulated. The 19 total books wrapped were to keep the display stocked, and the initial display included only 10 wrapped books.



Community Outreach/Meetings/Training

- Kurz Michel has been in discussion with faculty at the School of the Arts, Franklin Upper School, and School Without Walls about getting upcoming programs advertised within the school building. Currently, flyers are being distributed to both SOTA and Franklin, and Kurz Michel is waiting to hear back from School Without Walls.

Anecdotes/Other

- Bi-lingual Kindergarten teacher Nicole Rich at School 22 organized a program with her students and families to sign up for library cards over spring break. Lincoln staff were very excited to have the students come in for cards. Many of the parents and older children were also new to the library and were excited to sign up for cards as well. The staff hopes to see these families back in the library often!
- A student at Franklin High School has begun coming to the Lincoln Branch to speak with Kurz Michel, read, and hang out with friends at least once a week beginning in February Break. They were very excited when, at the end of the month, a sticker basket was placed out. They went through the collection of stickers with their friend. This has also provided a safe space for this teen to discuss identity and to feel validated in their experiences.

Lyell Branch Library, Shamika Fusco reporting

Programs

- Sherry Stanton and Heather Galletto added a twist to the monthly scavenger hunt for Black History Month called "Catch that Hero". They made the search for Rochester's African American heroes extra fun by including a fact about each hero! When children accompany parents to the library, they participate in this activity and receive a prize at check out.
- Kids stayed warm playing a snowball target game and even had snowball wars in the children's area!
- During Black History month, Shamika Fusco conducted a modified Black Films & Cinema Expo. The following titles were shown; *Raisin in the Sun*, *Women of Brewster Place*, *Miss Ever's Boys*, *Annie* (Jamie Fox), *Long Walk Home*, and *Creed*. The films were displayed near the circulation desk to be viewed by patrons browsing in the library, using computers.

Anecdotes/Others

- A library patron did not know how to send and receive emails, so he brought his laptop and asked the teen librarian how to sign up for an e-mail account. Manju Sharma helped him to sign up for his Gmail account and he sent a test email to lyelllibrary@gmail.com. Sharma also showed him the email he sent was in his sent folder and if he receives an email, it is in his inbox. He was satisfied that he got help from the library staff.

Maplewood Community Library, Johanna Buran reporting

Programs

- The Monroe County Department of Health held a vaccination clinic in February.
- The children made Valentine's bags and origami Valentine's Day hearts. Some children put the origami hearts in each other's Valentine Day's bags. The children also created Valentines for their family, class, or friends.

Anecdotes/Other

- Maplewood Community Library staff have started to work with a woman from Turkey who is an eye surgeon, and she hopes to improve her spoken English to gain her license to practice medicine.
- The children of the Maplewood Community Library have adopted a fire hydrant on Augustine Street and the hydrant is named Mr. H₂O. There was a naming contest where the children submitted names and voted on the top three. They enjoy cleaning snow off the fire hydrant and taking care of their neighborhood.

Monroe Branch Library, Mary Clare Scheg reporting

Programs

- Rebecca Hudson prepared a take-and-make craft program for February, a tasty Superhero Valentine.
- Hudson created a program for Random Acts of Kindness Day that allowed teens to choose a card and do the activity listed.
- Matthew Hoople posted weekly storytimes to the Monroe Branch's Facebook page. With no in-person programs, the focus of virtual storytimes was to increase "production value" with puppets and focus more on the pages and pictures than on a person sitting and reading.
- Hoople made a take-and-make craft (with help from Kathy Wolf at Winton) for kids to make a Valentine's Day stamp out of corks!
- To celebrate Valentine's Day, the Branch manager had a program called "Romance is in the Air." The library offered a surprise bag containing two romantic comedies, a bag of microwave popcorn, and a box of candy hearts for patrons to check out. In addition, there was a short movie review included in the movie bags. These movie reviews were put in a drawing for a seasonal prize at the end of the month. The library checked out 30 movie bags and there were 10 participants in the final drawing. One patron left a note saying "*The Valentine package was so SWEET! It was all an unexpected treat!*" Everyone had fun with this program.
- Ian Downey conducted another "Wheel of Poultry" with a valentine theme. This was by far the most successful one of these trivia games. New patrons joined this online program and are looking forward to the next one in April. *These programs fall within the Strategic Plan of community education and engagement.*



Community Outreach

- The library was contacted by Trillium regarding help to set up a bookshelf at the site on Monroe Ave. The library was able to donate boxes of books and magazines to them. Trillium wants to have an ongoing relationship with the Monroe Branch, and Mary Clare Scheg discussed future educational programs Trillium could offer library patrons.
- Some of the residents from Cobb's Hill Manor, an adult care community, came to the library for their monthly visit. Scheg spoke with the Counselor about reconnecting with future programs besides book/magazine donations.
- Every Tuesday and Wednesday when Hoople arrives at the library, a young man is standing across the street waiting for the bus. In the winter months, the snowplows cover the bus stop, and this individual waits on the shoulder of the road. Every time Hoople would come into the library, he would see this individual rub his hands together and stick them deep in his pockets to keep warm. With the help of Cherrin Arnold, Hoople and Arnold were able to wrap up a pair of brand-new gloves and give them to the young man as a belated Christmas gift from the library!

Anecdotes / Other

- A gentleman stopped by Monroe Branch for the first time. He had just moved into the area from Michigan to start a new job at a local hospital. He came over to Scheg's desk to ask for change for \$5 so he could ride the bus. The patron said he had lost a bus pass that morning. His lost bus pass was found outside by the front door. He said he had been there earlier to see when the library opened and must have dropped it. It was a \$20 bus pass, so he was very glad he had it back! He even showed his receipt for the purchase of the pass.

A while later the patron came back to Scheg's desk and said he was looking for a place to live. He was renting a room, but it was hard since there was no refrigerator there. His wife was going to join him soon, so he wanted to find an apartment on a bus line. Scheg called a patron who rents a lot of apartments in the area, then gave the phone to the patron so that they could talk and exchange information. After this call, the man asked for information regarding the Rochester Indian/Pakistani community. Scheg told him there was a patron who would be able to help him. Scheg called the family and explained the situation, and they were more than willing to help and planned to call this gentleman right away. The next day, the patron came over to Scheg and said that he was contacted by the family, they picked him up and brought him over to their house for dinner. They will also be helping him to find a place to live. He was very thankful to have made this connection to the Indian community. He told Scheg that he was so grateful to have stopped into the library that day. He will be starting his new job but plans to continue visiting Monroe. (Monroe has a great network of patrons that are always willing to help.)

Phillis Wheatley Library, Lori Frankunas reporting

Programs

- Thanks to Suzanne Kolodziej from George Eastman Museum and their Dutch Connection Program, Phillis Wheatley Library was able to get spring bulbs kits. Alexandra Haehn had teens, who have never planted before, help in the process. Children helped Haehn water and to measure the plants. Haehn found other books about plants that grow in the spring. By day 6 most of the bulbs had bloomed. The children like to stand on the step stool to smell the hyacinths. They are also excited to plant them outside once it warms up. *Priority 1, Education and Engagement: Promote learning, provide fun and deliver creative and innovative educational experiences for our diverse populations.*
- Our patrons and staff helped create string art celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr



Anecdotes/Other

- The staff was happy to donate books to a local teacher who works with special needs children. She told us that some of her students are homeless and will appreciate having a book to own. She also uses the books in her classroom for reading time.
- A mother came in with her child looking for help with homeschooling. She was overwhelmed with the prospect of homeschooling her child. Haehn was able to show her the homeschooling section and help her find the resources she needed. The patron was very grateful for the help.

Sully Branch Library, Maria Heeks-Heinlein reporting

Programs

- Sully has been adhering to the suspension of in-person programming. Thanks to the library administration for implementing this temporary measure to keep our patrons and staff safe. Sully has been running one-on-one versions of some of the regular program offerings such as the Young Adult Chess club, 3-D printing instruction for Young Adults, and sight word BINGO. While the numbers of these programs are much lower than the full in-person versions, staff are happy to provide a safe activity for the individuals who wish to participate.
- A bedtime story program started in February has not had any participants, but this virtual program will continue through March. *(Priority: Education – Promote learning and provide fun, creative, and innovative educational experiences for our diverse population)*

Anecdotes/Other

- Four new children visited the library during February recess. Carmen Gonzalez talked to them about getting a library card and gave them applications for their parents to fill out. The children said they would visit the library the next day with the completed application so Gonzalez could make them cards. Later that same day, Heeks-Heinlein gave the children a tour of the library and showed them the video game section. One of the children exclaimed, "We can borrow video games?!? I am not going to wait to get my card tomorrow." He and his three friends RAN out of the library. An hour later, one of their adults drove them up to the

library and they all had completed library card applications from their parents. They all received new library cards, and each checked out a video game. The next day the children came into the library and proudly presented their cards to Gonzalez. She playfully said that they were supposed to wait for her to get their cards ready, and one of the children replied “*Well, I saw a Pokémon game and I couldn't wait!*”

- Jacob Bigelow continued his annual tradition of honoring Black History Month by posting informative biographies of famous Rochesterians on our Facebook page. Bigelow covered well-known figures like Frederick Douglass but also honored lesser-known Rochesterians like Hester Jeffrey and Dr. Edwin Robinson. His posts received positive recognition on Facebook, and he plans on continuing with Women's History Month in March. Both displays are annual traditions that he began when he started at the Lincoln Branch.

Staff highlight: Carmen Gonzalez

Gonzalez, or Ms. Red as many people refer to her, has been a clerk at the Sully Branch for almost twelve years. She enthusiastically greets people when they visit the library and is often asked about by patrons when she is not there. One day in February, Heeks-Heinlein heard a lot of laughter at the circulation desk. When she looked up, she saw a patron and Gonzales having a little dance celebration because the patron came in to pick up her holds. Gonzalez often looks for fun ways to engage the patrons.



Winton Branch Library, Kathy Wolf reporting

Programs

- With Valentine's Day as an inspiration, the Winton Branch Library created a Matching Game. Staff came up with about twenty-five literary couples that were placed in one column, and the books they came from in a second column. Patrons were invited to match the couple with the book. There were paper copies of the game in the library as well as on social media for our virtual customers. Feedback has been quite positive, with patrons saying they didn't want the prize, but just did it for fun. (Priority #1 – Education and Engagement)

Anecdotes/Other

- Lauren DelGaizo is Winton Branch Library's new Teen/Media Librarian, replacing Patrick Pittman. She started the second week of February and dove in headfirst. She is meeting new-to-her regular patrons and immediately placing orders of popular Young Adult titles, so the collection does not fall behind. She is also working on planning Teen and Tween programs, both in-person and take-and-make, and developing Summer Reading for Teens and Tweens in conjunction with Wolf. This is her first position as a Librarian, having worked at the Frederick Douglass Community Library as a Page and Library Assistant.
- While learning her new patron base, DelGaizo ran into some old friends from Douglass, including a voracious 9-year-old manga reader who jumps between both branches. DelGaizo received a donation of a special cover edition of the manga *My Hero Academia* and showed it to this young patron, and the two embarked on a “research investigation” to determine the origins of the cover. The patron even asked his dad, also a manga reader and one of DelGaizo's patrons from Douglass, and Manga Expert Isaac Lewis from Douglass until he got an answer and reported back to DelGaizo (the volume was from a Japanese, not American publisher).

- Amber Houser from the Child Care Council had arranged with Children's Services Consultant Tonia Burton to drop off some brochures and handouts at the Winton Branch Library to be distributed among the Monroe County Library System. As she spoke with Wolf, they were talking about the important work the Child Care Council does and discussed ways that the two organizations could collaborate. Wolf offered them the opportunity to decorate the window display area that faces Winton Road; Houser was happy to accept and returned less than a week later with the supplies to create an attractive display.
- Finnerty helped an elderly patron access her MyChart medical account. She hadn't been able to get into her account for months and was very happy for the assistance.
- A woman approached Matt Hoople (substitute from the Monroe Branch) and asked for assistance in building a resume. After a little over an hour, the resume was complete, and the woman then asked for assistance navigating new places to apply in her field (personal care assistant). After nearly 45 minutes of looking up nearby PCA jobs and applying, the patron received a phone call to schedule an interview for one of the first jobs she applied for!



Safe To Be Smart, Derrick Coley reporting

The Arnett site

Laquanda Fields resigned as the Library Assistant on February 21st. Canvassing for new candidates begins February 25th through March 10th.

The Phillis Wheatley site

Michele Saccente reporting

- One of the teens who are part of the STBS program, and I joined the Zoom, "Wheel of Poultry" hosted by the Monroe Branch. There were seven other contestants in attendance, we each took turns answering a question after the facilitator spun the wheel. The teen and I discussed which answer we felt was correct. In the end, we scored 5,100 points and won. It was fun, we're glad we won too. A prize was given, this writer needs to go to the Monroe Branch to pick it up.
- Summer of Opportunity Program (SOOP) began accepting applications. I assisted three teens with completing the online applications. Many of the STBS teens have just turned 14, teens are unsure if they will apply for SOOP.
- Michele says, *"I continue to learn the CARL System, checking-out and returning books and I especially enjoy assisting patrons to find books. It's a special place, so glad I am part of this team. Special thank you to Alex the Children's Librarian for being there to help me out with a report and finding a specific teen book."*

The Maplewood site

Youth Services Assistant Stephanie Pitts will begin onboarding on February 28, 2022.

The Lincoln site

Vera Haygood reporting

- Homework help with a parent and student; they help each other and connect by doing homework.
- Gaming: Youth gathers periodically to challenge one another in rounds on ROBLOX and other internet games.

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

- Vera states Summer of Opportunity website is open for applicants. Vera has offered to help teens navigate through the website.

The Sully site

George Carter reporting

- Summer of Opportunity is taking applications and some youths are signing up for jobs, they have many questions and need his assistance on the website.
- George has been teaching chess to a few new teens that have shown interest.
- Teens are gaming a lot during their visits.
- George has met with local transportation companies locally for field trip capabilities for teens.

Teen Central site

Youth Services Assistant Tierenny Davis will begin onboarding on February 28, 2022.

John Hylton reporting

- Video games continue to be a draw for many youths in the Teen Center. After a long day in school, teens enjoy playing games with their friends. Video games are also a good tool to connect with youth.
- Yanni is a teenager that came in looking to apply for his learner's permit and New York State ID. He was in the early stages of filling out paperwork and the electronic form when he asked for help. I realized that he was having trouble navigating the questions and the technological aspects of uploading pictures and documents. I sat with Yanni and showed him how to do the necessary thing he needed to succeed at this task.

Selected Meetings & Outputs

RPL Director Patricia Uttaro reporting

February 19, 2022 – March 18, 2022

Standing Meetings

City Senior Management Team (weekly)

RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)

Tonia Burton, Brie Harrison, Melanie Lewis, Christine Ridarsky, Jennifer Smathers, Ana Suro, – 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)

Urban Libraries Council Executive Director call (weekly)

MCLS Directors Council (monthly)

Other Meetings

City Equity Team meeting

Attorney Stephanie "Cole" Adams regarding trustee training for MCLS

Rochester 100 Women Who Care quarterly meeting

Library Advocacy Day

- Senator Ed Rath
- Assemblymember Jen Lunsford

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

- Assemblymember Sarah Clark
- Assemblymember Steve Hawley
- Assembly Member Demond Meeks

Causewave Community Partners "Lovefest" annual event

Urban Libraries Council regarding new Anti-Racism and Digital Equity benchmark development

SMT City bus tour

City budget community input session

RPL Board Strategic Planning Committee

School Library Journal Middle-Grade Magic virtual conference

City Council Committee meeting

City budget telephone town hall

Visit Rochester (VIC) meeting

Chamber Women's Council ½ day conference

Pittsford Community Library Podcast (guest speaker)

City Budget Director Mike Burns

Email Activity

February 2022

Name	Send Count	Receive Count	Read Count
Uttaro, Patricia	800	4413	7056
Lenio, Jennifer	541	2486	1312
Lewis, Melanie	253	1796	1920
Harrison, Brie	304	2204	2524
Suro, Ana	811	3230	4804