TO: RPL Board of Trustees  
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director  
DATE: January 30, 2019  

**Action Items**

**Nomination for Reappointment to the Board (Uttaro for Baynes)**
The Nominating Committee recommends the reappointment of Trustee Donna Benjamin for an additional 5-year term to expire December 31, 2023. If approved by this Board, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Mayor’s Office for consideration by City Council.

**Board Action Requested**: Approval of recommendation for appointment of Donna Benjamin to a 5-year term as RPL Trustee.

**Nomination of RPL Officers for 2019 (Benjamin)**
The Nominating Committee puts forth the following recommendations for Board Officers for 2019:

- Katherine C. Baynes, President
- Donna P. Benjamin, Vice-President
- Sharon Salluzzo, Secretary; Reynolds Board Liaison
- John E. Lovenheim, Treasurer; MCLS Board Liaison

**Board Action Requested**: Approval of slate of officers as presented

**RPL FY18 Audit (Harrison)**
The Library’s auditors, Freed Maxick CPA’s, have completed their audit of the 2017-18 RPL fiscal year and met with the RPL Board Finance Committee on December 17, 2018, 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 2017-18 fiscal year.

**Request for Special Event Hours on April 5 (Uttaro)**
We are requesting the Board agree to close the first floor of the Rundel Building at 4:00 pm on Friday, April 5, 2019, to accommodate the opening of the Stonewall @ 50 exhibit. The Local History Division and the FFRPL have worked with a group of local organizations to develop this exhibit commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. The first floor of Rundel would close at 4:00 pm to allow for set up for the exhibit opening and reception later that evening.

**Board Action Requested**: Approval of closing the Rundel first floor at 4:00 pm on April 5.
Grant Acceptance, ALA/ALSC Strengthening Communities through Libraries Grant (Harrison)
The Central Library Children’s Division is a successful applicant in a competitive American Libraries Association (ALA), Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) grant program. The Division will partner with Girl Scouts of Western New York to provide after school STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, math) programming for 25 girls ages 7-11 years old by facilitating a new Girl Scout troop at the Central Library or another agreed, accessible location. The $5,000 grant award will pay for a service/program agreement with the Girl Scouts, bus passes for participants, and library materials to supplement programs. The program will be offered weekly for 60 to 90 minutes from January through June 2019, for a total of approximately 24 sessions with the troop.

**Board Action Requested:** Acceptance of an ALA/ALSC grant award of $5,000 for the purpose and services described.

Agreement, Girl Scouts of Western New York (Harrison)
As described above, the Girl Scouts of Western New York shall be lead organizer and facilitator for the ALA/ALSC grant. As part of the agreement, the Girl Scouts shall provide outreach and marketing services, an on-site facilitator for all STEAM programming for the program duration, all program supplies and materials, and administration of pre and post surveys to inform continuation of the programs and use in future sessions. All materials shall be reimbursed at cost through the agreement. The cost of the agreement is $2,650, paid for under the grant. The balance of the grant shall be used for bus passes and library materials as described.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval of a Professional Services Agreement with Girl Scouts of Western New York, for the services described, for an amount not to exceed $2,650.

Monroe Branch Food for Fines (Reeves)
The Monroe Branch Supervisor has proposed a month-long program called “Food for Fines” where patrons may donate food to satisfy outstanding fines. One item donated would earn $1.00 off in fines; lost items are not eligible for reduction in the program. All items donated will go to support the Monroe Food Cart, which debuted in early January.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval of the Monroe Branch “Food for Fines” program for an upcoming month in 2019.

Renaming Chester F. Carlson Patent & Trademark Center (Uttaro)
We are requesting the Board consider a proposal to rename the Chester F. Carlson Patent & Trademark Center to The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property. Center Supervisor Jennifer Byrnes suggests that “intellectual property” better represents the Center because its work includes patents, trademarks, design marks, sound marks, copyright, and more. Many of our patrons have a need of both patent and copyright information. Changing the focus to “intellectual property” better represents the scope of the services provided. A draft logo for the Center is included.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval of renaming the Chester F. Carlson Patent & Trademark Center to The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property.
Discussion Items

RPL Board Bylaws – The RPL Bylaws were last revised in 1994. Given the changes in NYS Standards for Libraries around policy review and revision, I am asking that the Board appoint an ad hoc committee to review the current bylaws and recommend revisions. I have sent a copy of the current bylaws to City Attorney Johanna Brennan for review.

Report Items
Patricia Uttaro, RPL Director reporting

Recommended Reading/Viewing

- The Room of Requirement - https://www.thisamericanlife.org/664/the-room-of-requirement

Upcoming Events

Advocacy In-District Visits – Please join as many as you are able:
- Thursday January 31, 11:00 am – Assemblymember Peter Lawrence at his district office, 2496 West Ridge Road
- Thursday January 31, 2:00 pm – Annie Chwiecko for Senator Gallivan at his district office, 900 Jefferson Road
- Friday February 1, 10:30 am – Senator Ranzenhofer at the Arnett Branch
- Friday February 1, 4:00 pm – Assemblymember Stephen Hawley at the Brockport Library
- Friday, February 15, 2:00 pm – Assembly member Jamie Romeo at her district office, 564 E Ridge Road Ste 103

Please let Debi know if you plan to attend any of these visits. Thank you to all trustees who have attended visits scheduled earlier in January.

Take Your Child to the Library Day – Saturday February 2 – There are events scheduled in libraries throughout MCLS. Check the libraryweb.org calendar for ones nearest you!
Non-Violent Communication - Thursday, February 21st, 9-11am, Central Library
Nonviolent Communication is founded on language and communication skills that strengthen our ability to remain human, even under trying conditions. The intent is to remind us about what we already know—about how we humans were meant to relate to one another—and to assist us in living this way. Kit Miller, Director of the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, will facilitate this interactive workshop. The mission of the Gandhi Institute is to help individuals and communities develop the inner resources and practical skills needed to achieve a nonviolent, sustainable, and just world. The program will take place in the Kate Gleason Auditorium. To register: http://evite.me/TB8hP6b7nH

Roc the Future Projects – I and other staff have continued to support Roc the Future work, specifically centering on early learning. During November and December, I met several times with Christina Dandino, Director of the Greater Rochester After School Alliance, Kelly Bauman from RCSD, and staff from RIT to discuss the possibility of RIT Computer Science students working with us to create an online program locator that would provide parents and caregivers with an easy way to find quality early learning programs for their children. RIT will take this on as a capstone project for a group of 4th year students.

I continued my work as Co-chair of the Early Grade Literacy Outcome Team which began to map out potential methods of community engagement that could help improve early grade literacy for RCSD students by 47%. I presented on the work at the State of Our Children Address in November, and continue to work with RCSD Executive Director of ELA, Karen Fahy, to gather & interpret data and engage community stakeholders in the process. My intended outcome for this project is to use it to create the “culture of reading” in Rochester that will provide an example to our students and encourage reading.

Finally, Dr. Reeves will be joining Roc the Future Executive Director Jackie Campbell and several others as part of a Rochester Leadership Team that will be training with the Strive National Program monthly throughout the year. This will expose Dr. Reeves to other communities like Rochester who are working on community literacy issues and could help shape how we deliver services in the Branches in the future.

Sister Cities Intern – I was happy to learn last Fall that RPL has been awarded a paid intern through the Rochester Regional Library Council. This intern will work with me and with International Sister Cities of Rochester Board members to inventory items associated with our sister cities. I interviewed five candidates in December and offered the position to Lisa Buda. Ms. Buda is a Rochester resident who is currently in library school, but has an extensive background in museum studies as well. She will begin her work at the Central Library in May.

RPL Strategic Plan Progress

Education & Engagement

Tuesday Topics – On January 15, I kicked off the 2019 Tuesday Topics discussion series at Central with a presentation on Eric Klinenberg’s Palaces for the People, focusing on the topic of libraries as special infrastructure. I thank FFRL’s Ned Davis and Susan Lusignan for inviting me to speak. There were several very thoughtful questions asked by audience members, and I received good feedback afterwards. If you missed the presentation, it is available on the Central Facebook page. I can also share the text of my talk if you prefer to read it.
CASH at Central - CASH [Creating Assets, Savings, and Hope] is a community coalition of 40-plus organizations convened by the United Way of Greater Rochester in 2002, working together to improve life for low-income working families in Monroe County. CASH is regarded as a pioneer and national leader in the effort to provide financial services to low-income families. CASH operates free, high quality tax preparation sites throughout Monroe County. IRS Certified Volunteers prepare and electronically file federal and NYS tax returns free of charge for income eligible persons. This season, the Central Library will host the CASH “super site” in the lower link level of the Bausch & Lomb Building. CASH volunteers and staff will provide free tax filing and assistance to eligible people.

Holiday Celebration at Arnett - Approximately 200 students came to the library on December 3, for story-times and to decorate a Christmas tree with Santa and Rochester Firefighters in a garden next door to the library. This program was sponsored by the Arnett Block Club and the Arnett Library Friends. Those same volunteers held a nice caroling event in the garden on December 11. Several patrons knitted or bought hats, gloves and mittens for Arnett to give to patrons in need. The items adorned our indoor Christmas tree. Over 60 such items were given out.

Sustainability & Resources

Hillary Olsen – I met with new RMSC President & CEO Hillary Olsen in December. Hillary has some interesting and exciting ideas for RMSC and is very open to new partnerships and collaborations with the library system. We initially met to discuss whether the Challenger exhibit, which is moving out of RMSC, would be a good fit for Central (it would have been, but a new home had already been found by the time Hillary and I met). I look forward to working closely with Hillary, especially in the areas of early childhood and adult education.

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Constant Contact Newsletter
- 1850 subscribers opened newsletter
- 139 clicked through
- 30 new subscribers

Central Library Updates
Assistant Directors Sally Snow & Tolley Reeves, EdD, reporting

Arts & Literature Division, Nanci Rosenberg-Nugent reporting

Staff Development
Mary Fraser, Melissa Manczuk, Carol Moldt and Nanci Nugent all attended the NYLA conference this year. Here are some comments they made about a few of the presentations they attended:

- Cultivating Empathy in Reference Services:
  “This presentation provided further validation on the importance of active listening to cultivate empathy. Specific examples of challenging situations with patrons were discussed.” (Carol Moldt)
- Keynote Speech:
  “Very moving and informative talks from a Social Worker and a formerly homeless Health and Safety Associate at the San Francisco Public Library. By expanding the definition of the type of information libraries can provide and the ways they can serve their communities, the SFPL has helped hundreds of homeless library users find housing, employment and health services.” (Mary Fraser)
- Save the Books!: Preservation on a Budget:
  “I learned about some new and really good resources for repairing and preserving the books in the Reynolds Collection.” (Melissa Manczuk)

Programs
- Rochester Writes continued its popular programming with a four-part series called Polishing Your Written Work. This series, taught by Lisa Kleman, assists local writers in finalizing a short written piece by exploring methods for evaluating and revising.
- Emotion of Color Painting Class—Artist Sara Blake taught a class on color and how color can influence and create emotions. Students learned how the colors they choose in a painting can affect how others react to it. There are certain similar universal reactions to color that transcend the individual variables gender, age, etc. Students created a painting using acrylics and Blake explained how warm colors such as such as red, yellow, and orange; evoke warmth because they remind us of things like the sun or fire. Cool colors from the blue side of the spectrum, include the blues, purple, and green; these colors are many times described as calming colors but can also create feelings of sadness. The artist they focused on was Wassily Kandinsky and learned how he used color in his works to create a desired mood.
• **Felt Christmas Ornaments** – Our library patrons very much enjoy creating personalized items like dolls and ornaments. One of the most popular classes here was a class by Librarian Nanci Nugent where students created their own dolls. In the world of handmade dolls, monster dolls are in vogue. Nugent took trendy monster dolls into the holiday ornament world and students had an enjoyable time sewing felt monster ornaments. All the ornaments created were colorful and fun.

• **Music Program** – Multi-instrumentalist Mike Kedley led a “bluegrass ukulele” workshop. He taught participants how to strum or pluck their ukuleles in patterns that mimic traditional bluegrass instruments such as banjo or mandolin, then everyone played and sang a couple of tunes to try out their new skills.

• **Ornaments** – The “Wonderland at Central” display of large, handmade ornaments included 13 new decorations that were hung all around Central. These ornaments were created by families, individuals and nonprofit organizations. When a representative from the Mental Health Association Creative Wellness Opportunities program brought in the ornament they had created, she told me that last year’s ornament was noticed by someone who commissioned the MHA to create more to beautify a doctor’s office. The money they earned through that commission allowed them to buy more art supplies. The ornaments hung all month, and dozens of people participated in the ornament scavenger hunt.

• **Book Signing** – Author Donald Staffo was here to do a book talk and signing for his book, *Jim Boeheim and Syracuse Basketball*. The author said he was in town and was last-minute but was happy to be in Rochester. He is an alumnus of SUNY Brockport and has taught in Alabama for 30 years. He signed a copy of the book for the library.

**Business & Social Sciences Division, Darlene Richards reporting**

**Meetings**

• Sarah Bishopp Vélez represented the Central Library at December’s Center for Urban Entrepreneurship (CUE) Partnership Roundtable. Main topics covered included:
  o Lomax Campbell’s overview of the City’s Office of Community Wealth and initiatives and policies that are associated.
  o President of the Rochester Downtown Development Corporation, Heidi Zimmer-Meyer’s report that the Commissary is almost completely funded. For those who do not know, the Commissary will be a fully functional kitchen incubator to foster the growth of food businesses in Rochester.
  o Vasanthi Pillai’s report that the Micro-Entrepreneur Pro-Bono program at Volunteer Legal Services (VLSP) has run out of funding. New funding to continue the program has not been found as of yet.
  o Ebony Miller’s report that J.P. Morgan Chase has pledged $137,000 to develop a tracking system, which will most likely be the Unite Us platform. She is calling a working meeting to be held in January where all parties involved will flesh out how the tracking system will operate.

• Sarah Bishopp Vélez met with Patty Uttaro and Brie Harrison regarding a new Financial Empowerment Center Initiative through the City. They talked about the potential of the partnerships with Score, CASH and
Consumer Credit Counseling. Brie Harrison explained to Richards and Bishopp Vélez in detail the Financial Empowerment Centers and that there are 20 cohort cities. The mayor is very interested in financial empowerment and it makes sense that the Business Division would be a participant.

- Darlene Richards, Florence Morris, Cynthia Dana, Brad Stanley (NYS Dept. of Taxation and Finance) and Jennifer Byrnes met with Berta Rivera from CASH to tour the area and to speak about the collaboration between the library and CASH staff in supplying services to patrons.
- Richards and Bishopp Vélez met with Claudia Burcher (Economic Development & Grant Specialist) to discuss a partnership between the Chamber and the Business Division.

Programs
- November’s 1st Wednesday program was “The Procurement Experience”
- Steve Ingraham from the IRS and Paul Visca, CPA, presented a “Year End Income Tax Review” for December’s 1st Wednesday program. Steve walked the audience through the IRS’s website, which contains a wealth of info on business structure, self-employment, and independent contractor vs. employee. Paul discussed taxes for small businesses and went over some of the highlights from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.

Outreach
- Sarah Bishopp Vélez attended the SCORE Holiday Luncheon for the first time at the Midvale Country Club. This was both a fun event and a great opportunity to network with SCORE mentors, local businesses that received help from SCORE, and other community organizations devoted to fostering entrepreneurship in Rochester.
- Darlene Richards met with a volunteer from Causewave. They are working with the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning and need grants for childhood education to lead exposure, public and environmental health, healthy homes & housing, social and environmental justice, pollution, and environmental education. Richards showed the volunteer ways to search the database efficiently, and shared handouts and other information from the Foundation Center.
- Bishopp-Velez shared a table with KIVA at the Rochester Young Professionals Entrepreneur’s Expo; she promoted the Small Business Resource Center.

Small Business
Sarah Bishopp Vélez had a busy month with many small business start-up questions! Business ideas that Sarah helped provide information for included bakeries, electrical products manufacturing, writing, mobile phlebotomy, travel agencies, voice acting, and contracting for inventions.

Collection Development
- Matt Sherman has continued to work with the Collection HQ reports that Jen Lenio has provided us. Sarah Bishopp Vélez and Darlene Richards have been diligently weeding the collection.
- Chris Herpers provided a brief demo on Gale Small Business Builder and Demographics Now. Richards and Bishopp-Velez will review a trial version of both to consider for future purchase.

Anecdotes
Sarah Bishopp Vélez spoke with a patron, who said he had heard that a legal firm came to the library. She explained the legal services that LROC provides each Friday. He was looking for an attorney to help him with an employer issue and was sure he would not receive any help. Bishopp-Velez told him that LawNY or Volunteer Legal Services were real attorneys and they could help him with this. The patron was so pleased and said thank
you many times that we had given him "a ray of hope." so, kudos to LROC, to LawNY, and VLSP for helping patrons!

Children’s Services Consultant, Tonia Burton reporting

Programs

- Raising a Reader – We continue to work on preparing bag sets for classes. Red bags were dropped off at more sites throughout December by Tonia Burton and Katie Powell. There are sites still waiting for their books and RPL is still waiting for an agreement from the Rochester City School District before we can begin rotating bags at School #33 & #57.
- Burton joined the Action for a Better Community (ABC) Early Head Start Holiday celebration at the Hart Street location. Fifty families were treated to a pancake breakfast, visit from Elmo and Curious George, and local Fire Fighters joined the festivities when an alarm was set off. Raising a Reader families registered for the Central Monthly Program brochure and were then entered to win free books, games, and toys. There were five families that won prizes.
- LaToya Mcghie Rowe will join us as the new Library Assistant/Raising a Reader Coordinator. Currently, activities have been limited due to staffing shortages in the Children’s Center and at child care sites. Once Mcghie Rowe and the new AmeriCorps members have been trained, we will be able to offer more in-depth services to our RAR sites.

Other Programs

- In December we saw many families gathering in the Children’s Center for play and programs, especially during break week. Powell ran a preschool-aged program on Snow STEM that included activities and science experiments on arctic animals and adaptations as well as playing with "snow dough."
- Exciting future programming is in store as the Children’s Center received a grant to partner with Girl Scouts of Western New York to develop a Girl Scout troop that will provide girls from Rochester’s urban core access to high quality out-of-school time STEAM opportunities. Participants will have the opportunity to build STEAM interest and knowledge through hands-on projects in a variety of topics, such as robotics, financial literacy, aerospace, and digital art. Girls will also interact with women who are subject-matter experts working in STEAM fields. This troop will work to remove barriers to scouting by eliminating membership fees and dues and the traditional volunteer-led troop model. Participants and their caregivers will be given a free bus pass to ensure that girls from any neighborhood in the City of Rochester can participate. Removing these barriers will enable girls from all backgrounds to explore STEAM topics in a fun and supportive environment. Powell will lead this initiative in the New Year.

Outreach

- We resumed our monthly visits to Carlson Metro YMCA Childcare in November. The Center has temporarily closed several classrooms because of reduced enrollment this Fall. Therefore, Powell and Miranda Hazen did storytimes for 3 classrooms each instead of the ten classrooms we served last school year. They expect to be adding a few more classrooms in January 2019.
- Hazen resumed visits to TLC Adventures in Childcare to conduct three storytimes for four of their classrooms. As a result of their staffing and the younger ages of their oldest kids they will not be resuming their visits to us until the spring.

- In ongoing efforts to support literacy throughout the city, Burton met with Sara Scott & Cynthia Rochet, City of Rochester Department of Recreation and Youth Services. Scott and Rochet are interested in expanding library services to R Centers. The centers are focusing on literacy after school but are facing challenges in this area. Burton discussed the need for working together rather than duplicating services and offered suggestions on how library staff can better support R Centers. There has been a test project of rotating books from Central around three different R Centers and this will be expanded in the coming months. In addition, library staff will be invited to provide literacy activities at R Centers and some R Centers will make routine visits to libraries. This happens at the Frederick Douglass Community Library and Sully Branch Library. Douglass has had the most success with staff relationships and we are looking to replicate that at other spaces. Recognizing staff expertise and staff buy in is crucial, Rochet and Burton will work closely together to ensure success. This will require additional funds if the program continues. We will assess the cost over the next few months.

- Mary Eileen Wood, Director of the Terra Rochester Finger Lakes Science & Engineering Fair met with Burton and Jennifer Byrnes from the Science Division to discuss the possibility of partnering on summer programs. Wood has been working with the Children's Center and Business and Education Division to promote the 2019 Science Fair at the Rochester Museum & Science Center and connect homeschooling families with resources. She is connected to various NASA groups and offered to help get a former NASA astronaut for a summer program. During the meeting the speaker opportunities shifted a bit and the possibilities may be a better fit for adult programs than children's but there are still ongoing discussions.

Community and Play

- One afternoon during the NYLA conference, a gathering grew in the preschool play area with some of our regular families as well as some out-of-town conference attendees and their family. An impromptu “schoolhouse” playgroup formed. One of the caregivers played the “teacher” and led his “students” through nursery rhymes, songs, reading stories, and reviewing the alphabet with the magnetic letters on the white board. This type of organic, child-initiated play with actively participating caregivers is the type of environment and positive community relationships that our Children’s staff are implementing from our Fall Pyramid Training initiatives.

- We were thrilled to host local author Leslie C. Youngblood as she presented her brand-new book, Love Like Sky, from Disney-Hyperion Publishing in the Kate Gleason Auditorium on Tuesday, November 6, co-sponsored by the FFRPL and supported by Writers & Books. Families were able to get their own signed copy of the book and hear Youngblood discussed the development of her story and family relationships. She also answered questions about her book.
New and Coming
• The new aquarium was installed on November 30th! As soon as the tank had time to adjust to the room temperature the fish will be added. Thanks to the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library, especially Rebecca Fuss, for arranging for the purchase and delivery of the new aquarium.
• On December 6, RPL Children’s Librarians attended the last session for the Fall Training series. There were three session of Pyramid Model Training in addition to the *Ready to Read at New York Libraries*: An Early Childhood Public Library Staff Development Program. This series was implemented to ensure all RPL Children’s Librarians are versed in best practices of early literacy and public service. For staff that participated in every offering, they received 33 hours of professional development. The trainings took 96 hours for Burton to plan, prepare, implement, and evaluate.

Community Contacts/Meetings/Trainings
• Burton attended the Rochester Children’s Book Festival to promote MCLS Library services. The annual event had over 3000 people in attendance.
• Burton hosted the New York State Youth Services Consultants for the annual meeting. The participants enjoyed a tour of the Children’s Center and Teen Central after the meeting.
• Burton presented with Cara Rager, WXXI, at the annual New York Library Association Conference on Successful Partnerships. The presentation included Exploration Stations in addition to collaborations the library has with early childhood sites, out of school time providers, school districts, and government agencies.
• Burton, Powell, and Hazen attended the monthly MCLS Children’s Services meeting. Burton arranged for a presentation from Carla Stough-Huffman on Brain Architecture. Stough-Huffman is the Coordinator of Professional Development and OST Program Quality for Greater Rochester After-School Alliance (GRASA). Staff had a chance to play The Brain Architecture Game. The game examines the influence of childhood experiences on early brain growth. When traumatic events happen during our formative years, they can impact the actual physical way our brains grow, which impacts our abilities. We are used to thinking about impacts of things like malnutrition, but what about caregiver attention or parent employment? The Brain Architecture game allows you to learn how our genetics and support systems combine with our early childhood experiences, creating brains that can either cope or collapse under the stresses of life. Working in teams and using a mix of pipe cleaners and straws, you will try to build the tallest, most functional brain based on the experience cards you draw. Some librarians requested to borrow the game to use at their own libraries too.
• Burton joined Cynthia Dana and Dennis Williams at a Corridor of Play Youth Program team meeting. The group shared plans for the Youth program that will begin in January with Jenn Beideman and Hannah Shippee; Common Ground Health’s organizers for the project. The Youth program will be handled by Williams. Burton is on the Outreach Committee which will promote the project to families and children at area events.
• Burton joined the Action For a Better Community Education/Disabilities/Mental Health Advisory Board. This meeting focused on the challenges that Early Childhood providers are facing with staff retention. There are many centers without the proper staffing and centers with lower enrollment since the city school district has expanded its 3-year-old classroom offerings. A teacher can earn more money teaching in the district or at higher levels with better benefits, which makes it very hard for sites to fill all the open slots. This has affected Raising a Reader as well because our staff shortages and their staff shortages make it very difficult to connect.
Circulation & Information Services Department, Chad Cunningham reporting

- 242 new borrowers
- 7 RRLC Access cards
- 143 Notarial Acts

Circulation Anecdotes
- Chad Cunningham helped a patron who wanted to change her name on her naturalization papers. Cunningham helped her recover her e-mail password and create an account to address her issue. The two discovered that she already had received the information about the change and they found a number she could call to get further information. The patron tried to give Cunningham money as thanks, and when he informed her that we don’t take tips she brought in cookies as a thank you instead. They were delicious cookies enjoyed by all the staff at the Circulation Desk.
- A patron approached Jennifer Fleet and told her that she was the first person in Rochester to be kind to him after he moved here. He told Fleet that her kindness had stuck with him and that he very much appreciated her welcoming nature.
- Alison Bieber offered a patron the opportunity to spin the fine wheel to clear his fines. The wheel landed on “Show Us Your Best Dance Moves” and Bieber and the other desk staff were treated to a virtuoso show of popping, locking, and the best robot moves they had seen.

Information Anecdotes
- An elderly gentleman came to the Information Desk with a dilemma. He draws Social Security income and receives his payments on a debit card. He went to the ATM to use the debit card and asked someone to help him draw out money. He gave the person the card and his PIN and the person walked off with his card. He was very concerned that on the first of the month, this person would withdraw his Social Security check. He worked with a staff for about 30 minutes and we reset his PIN, cancelled his old card, and had a new card mailed to his home address. Later in the month he returned with the card that Social Security sent him. Staff helped him register his new card and set up his new pin. He was very happy that now his first-of-the-month Social Security payment is safe.
- Ron Freitag assisted a patron with designing and printing up some basic business cards. He was beginning the process of setting up a handy man business and was very happy to have some business cards to hand out as he started up his business.
- Sochia, Freitag, and DiNitto provided assistance with visa applications. One gentleman from the Congo was sponsoring his son to come to the US and a woman from Nepal was sponsoring her husband. The gentleman from the Congo has been coming for months and has been transferring many documents. He is hopeful that he is almost done with the process.

Local History and Genealogy, Christine Ridarsky Reporting

Programs
- Genealogy Specialist Barb Koehler presented one session, entitled “Database Review,” in her monthly series, TGIS: Think Genealogy It’s Saturday at Central Library in November. There was no December session due to the holiday. Koehler also presented “Building a Family Tree” at the Webster Public Library and “Genealogy 101” at the Lincoln Branch.
- We presented four other programs. These included two sessions in our Race, Rhetoric and Resistance series, part of the 2018 celebration of the centennial of Frederick Douglass’s birth:
“A Time in the Life of Frederick Douglass: Shields Green and a Woman Called Moses,” a performance presented by AKWAABA.

“Radical Friends,” a talk by Nancy A. Hewitt on the friendship between Douglass and local abolitionist Amy Post.

The other presentations were:

- “Lifelong Fascinations: A Portrait of Margaret Woodbury Strong” by Julia Novakovic, part of the Rochester’s Rich History series. The talk was based on an article Novakovic wrote for the Rochester History journal. We hosted a small reception for journal subscribers prior to the talk.
- “Beyond ‘The Mere Property Career’: Lewis Henry Morgan, the Human Mind, and the American Experiment in the Age of Donald Trump,” by Daniel Moses. This event was also preceded by a reception. These events were held in partnership with staff and students from the University of Rochester as part of the “Morgan at 200” bicentennial program series.

Exhibitions

- The Stonewall @ 50 Exhibit Planning Team, led by City Historian and Historical Services Consultant Christine L. Ridarsky, met four times and continued to refine the narrative framework for the exhibit, which is scheduled to open in the Anthony Mascioli Gallery in Hacker Hall on March 1, 2019. Historical Researcher Michelle Finn and Librarian I Brandon Fess also participated.
- The 2017 exhibition Because of Women Like Her...Winning the Vote in New York State received an award of recognition from the New York Cultural Heritage Tourism Network at its First Annual Recognition Luncheon. The traveling version of this exhibit was on display in November at Parma Public Library and Webster-Schroeder High School Library; between the two locations it was seen by more than 6,500 people.

Community Outreach/Meetings

- The High Falls Center & Interpretive Museum permanently ceased operations on November 18; 107 people visited the museum in November. Total attendance for 2018 was 4,666. Following the closure, Ridarsky and Historical Researcher Amy Pepe spent several days sorting and packing materials to be transferred to the library, met with the city’s purchasing agent and an auctioneer to determine what and how the City could sell surplus items, and returned items such as magazine racks and sandwich board signs that had been borrowed from Visit Rochester.
- The City of Rochester unveiled a historical marker in November at the site of Frederick Douglass’s first home on Alexander Street. The research and grant application that made this possible was done by Library Assistant Emily Morry, under the direction of Ridarsky. They attended the unveiling, as did Finn, Pepe, and Library Director Patty Uttaro.
• Finn presented two talks for students in the Rochester City School District’s Office of Adult & Career Education Services (OACES): “Greetings from Rochester: Exploring the Past Through Postcards” and “The Turbulent History of the Rochester Subway.” These were the second and third in a series of four presentations Finn is scheduled to give at this facility this season. An offshoot of these presentations has been an effort to sign OACES students up with MCLS library cards with support from the library’s Outreach and Circulation departments.

• Librarian II Jay Osborne hosted a visit from a class of RIT students that was researching a group of Federal Period (1800–1865) buildings in Monroe County. Though many of the resources they needed could be accessed online, the professor wanted the class to have the experience of physically handling the maps, directories, and monographs they needed to consult.

• Ridarsky attended the 2018 Researching New York Conference in Albany where she participated as a panelist in two sessions. The first, “No Soil Better: Frederick Douglass at 200 in Rochester,” focused on the City’s yearlong, citywide celebration of the bicentennial of Douglass’s birth. Ridarsky’s paper explored the significance of the 1895 statue of Douglass, the first public monument in the nation to honor an African American, in the context of recent debate over the removal of Confederate monuments in the South. She also participated in a panel discussion organized by State Historian Devin Lander entitled “History’s Relevance: A Discussion on Articulating the Value of the Historical Enterprise,” during which she discussed ways of engaging and representing underrepresented populations in public history endeavors, focusing on the outreach work she’s been doing in preparation for the upcoming Stonewall: 50 Years Out exhibition.

• Finn represented the library at the Frameless Symposium at the Rochester Institute of Technology, which focused on how educators, librarians, and museum professionals can use new developments in Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR), collectively identified as “XR” technology, to better serve their audiences.

• Finn consulted with a teacher and students at Monroe High School who are planning an entry in the FFRPL local National History Day contest in February.

• Ridarsky and Finn attended the culminating event for the citywide celebration of the 200th anniversary of Frederick Douglass’s birth, “Prophet of Freedom: Honoring Frederick Douglass in Word and Song,” at the Hochstein School. The event included a reception with and talk by renowned Douglass scholar David Blight and a premier performance of a piece of music written for Douglass and recently acquired by the University of Rochester Libraries’ Department of Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation.

Collection Development and Maintenance

• Fess processed multiple donations, including a substantial group of Rochester-area trade cards, a collection of World War I era recipe booklets, an album of greeting cards, and a binder full of patent and trademark searches carried out by an unnamed law firm for many Rochester-area businesses in the 1920s and 1930s. He also processed and created accession records for six recently acquired collections, including ledgers kept by Rochester Police Detective William F. Popp and several 19th century diaries written by Rochester-area residents.

• Volunteers Kaye Knoll and Kayla Jackson processed, created accession records, and wrote finding aids for the Frederick W. Townsend collection, the Day family papers, and the Rochester Subway and began working on the Brandon family papers and the O’Connor family papers.

Digital Projects

PT Clerk Veronica Shaw and BOCES intern Ethan McBride finished scanning almost all of our card file indexes. Obsorne and Fess will work with LAS to make them available in a searchable online format over the next few months. The only index that remains to be scanned is the Civil War index. This invaluable, century-old newspaper index had to be restricted about 10 years ago due to the fragility of the paper cards. This
painstakingly created index catalogs the activities of individual soldiers (both during and after the war), and units of every size as recorded in contemporaneous Rochester newspapers. Scanning this will take time and care. The end result will be a searchable database with unparalleled detail from this era and will fundamentally alter the nature of our patrons’ ability to research this period with respect to Rochester related units and personnel.

Rochester Voices
- A new intern, Mason Lezette (RIT), joined the Rochester Voices project this month. Mason will be working under the supervision of Historical Researcher Michelle Finn to develop a digital exhibit on the Erie Canal. Mason put in a total of 25 hours in November.
- Mason Digital, the firm hired to transfer RochesterVoices.org to the WordPress platform last spring, deleted the corresponding Development Site this month, resulting in a problem with missing images that library staff discovered by chance and reported to Finn. This problem is new and separate from the problem of missing/incomplete content resulting from the transfer process. Unlike the initial problem, which has required a thorough review of every piece of content on the site, this recent problem was resolved with relative efficiency once it was discovered and reported.

Social Media
Staff from the Local History and Genealogy Division contributed content for 24 social media posts in November and December: 8 on Twitter, 6 on Facebook, 8 Facebook Events, and 2 blog entries on www.rochistory.wordpress.com. These posts reached 20,058 people, including 7,157 on Facebook, 3,266 on Twitter, and 9,635 on our blog; 423 people engaged with Local History posts on Facebook, 34 on Twitter, 102 on our blog. Morry contributed a one blog entry, “Monorail! Monorail! Monorail!” (11/21/18); Substitute Librarian Christopher Brennan wrote “ABC: The American Brewing Company and Beer Brewing in Rochester, Part 2” (11/15/18).

Anecdotes/Other
They say it’s a small world. Some days in Local History, it gets very small very quickly. One afternoon a young couple came in looking for an obituary or any other information they could find about a Mr. Barry Warner. Mr. Warner died when his son (our patron) was only two years old. After a bit more conversation and poking around in the Democrat & Chronicle we discovered that Barry Warner was the owner of Bear Erectors. The reference librarian helping him at that moment recalled having bought a used truck from Barry almost 30 years ago, and still has it. Though that interaction was brief, our patron was happy to have that vignette relayed. We were able to provide him articles about the company and memorials related to his father’s passing. He headed for the exit, then turned back to ask if we could find any buildings that his father’s company worked on. As it turns out, Bear Erectors was the company that installed the granite facing on the Bausch and Lomb Memorial Building. Our patron was able to walk out the Rundel Memorial Building with a file folder of meaningful articles and admire his father’s contribution to one of the most visited public buildings in the city.

Volunteer/Intern hours
Genealogy docents Stephen Clark, Bob Coomber, Bob Holmes, Pat Southcomb, and Anna Tomasson worked a total of 55 hours in November and December and assisted 13 patrons. In addition, we were assisted by five volunteers (Kevin Allen – 17.5 hours; Kayla Jackson – 36 hours; Karen “Kaye” Knoll – 21.5 hours; Nancy Martin – 12.25 hours; Susan Potera – 3 hours; Ira Srole – 59.75 hours), two college interns (Nicholas Andrusin, SUNY Brockport – 41.75 hours; Mason Lezette, RIT – 25 hours), one intern from Monroe BOCES (Ethan McBride – 72 hours), and one intern from Project SEARCH (Abrianna Brown – 46 hours).
**Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting**

- **Reference:** During the months of November & December, RMC handled 3214 reference questions and 781 non-reference transactions for a total of 3995 questions.
- **Circulation:** RMC circulated 23,787 items or 57% of the Central Library’s total circulation of 42,097 (before renewals from Catalog Plus, Classic Catalog and Telephone are added).
- **Hoopla:** Hoopla circulations totaled 2250: (599 Movies/TV, 882 Audiobooks, 239 Music, 373 eBooks, 161 Comics) 646 patrons used the service during the month, with 58 new users registering and 131 patrons using all seven circs (22%). Average cost was $2.09/item.
- In response to numerous requests, RMC has acquired an 8mm video tape player/recorder with the help of FFRPL. This unit will be added to the Equipment Rental Library for patrons to view their family 8mm videotapes before paying to have them transferred to digital medium. We hope to have the unit in use during January 2019.

**Science & History Division, Jennifer Byrnes reporting**

**Meetings**
- Jennifer Byrnes attended a community breakfast at the MK Gandhi Institute where she met with staff and learned about programs they offer.
- Byrnes also attended the monthly Greater Rochester Coordinated Care Network meeting (GRCN). They have now changed their name to the 360 Collaborative Network.
- Byrnes attended the CASH meeting to learn about the services they will offer when they move in this February.

**Programs**
- The Rochester Regional Health Mobile Mammography Center was at Central the first time this month. Participation was low due to a lack of lead time, but they will come again in January and new marketing strategies were implemented that will hopefully increase attendance.
- Adult LEGO Club - Among the participants were a father and his two teenage daughters; all three really enjoyed themselves. They were visiting from China, so Alla Levi is proud to report that we are sharing what we do on an international level! All participants’ creations will be displayed for the month of December in the Science & History display case.

**Partner Organization Statistics**
- LROC – 67
- Volunteer Legal Services Project – 10
- STI Testing – 11
- 360 Collaborative Network (formerly Greater Rochester Coordinated Care Network) – 1

**Outreach**
- Alla Levi attended the Rochester Educational Opportunity Center’s Annual Health Community Resource Day; she gave out pamphlets highlighting library services and swag. Over 200 people stopped by, picked up library info and chatted about library programs and events. It was a wonderful way of promoting the Central Library!
- Levi conducted a tour for Office of Adult and Continuing Education Services through the Rochester City School District. They were very impressed with all that the Library had to offer and said they will be back.
- Once again, Levi coordinated donations of mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and socks for “The Mitten Tree.” She attached a book to each item and called it "bundle up with a good book." She delivered a total of 200 items and books to The Hillside Children's Center, Special Santa Program, and they were delighted to receive them and said that the children will really enjoy these gifts.

- Steve Nash represented the Central Library at the 2018 Veterans Outreach Center/NY Serves Network Updates and Performance Review. The data review showed that VOC service to US military veteran clients has been increasing by 10% each year since 2016. NY Serves has resolved more than 1,000 veteran issues since its kickoff in October of 2016. NY Serves Upstate has 52 providers in the greater Rochester region, of which Central is one.

Consulting
The Carlson Patent and Trademark Center helped 16 people with Intellectual Property needs this month: 4 in person, 3 by email, 1 by mail, 8 by phone. Kate Meddaugh held office hours at RIT’s Venture Creations Incubator as part of their Ask the Experts program.

Anecdotes
- The division received the American Library Association’s (ALA) American Creed: Community Conversations grant. Central will be one of 50 libraries in the U.S. to participate; it focuses on the PBS documentary American Creed that invites audiences to consider what America's ideals and identity ought to be.
- One of Levi’s Facebook posts for the Central Library was one of the top posts of 2018! It was about the best ice cream in New York State and reached 34,763 people, had 3,034 engagements, including 1,125 comments and had 3,034 post clicks. Now we know that people love ice cream and love to read about where to go for the best ice cream!

Teen Central, Dennis William reporting

Programs
- In December we began the Chess and Ping Pong challenge. Winners of each received a $40.00 gift certificate. The winner of the chess tournament, Dakota, walked home with a beautiful glass chess set.
- Rather than hiding the art supplies on some cart that would only be occasionally pushed out for use, the Teen Center just made the art supplies available to anyone, anytime the Teen Center is open. Results: a lot of GREAT art by kids. Malcolm has been hard at work creating art for the teen center. We got him art supplies and poster board.
ImagineYOU Media Lab, Jeffery Bostic reporting

416 Visitors in November

- Working with the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library, imagineYOU has created and is now maintaining a distrokid account. For the first time the library has provided access for our patron-creators to international stores such as: Apple Music, Spotify, iTunes, Google Play, Amazon, Pandora, Deezer, Tidal, Napster, iHeartRadio, ClaroMusica, Saavn, Anghami, KKBox, and MediaNet. Content created in imagineYOU can be uploaded to the sites. [https://distrokid.com/hyperfollow/rochesterpubliclibrary/fm6I](https://distrokid.com/hyperfollow/rochesterpubliclibrary/fm6I)
- With the help of imagineYOU, this young man now has a complete album and is working on marketing and distributing. This young man is using a stunning photo created by teens using Photoshop as his album cover. This is just an example of the level of creativity among our teens that utilize the space.

Fall Classes
November featured three fall classes; a Photoshop class, a get to know your camera class, and a photography lighting class.

Studio
Joshua Pettinger, CEO of Wicked Squid Studio continues to work one on one with the youth. He has helped a number of teens write and record songs. The studio sign-up list usually has at least two teens signed up per day.

Media Literacy Week
During Media Literacy Week, imagineYOU hosted visitors from Africa who were part of the Integrity in Journalism: New Media and Civic Engagement program. Visitors took a tour of the lab and particularly enjoyed a virtual reality experience on the Oculus Rift and a recording session in the studio.

Photoshop/Cameras

Photoshop and imagineYOU cameras were used for business cards, headshots, and album covers.

The imagineYOU lab was awarded a breakthrough grant by RRLC for funding an E-sports gaming center. We will be purchasing two gaming systems that will allow kids to have access to online streaming and game play.
Outreach/Community Contacts

- Williams attended the YouMedia reflection and reporting three-hour video conference on Wednesday November 14. Sites similar to our imagineYOU Media Lab that had been funded by the MacArthur grant have one meeting a year to discuss direction, answer each other’s issues, and reflect upon best practices.
- Williams met with Diane Bardeen of Action for a Better Community.
- Williams met with Craig Carson who is creating a Mock Trial challenge using KGA and the teen space for consecutive Saturdays in late winter/early spring.
- Williams introduced RYSAS member Meghan to the FFRPL administration. They will be working together through SUNY Geneseo to get books to underrepresented schools that have no funding for literature.
- Also, Williams met with REOC members to interest students in attending the school and for getting free haircuts.

Branch Library Updates

*Assistant Director Tolley Reeves, EdD, reporting*

**Branch Facilities and Operations Plan Update** - On December 18, Patty Uttaro and I gave a short presentation of the *Branch Facilities and Operations Plan* to the City’s Investment Team at City Hall. This presentation was primarily focused on our top funding priorities in the branches. In addition, we presented the plan to the full staff of the City Neighborhood and Business Development Department at the request of Commissioner Baye Muhhamed. I will be scheduling a retreat for all branch staff in February or March to fully discuss the branch plan.

**New York Black Librarians Caucus (BCALA)** - This year the New York Library Association (NYLA) Annual Conference was held in Rochester from November 8-10, 2018. This was my first time meeting members from the New York Black Librarians Caucus (BCALA). As an affiliate of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, BCALA is committed to the professional development, growth of and opportunities for library professionals; to scholarship, mentoring and support of graduate library students; to bridging the digital divide; and to advocate for quality standards and services in school libraries, in special libraries, on college and university campuses and in public libraries serving our communities. I was honored to see other librarians who look like me. RPL Librarians Joan Lee, Shamika Fusco, and Melanie Lewis participated in the BCALA meeting at the Arnett Branch with me. What a treat!
RPL Adult Service - On November 20, I met with most of the RPL Adult Service Librarians to discuss current services, marketing, library trends, and challenges. We also had an opportunity to talk with Xandi DiMatteo, Community Services Librarian about her role with Adult Services. We plan to meet quarterly to share ideas, set goals and explore various program opportunities.

Branch Outreach, Shamika Fusco reporting

Books were distributed to inmates who participated in the Every Child Ready to Read Series taught at the Monroe County Jail. Participants were able to send home a book for the Holiday's to their children.

Anecdotes

- I met Lucienne Nicholson from Woods and Us at a Rotary Club Meeting. The thing that intrigued me about Nicholson is her passion for the outdoors. Her goal is to encourage, educate and expose children of color to the great outdoors. Nicholson and I met and we began to plan future programming in libraries. I spoke to Tonia Burton about Nicholson and she will be working on a future collaboration.
- I met Laurence Forte at the Celebration of Life Community meeting. Forte caught my attention because he spoke of a digital platform that could assist youth with career goals and teach them some softskills to make them employable. When I met with Forte it was a success. I connected him to Dennis Williams and Derrick Coley from Teen Central and they will be instituting the program in the near future.
- Storytime is always a joy to do at #16 school. The kids always look forward to me coming. I try to visit at least twice a month. Below I have included the contents of an email sent by Susan Neal (Teacher at #10 school).

  The Rochester City School District School’s #10 and #2 Pre-K children experience the wonder of stories when Shamika Fusco visits to read to them. Shamika makes the stores come to life with her soft voice and engaging activities including music and movement. Children eagerly await to see what she has brought for them in her bag. Shamika brings literacy activities related to classroom learning including props, stories, musical instruments. She engages the children with her enchanting songs that are easy to learn and join in prior to reading books that are connected to the lessons and learning in the classroom. At the end, she checks for understanding and comprehension by asking each child questions about the story in addition to connecting to children’s prior knowledge. The children look forward to Shamika’s visits with excitement and anticipation. We are very grateful for her commitment to developing children’s literacy by creating a love of learning for books and reading.”

Community Services Librarian, Xandi DiMatteo reporting

- I have spent most of my transition time doing research on my “new to me” demographic. I am focusing on seniors and New Adults. I have found several issues to build a survey around: aging & caregivers, DIY & life hacks, parenting & grand parenting, college & careers, and finance. Within all the categories there are facets to present like: technology, fitness, mindfulness, and social gatherings to build support networks. I compiled a list of games for grown-ups that would facilitate mindful social relationships and were available in a format that included larger text and dexterity aides.
- I have been doing research on current adult programming in libraries, internet resources for programming ideas, and planning approaches to present intentional ideas in engaging ways. Thanks to innovative community programming approaches by Melissa Manczuk in the Art department, I was lucky enough to
assist with a winter craft program at Lifespan. It was a good opportunity to observe things like dexterity and visual needs in older adults.

- I was able to do some outreach at OACES and sign up adults for library cards. Chad Cunningham and his staff processed the applications and sent the cards to our new patrons. I have already been contacted for a return visit to promote branch libraries and unique resources at RPL. It is my hope that my previous work with committees & event planning will be of use in future endeavors serving staff and patrons.

- Christine Stanford and I discussed a current program offered by the YMCA for seniors, Moving Toward Better Balance. The program tracks physical and emotional metrics that indicate improvements in dexterity and personal outlook over a course of 12 weeks. There is a fee. I asked if the length of time might be compressed (yes), and if we could discuss a possible reduced flat fee for a pilot program at one branch. We will meet again to discuss the possibility of a pilot program for the next budget year.

- Marie Brantis from the Office of Adult and Career Education Services reached out to request outreach on Rochester Public Libraries as community and personal resources in February and March. I will also do a segment on research methods and information literacy. My initial discussion with Marie promotes RPL branch services and unique offerings for all ages.

- My primary goal in December was to become a branch library resource to assist with staff coverage needs. I reached out to all branch supervisors to schedule training segments to refresh my public service skills at branch libraries in the months of December and January. I was able to train and assist with coverage at the following branches: Sully Library, Lyell Library and Lincoln Library.

Anecdotal

My last effort at Teen Central was to complete a year’s worth of planning of the Greater Rochester Teen Read. The pinnacle was facilitating various author visits by Laurie Halse Anderson. I was able to connect high school students in Penn Yan with Fairport High School so that they could meet Laurie, which would never have been possible in their consolidated school. I sold books at every MCLS library event, which resulted in the most books sold for GRTR. I was contacted by a former teen patron who has since moved to Virginia.

Ahhhhhhhh!!!!!!!

OH. MY. GOSH!!!! I’m SO glad that I was able to reach you, Ms. Xandi!!!! I’m so excited about Laurie coming to Rochester, and I didn’t expect an inside joke with my Mom to turn into my FAVORITE librarian in THE WHOLE WORLD to hook me up with not only Laurie Halse Anderson’s books, but also her AUTOGRAPH (something that I only got on a pin with her face on it when I was her teen helper for TBF 2016). Thank you sooooooo much; you’re THE best!!! Here is my address: Newport News, VA 23606. (Newport News and Hampton are literally almost one in the same; you can drive into one or the other without even trying to by way of any of our main boulevards *rolls eyes*). Also, I’m pretty sure you still know how to spell my name, but just in case: Tiye’ K. (I’d rather not use my last name because Smith is rather boring, lol.) Anyway, thank you again, Ms. Xandi!!! I hope Mom and I will be able to visit the Roc soon again, and our first stop will be the library!!!!!

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU,

Tiye’ K. Smith, Professional Teen Reader and Full-time Unicorn ♀

She and her mother are tremendous fans of Laurie, and I arranged to send them books that were dedicated to Tiye’.

One of my personal and professional joys is helping people. My experiences with wider community service in branch libraries have given me the pleasure of reconnecting with some of my previous teen patrons from
Central library who are now adults, and in some cases, parents. It is always nice to know that libraries have had positive impacts on their lives at every age, and that they are raising future library lovers!

**Safe To Be Smart Program, Derrick Coley reporting**

- **The Arnett site:** Shetora Banks continues to encourage teen boys and girls to play the variety of video games at Arnett. Banks has added a robot to the Nintendo Switch STEM gaming system. She facilitated an UNO card tournament with snacks as prizes. Banks continues to assist older teens with job readiness skills and job search assistance. She has worked diligently on creating fruitful relationships with the former and current gang members which is having a positive effect on the youth turn-over at the Arnett Branch Library teenspace. New immigrant youth are becoming more frequent visitors to the branch as violence and bullying has been quelled by Banks. Thanks to a generous donation from Patty Uttaro, Banks chaperoned a group of teens to the Hip Hop Nutcracker performance. She provided a holiday movie for the teens with snacks.

- **The Phillis Wheatley site:** Lynnicsha Bostick-Beckford facilitated thankful journals with the Wheatley youth. Youth wrote one or more sentences each day in November on being thankful and then created a journal book. The youth read the folktale called, “Stone Soup.” Afterward, the youth made stone soup in the branch to eat. Bostick-Beckford had youth participate with elderly guests from the Episcopal Nursing Home in an event called, “Charlie Brown Thanksgiving.” The theme was Charlie Brown books and figurines with homemade peanut butter and jelly toasted sandwiches to eat with the elderly guests. Bostick-Beckford honored a Special Olympics young adult winner that has grown up in the teen space. She also facilitated a Play Station 4 basketball tournament for the teens with the new gaming system and assisted with Tween Tuesday Gods Eyes craft session. Students made Gods eye designs using popsicle sticks and colored yarn. In addition, Bostick-Beckford had youth participate in 12-days of Christmas crafts. The youth were given a choice of 12 different crafts each-day to make a gift for someone or themselves. She facilitated the mix and mingle for all the youth in the branch, they ate baked Ziti pasta. Thanks to a generous donation from Patty Uttaro, Bostick-Beckford chaperoned a group of teens to the Hip Hop Nutcracker performance.

- **The Maplewood site:** Mark Dixon continues to meet the STEM demand of the Maplewood youth. The youth ask for the Nintendo LABO robot each day. He continues to solicit youth to complete the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation youth survey for after-school programming. Dixon continues to assist teens with job search assistance and work permits. He has been providing homework assistance to our New American teens and locals. The Maplewood Branch Library has the highest number of teens that utilize the library after-school for homework. Many high school students from Aquinas have been coming into the branch after-school since the former gang presence has been abated by Mark. A student that Dixon has mentored (Ku) came in to show him the Buffalo University acceptance letter she recently received. Dixon conducted a STEM activity using a cardboard roller coaster with marbles to understand motion and kinetic energy.

- **The Lincoln site:** Vera Haygood continues to provide internet assistance to teens and some young adults, along with job search assistance. She provides homework and resume assistance to teens that need help. There is a small group of teen males that are into the ROBLOX online game. She facilitated a teen discussion about college as she is currently an undergraduate student. The teens asked Haygood questions about college classes and the cafeteria food. Haygood collaborated with College Connection from the Rochester College Access Network. The teens got to interact with their staff on all college related questions and information about local colleges and universities. She assisted the YA/librarian with recruiting teens to participate in scavenger hunts using the Dewey decimal system. Thanks to a generous donation from Patty Uttaro, Haygood chaperoned a group of teens to the Hip Hop Nutcracker performance. Haygood continues to provide board games for the teens. The teens have been playing a lot of chess and PlayStation games.
• **The Sully site:** George Carter facilitated a STEM group activity program demonstrating implosion with hot and cold temperatures on aluminum cans. Carter allowed the teen participants to implode their own cans and discuss the results. Carter continues to facilitate the Sully reading group. The teens read paragraphs from the book called, “The First Part Last.” The teens read part of the book in silence and other parts aloud to help their confidence in reading. Carter has been very successful keeping this group reading program together through-out the school year. Also, he provides ongoing gaming, employment and homework assistance to teens. Carter’s father passed away this month, we offered our condolences.

• **Teen Central site:** Lydia Williams-Hylton and John Hylton had teens color on sheets for Christmas Holidays when they became bored or bothered one another. Staff realized this activity calmed them down and they had better conversations with each other. Mrs. Hylton encouraged a group of teens to assist the YA/Librarian Melora Miller with a collage of Marvel Comic pictures at a tribute to Stan Lee, creator of Marvel Comics. John & Lydia facilitated a music contest called “Name That Song” using clips of songs. The participants ate healthy snacks and winners received gift cards for prizes. They held a Thanksgiving Dinner at TeenCentral for Teens that may not have family or even eat a holiday meal. The teens were treated to pizza, wings, sodas and cookies as the feast. John & Lydia represented the library at the new Center for Youth Crisis Nursery on Genesee Park Blvd. They were both thanked for coming by Councilwoman and Executive Director of the Center for Youth, Elaine Spaul. John Hylton has been monitoring truant teens that frequent the library during school hours. Hylton has created a truancy log that has the youths name and the reason the student was not at school. He also contacts the school to verify the teen’s story and reminds them of our library policy on truancy. Hylton assists older teens by giving them information about TASC and organizations nearby like REOC, Urban League and ABC. Also, he has relieved a lot of early morning tension and disruptive behaviors from teenage patrons. Both Williams-Hylton and Hylton facilitated a ping pong tournament with a gift-card prize for Christmas and were thanked by Action for a Better Community for the mentoring that takes place in TeenCentral. Williams-Hylton provided snacks for teens that consistently, “Do the Right Thing” when they are at TeenCentral. The teens assist staff with setting up programs, clean-up, act as positive role models to their peers. Williams-Hylton and Hylton have encountered numerous gang related incidents that they helped to diffuse before they escalated into large brawls during the month of December.

**Arnett Branch, Bruce Tahan reporting**

**Programs**

• Teen Programming was especially strong at Arnett during November. Nancy Cholewa’s Teen Handmade Gifts series has been very successful. She attracted a diverse group of our teen patrons, as well as some of the older children and a few adults. Each week we have teens who participate regularly and a few who are joining us for the first time. It was so popular that Cholewa ran out of supplies at all but one of the programs. She plans for at least 25 projects, but many of our participants ask to make multiple items during the 90 minute program time. Patrons are learning many ways to recycle materials, such as jars, old neckties and metal containers. They also learned how to measure cooking ingredients, such as flour, brown sugar, and white sugar. They also learned the difference between tablespoons and teaspoons and the importance of following the recipe (kitchen chemistry). One project taught basic sewing, including threading a needle, pinning and
whip stitching a seam. The kids are very proud of their finished products and are planning who they can give them to, as they work on the projects. (*Priority #1 Promote learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities*).

- Cholewa and Shetora Banks’ Uno Tournament has been a big success this month. We had over 65 games played and over 30 participants, with 17 winners enjoying the game. We discussed the logistics of taking the Uno Tournament concept city-wide and inviting all the branches and Teen Central to send their top players to a city-wide tournament during the February school break. Cholewa and Banks will be proposing the idea to Derrick Coley, Youth Services Coordinator in the next few weeks.

### Community Outreach/Meetings

- The annual Children’s Book Festival was held at Monroe Community College on Saturday, November 13. Cholewa hosted a table at the event. She had the opportunity to interact with students and provide information about the RPL. She also had the pleasure of talking with several authors of children’s books and providers of children’s programs. She reports that, “It was a fun festive atmosphere that celebrated children’s books and reading in many different ways. Our booth had a children’s book characters wheel for the kids to spin and we gave out several prizes to our eager participants.”
- Cholewa started a Raising a Reader (RAR) program with the Southwest Childcare center in the St. Mary’s complex. She delivered the red bags and books and had a short story time toward the end of October. Cholewa scheduled story times on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Cholewa reports that, “The four-year-old classroom was introduced to RAR as three year olds, so they dove in with great enthusiasm. The three-year-old class is new to the program so they are a little unsure about how the red bags work. They are thrilled to be able to take the books in their bags home and share them with their families. For some families, having and reading books in the home is a new practice. All the children enjoyed our time together during story time and we are all looking forward to our next session together.”
- Cholewa also attended the 19th Ward Community Association’s annual convention where she was able to meet many of our patrons and neighbors. She talked to visitors about our VIP passes, homework help, adult knitting classes, Arnett’s new extended hours on Mondays and Wednesdays, and her new position at the library. It was time well spent for both Arnett Branch Library and the members of the Arnett neighborhood.
- Artist Richmond Futch and I gave a presentation at the New York Library Association’s conference on how friends groups can bring wall art to their libraries.
- I also attended several other community meetings and read stories to children at a Real Men Read Event at ABC Head Start on Jefferson Ave. Rochester NY. I am very grateful to Clerk Colleen Murray, who helped Cholewa and I meet all our Outreach commitments.
- Murray visited School #16 for an evening open house type event where she was able to tell students and their parents about all the Arnett Branch Library has to offer. (*Priority #1c: Expand our visible presence in our communities*).

### Charlotte Branch, Paul Tantillo reporting

**Staffing**

- We’ve had several staff changes during the month of November, though fortunately we haven’t lost any of our crew. First, long-time clerk Ann Marie Buonemani resigned her position. She’s studying to be a radiologist and starting this semester her coursework will get very demanding. She felt she could best meet the challenge by letting her library job go. As luck would have it, we had an open page position that is funded at just a few hours a week, and I was able to offer it to her. She accepted, and so we get to keep her unique skill set (she’s a trained artist), her years of experience and her excellent rapport with neighborhood
patrons. She, in turn, gets to make a little money and stay connected with the library she loves while still having time and energy to devote to her studies.
- We've hired our former literacy aide Yamilet Torres to fill the clerk position vacated by Buonemani. Torres was a standout in our interviews. She’s proven herself to be a creative, gifted, cooperative and responsible worker, and I was happy to offer her a chance for advancement in the library. In addition, she’s fluent in Spanish and knowledgeable about Caribbean Arts and culture. These are valuable skills in and out. Since Hurricane Maria, we’ve seen a small but noticeable increase in the number of patrons whose first language is Spanish and who need a qualified Spanish speaker to assist them.
- Finally, Adult librarian Karen Duff landed a part-time reference librarian job at Brighton Library, where she’d been working as a circulation aide. We were able to accommodate some schedule changes for her without much difficulty, and so at last she’s working solely as a librarian. Between the two jobs her schedule is still very demanding, but she’s at last been able to let her third job...a position in retail... go. Congratulations to Duff!

Meetings
On November 20, we were pleased to host the first meeting of the RPL, Adult Librarians group. This is a group convened by Dr. Reeves to offer the adult librarians a chance to share ideas and brainstorm solutions to common problems. The group will probably meet quarterly. The turnout was great, and the meeting had a lot of energy. Duff and I were in attendance. Duff shared this feedback: “I found our time together at the first meeting informative and encouraging. It’s so easy to lose sight of the whole enchilada and feel isolated and out of touch working in one’s own little branch. Getting together with peers reignites the excitement of doing this work.” (Priority #3 Stewardship and Curation: Develop, support and appreciate staff).

Services
On November 29, we had a Health Care Navigator on the premises to assist people in signing up for medical insurance through the Affordable Care Act. We were surprised at the turnout. The navigator was here for four hours and in that time assisted 6 clients. This is a much better response than we got when we had navigators here shortly after the ACA was first made law. We’ll have a navigator back in December and in January. Thanks go to Jennifer Byrnes of the Central Science & History Division for setting this up. (Priority #2 Sustainability and Resources: Provide access to an evolving variety of collections, programs, services and technologies based on community need).

Professional Development
Both Duff and Children’s Librarian Whittemore were able to attend NYLA this year. This was the first time either librarian had attended and they both found the experience worthwhile and invigorating. Duff lunched with some librarians from the Geneva Public Library. She mentioned to them that we’re providing curbside service. Says Duff: “One of the librarians declared ‘Of all that I’ve listened to so far, this is the best thing I’ve heard all weekend!’ She was jazzed about the idea.” In addition, Whittemore reports “The highlight of the month was the opportunity to attend the NYLA conference here in Rochester. As a NYLA Navigator volunteer, I wore a button with a big question mark so I could help other attendees with questions. The most often-asked question was ‘Why are you wearing that button?’ She also helped out at the STEM Roundtable booth, where they had a Breaker space they created [a Breaker space is an activity that allows participants to take objects apart to see their components and how they work]. Whittemore had so much fun with that station that she scheduled a Breaker space activity for our December Science Fun night.” (Priority #3 Stewardship and Curation: Develop, support and appreciate staff).
Programs

- We had a few fun activities in the Children’s Room this month. Whittemore borrowed a giant chess set from Central, and it proved quite popular with patrons. Especially gratifying were the inter-generational games – grandfather teaching grandson, mother versus child, teen volunteer teaching tweens.
- Later in the month, she held her 3rd Annual Charlie Brown Thanksgiving that featured a screening of the cartoon film, and the traditional Charlie Brown Thanksgiving feast – popcorn, pretzels, jellybeans and burnt toast. It was a snowy night and attendance was less than in past years, but those who came had a good time, and one mom reported the next day that her child couldn’t stop talking about the burnt toast. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement, Promote learning, provide fun and deliver creative and innovative experiences for our diverse population).
- Children’s activities, of course, were at the forefront of our offerings. Whittemore was especially enthused about her December science activity. She held a “breakerspace”, an idea she picked up at the Fall NYLA conference. Breakerspaces play off the popular concept of “makerspaces.” A makerspace is a space or activity where people learn to use physical and virtual tools to develop creative projects. A breakerspace, conversely, is a space or activity where participants use tools to disassemble things and see what they’re made of. The kids, under close supervision, took apart non-working, donated objects including a Buzz Lightyear toy, a computer and a keyboard. A total of 70 screws were removed from the disassembled stuff! (Priority #1 Every RPL location addresses the unique needs of their community).

Anecdotes

- December was a fairly routine month at Charlotte, with patrons’ attention being taken up by holiday concerns. As usual we were blessed with an abundance of treats from patrons and Administration. Special thanks to Patty Uttaro for the beautiful home-baked cookies, and to Dr. Reeves for the chocolates. Our staff runs on sugar!
- Also, in December, Whittemore received this very affirming email from a recently divorced dad: “Thanks also for doing what you do. The kids’ mom and I are going through a tough time, and it’s been hard learning to be a single dad half the time with no family or anything around. You guys are always there and do a great job and the kids love playing and learning there. You’re appreciated!”

Frederick Douglass Community Library, Erin Clarke reporting

Programs

- The Rochester Childfirst Network (RCN) class that walks to library for story time is always excited about visiting the library. This month though with the change to colder temperatures, the kids seemed more active and talkative. It was a little difficult to get through our normal three stories and songs. Ngo has had to adapt based on what is happening each session, but the kids are always enjoyable to have in the library. The two classes she visits at RCN are always fun. The three-year-old class is also very active, so she only reads two stories and they dance a lot. Ngo has been adding in music CDs so she doesn’t lose her voice. The four-year-old class is sometimes ready for her and sometimes not. One visit resulted in no story time for them because the class was having some behavioral issues, so the teacher passed on having stories that day. Ngo is always open to doing what is best for the class and helping the teachers.
  - Total Participation: 109
  - Total Afterschool Library Users for our kid’s space: 795
  - Total Number for Homework Help: 210
  - Total Number of Rec Participation: 69
The turnout for the Washi Eggs Program with Linda Bowers was high for our recent adult programming options. People were happy with the workshop and made beautiful eggs. One of my regular patrons attended and went out of her way to thank me. She mentioned she’s been having a rough year and she enjoyed being able to relax and make something for herself. We were able to hold this program in the shared space on a Saturday! This is the first time in three years we’ve been able to access the shared space without setting off the alarm.

Ngo and I met with Chuck Hazlett, Urban Sports Coordinator for the YMCA on December 27, in order to discuss a possible partnership. Although he is primarily based at the Maplewood branch, the YMCA is looking to expand their community involvement throughout the city with effort dedicated to assisting children ages 5 to 12. We have two Fitness Friday programs arranged and tentatively scheduled for the end of January and end of February, and we’ll assess how they go to determine what other programs to offer. These programs would utilize the shared space, have room for both library and Douglass R-Center children, and all equipment is provided by the YMCA. The Y is also utilizing their trained and certified staff to run the program, and library staff will monitor the room and the behavior of the kids who are participating. (Priority #1c: Expand our visible presence in our communities.)

The Story Book Cook, Liz Bauld, visited the library and the kids made graham cracker gingerbread houses. Bauld provided all the yummy ingredients such as graham crackers, frosting, candy and even different cereals for decoration. The frosting was to be used as the “glue” to hold everything together. Some creations were very detailed and crafty while some kids did their best and just wanted to get to the eating! Everyone had a very yummy and delicious time. All fun with food comes with cleaning up and some of the kids even assisted with the vacuuming and wiping down of the tables.

On New Year’s Eve Miss Caitlyn ended the year with activities and snacks with the kids. Stahovic put out supplies to make a New Year’s hat. She printed out a template for coloring and decorating. With the help of tape, glue and yarn the kids made hats. Anyone who stopped in could also sit and color or take coloring sheets home to help with the midnight wait. Throughout the day Miss Caitlyn and the kids watched Disney movies. Miss Caitlyn let the kids pick, but Disney seemed to be with winner. Cinderella started the day off followed by Snow White and then Radio Rebel, a movie seen on the Disney Channel. Snacks of cookie bars and brownie bars were enjoyed with a choice of berry juice or fruit punch.

Lincoln Branch, Sarah Lehman reporting

Staffing
We are still in the process of searching for and hiring a new children’s librarian. We worked with the Toy Library to have children’s librarians from other branches come in to conduct story times for two separate UPK groups that were visiting. The story times were wonderful and we appreciate the assistance from our peers while we are still looking for staff! Our literacy aides have done a wonderful job of continuing to offer craft activities and programs for children visiting the library throughout November. (Note from Patty: We were not successful in hiring a FT bi-lingual children’s librarian, so the position Sarah mentions above was reclassified to a FT bi-lingual library assistant, which does not require the MLS. The plan is to hire someone who meets the qualifications of the library assistant position and has experience working with children, then work with the successful candidate to pursue the MLS.

Toy Library
• In November, we welcomed field trips from RCSD UPK classes. A total of four classes visited. Thanks to two substitute librarians, Lincoln Branch was able to offer story time as well as play time to two of the classes.
• We featured some new toys in November, Magic Trax and two large size horses. Both were well enjoyed by patrons.
• The Toy Library received a $200 donation through FFRPL. The Toy Library staff shopped at Once Upon a Child and found a huge array of gently used toys to enhance the collection as well as our stay and play centers. We also received numerous donations of used toys from patrons and people from the broader community.
• We featured remote control Geotrax trains for the month which delighted our patrons. We like to focus on trains around the holidays.
• We also had a holiday themed bulletin board where we invited patrons to make suggestions about additional toys they would like to see in our collection. We received many suggestions and were pleased to see that patrons wanted more topics in our Play and Learn backpack sets.
• Speaking of backpack sets, we used some of our budget to complete the remaining unfinished backpack sets. We had two kindergarten classes visit from School #58. They had a wonderful time.

Other Programs
• YA Librarian Jacob Bigelow conducted a Resume and Working Papers Program: We had a lower turnout than we were aiming for with this program, however, has noted it was a resounding success as not only were the teens involved able to get copies of working papers applications, they were educated about the importance of a positive social media presence. This is something that Ms. Vera and Bigelow always try to hammer home: your social media is not private and everyone from your employer to your school check to see what you are posting. From the reactions Bigelow received, this came as a surprise.
• During the month of November, Bigelow proctored two exams and took several calls regarding this service. Our two smaller rooms have been perfect for these purposes. One of his teens, Norris, is an avid artist and designer. Bigelow managed to pique his interest in the Roc Art program and wrote him a glowing letter of recommendation. While he did receive an interview for one of the openings he was ultimately turned down. We were all disappointed but very proud of Norris‘ accomplishment and have already planned to apply again next year. (#1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.)

Outreach
Lincoln Library Staff were able to attend the Joseph Ave Business Associations annual holiday party. We were able to bring close to 200 books wrapped in holiday paper to give out to families as a Christmas gift. It was a wonderful event that we enjoyed very much! (Priority #1c: Expand our visible presence in our communities.)

Anecdotes/Other
We had great exposure on Facebook after posting a link to an Atlantic Magazine article entitled "Every City Needs a Toy Library." Although we weren't mentioned in the article, it provided a great review of the origin of the Toy Library concept in the United States. The posting reached 3391 people, received 48 likes and was shared 26 times.
Lyell Branch, Pat Connor reporting

Programs
- Lyell staff has recently been welcoming a group of teens into the library on an almost daily basis. All males, the guys have “discovered” our computers and will spend hours playing games with each other. There have been challenges and we have been working with them to accommodate their computer needs along with the needs of our other patrons. Staff has had many discussions with the boys and it was decided to make the computers in the Southwest corner of the library for teen use only during afterschool hours and on days that school is not in session. We also moved a computer from the Children’s area to that area in order to give the teens four computers for their use. Ten additional computers were designated adult use only. Furniture was also rearranged. Thanks to Jim Whittemore for his assistance with this project. This is a work in progress—we’ll be watching activity and making adjustments if necessary. *Priority #1 - Education and Engagement*

- The monthly produce distribution continues to be popular with over 30 families being served in both October and November. The Lyell Branch staff thanks the many volunteers from the Lyell Otis Neighborhood Association, library patrons, and the Flower City Pickers for all the hard work in getting this program up and running each month. This month’s food celebrations included Cookie Monster’s Birthday on November 4th and the Last Friday of the Month Coffee and Cookie Afternoon. Patrons took advantage of the opportunity to warm up with a cup of coffee and conversation. *Priority #1 - Education and Engagement*

Community Outreach/Meetings
- Students in three Pre-K classes at School #17 were given library card registration forms by Connor, at her monthly classroom visits. Connor will be giving children who return the forms their library cards when she returns to the classes in December. They will also be given a calendar of events happening at Lyell in December. *Priority #2 - Sustainability and Resources*

Anecdotes/Other
- The Lyell Branch staff and patrons were pleased to be the recipients of several gifts during the month of December. Long-time patron Alan D. gifted us with a wreath which we displayed on the outside of the library. Ann D., who is also a volunteer with the Produce Distribution program, made hats and head warmers to be distributed to our patrons. The congregation of the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Greece designated the Lyell Library as the recipient of their December mission project and sent hats, gloves, and scarves.
- Lyell once again said farewell to a staff member in December. Baker accepted a full-time position at the Irondequoit Public Library. We wish her well and thank her for all she has contributed to the library in her tenure here. We welcomed Cadeeja Tanksley, Literacy Aide on December 11.
- Cherelin, has written over 60 referral letters for Lyell Branch Library patrons, expressing their need for a bicycle for either transportation or exercise to take to R Community Bikes to receive a free bicycle. Many thanks to the dedicated volunteer staff at R Community Bikes for making this possible.
Maplewood Community Library, Johann Buran reporting

Programs

- November story time’s themes were Thanksgiving, turkeys, and the coming winter. LEGO lab continues to be a favorite as the children, tweens and teens like to build and create unique arrangements. Coloring pages featuring turkeys were popular. There were several conversations about what a cornucopia was and the traditions of Thanksgiving. During the two days off for Thanksgiving the children, tweens and teens watched two movies. The favorite movie was Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation. When asked, one of the kids told us it was the funniest movie ever. (Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.)

- Homework help continues to be very busy. We have hired two new literacy aides. One of the literacy aides took part in the Rochester City School District Summer Literacy aide program. She did an excellent job during the summer, so we were pleased to hire her on a permanent basis. The second literacy aide is a student at Aquinas Institute. She had volunteered last year and came back to do more hours. We were impressed with her work with the children and were happy to have her as one of our new literacy aides.

- The Story Book Cook, Ann came to visit Maplewood to make graham cracker gingerbread houses. This was popular last year and was popular again this year. The children and teens could create unique gingerbread houses using graham crackers, candies and lots of icing. Some made fancy houses while others ate the candy and the icing. Many of the teens who created gingerbread houses were more detailed and made more elaborate gingerbread houses. The teens enjoyed this, requested it be repeated, and are looking forward to doing it again next year.

- The children, tweens, and teens had a New Year’s Eve party at noon. Since we couldn’t stay open until midnight we celebrated at noon. We had a countdown, there were games and we talked about one of their favorite things that happened in 2018. They declared that their favorite part of the party was the pizza.

- Representatives from the Southeast and Northwest Neighborhood Service Centers came to speak to patrons about services available to them as a resident of the City of Rochester. They discussed ways to report issues and as a way to teach about the process for reporting issues was to call the 311 Call Center and “walk through” the steps of making a report.

- For the adults we held be an informed voter program. The League of Women voters explained the voting process to new voters using sample ballots. They also provided guides to the offices and candidates up for election and listings of current representatives. Eight people attended but the materials were used in subsequent ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) classes and with general public. One person who would not have voted due to the feeling of being uninformed said they would vote after receiving the materials provided.

Outreach/Meetings/Other

- Evanna DiSalvo visited RRRS (Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services) to speak English with the Nepali women who sew there. She worked and made herself useful and took apart a small bag that needed to be
remade. She brought them a page of ten sewing words with pictures. The three women who were there could all read them. (*Priority #1c: Expand our visible presence in our communities.*)

- DiSalvo resumed instruction at Wachuku Foundation which is a not-for-profit organization to help people get out of poverty by providing English classes and job training to prepare for job placements.
- DiSalvo also met with Nasos Mihalakas, the new internship coordinator for UNAR (United Nations Association of Rochester). They will be starting the internship program again in January. He was happy to hear about the opportunities we can offer the college interns. We explored the idea of using them for outreach and tutoring as well as assisting with classes. It will be great to have this resource available again.

**Anecdotes**

Pilapa Esara presented preliminary findings from the “Supporting Adult Refugee Students Project” to Disalvo, four volunteer teachers, and four students. Many of the findings were as expected but still provided food for thought. She found that students are satisfied with our teachers; they praised patience, learning goals are varied—speaking, reading, writing, citizenship, social factors are important and childcare and transportation issues are barriers to attending. Pilapa will share the entire collection of comments with us soon but recounted a few ideas she remembered. She told us that students like repetition, they would like to know what they missed when not here and continuity is important.

Things from this study to think about are:

- How can we better support the language and adaptation needs of our clients?
- In what ways could outreach and service delivery be enhanced to better support our mission?
- What is our role within the local landscape of service providers and advocates?

**Monroe Branch, Mary Clare Scheg reporting**

**Programs**

- Birthday Book Club continues strong! Here’s Jacob (member since 2014) with his postcard and the book he picked out.
- Teen Librarian, Rebecca Hudson had a *Celebrate in Color* program! Holiday coloring sheets and colored pencils set up on the table in the Teen Space. Hudson had several book displays throughout November and December.
- Musical Monday: On November 19, we were entertained by the beautiful sound of the Chinese Lute called the Pipa. Classically trained, Leah Ou has devoted herself to musical exploration and is working to bridge the gap between traditional Chinese folk and American music. We had an audience of about 14 people which was good on a cold night. (*Priority #1B Promote learning and provide fun, creative & innovative educational experiences for our diverse community.*)
- First Friday: On Nov. 2, we held another First Friday coffee hour. These coffee hours are a nice way for staff and patrons to get to know one another. We had 39 people enjoy coffee and cookies that day. This month we followed up with a “Saturday Social” on Nov. 3 and 31 people attended.
- We had two musical performances in December. On December 3, Gretchen came and played classical and early 1900’s music on the flute. It was lovely. On Dec. 17, Rob & Mike played a variety of songs with acoustic guitars and vocal harmonies.
- Our YA fiction items that had not circulated for the past four years were examined and most were removed from the collection. Some items were not located, which allowed us to begin the process to declare those books lost.
**Outreach**

We continue to grow our association with the New Beginnings School. We are saving books for their Leisure Reading Bookcase, and in December will begin to present a series of coding classes with the students. The school has also expressed a strong interest in being involved with Monroe Reads to End Racism. Rebecca Hudson visited the New Beginnings School on December 6 and did introductory presentations on Scratch coding for two classes. Scratch is a program developed by MIT and available online that enables students to use simplified coding to create their own video games. Students who are interested will sign up to take classes with me at the library. Due to RCSD schedules, the classes will not begin until the end of January at the earliest.

**Anecdotes/Other**

- We worked with Andy Carey from LROC to help a patron get another set of apartment keys. The patron was unable to get back into his apartment and had been sleeping out during that cold spell. He came to the Monroe Branch to get help. He no longer had a phone and no way to reach Carey. Between the phone and sending urgent e-mails back and forth, I was able to advise Carey of the situation and relay this help to our patron. This is a very positive collaboration between our Branch and LROC. My hope is that this can be expanded upon in the future. Carey is always responsive when we have an emergency like this one.

- Scheg was asked to judge some Christmas decorations in the Lock 66 neighborhood. They have a contest to see who has the prettiest decorations. Clerk Cherrin Arnold and Scheg navigated around these side streets off of Monroe Avenue to view the decorations. It was a very rainy night which added to the challenge of identifying the specific house numbers. Their mission was to find 3 houses that had done a really good job in decorating in a colorful and unique way. They found them!

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

**Programs**

- We had another fun and successful Gingerbread House program this month. Sully staff worked hard to make 150 kits full of graham crackers, frosting and candy! Children, teens and families enjoyed building festive houses and nibbling along the way. Thanks to our generous donors, and help from the Rec staff, we were able to host a very successful program that made a lot of kids very happy. Jennifer Nesbitt used the leftover kits to host a second program the week before Christmas with another 17 kids. The second program happened to occur on pajama day at school, so the kids got to enjoy creating their gingerbread houses while wearing warm and comfortable pajamas. What a perfect combination!

- Sully staff came together to help Nesbitt run a Christmas ornament craft program. Supplies were purchased for three separate ornaments: reindeer, Santa hats and Christmas trees. Kids made some really cute ornaments to take home and give as gifts or hang on their own trees.

- After assisting a 10th grade patron with their homework regarding *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, Tim Ryan decided to have a reading program with a few of the 10th grade teens at the Sully Branch where they read selected portions of *The Crucible* and discussed some of the intricacies of the story. Although only one teen had asked for assistance regarding their Crucible homework assignments, many of the teens who participated in the reading program stated at the end that it really helped them gain a better understanding and provided them with additional perspective in respect to some of the more complex areas of the book, especially as it relates to the power and authority structures present in the story and how that shapes the dynamics of the community portrayed in *The Crucible*. *(Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.)*

- Ryan continues to engage in technology programming for young adults at the Sully Branch Library. We also continue to utilize virtual reality technology as we have for the past two years as a means of providing...
entertaining and educational programming. It is used to enhance the current school curriculum and provide a greater and more in-depth understanding of various topics and subjects’ young adults are learning in school. This month, the teens at the Sully Branch experienced Assassins Creed Origins Discovery Tour. The Discovery Tour virtual reality mode of this game allows participants to explore, discover, and interact with the environment of Ancient Egypt free from the conflict that exists in the standard gameplay of Assassins Creed Origins. The teens really enjoyed this virtual reality experience and they were not only able to have fun, but they also learned a few things as well about the history and culture of Ancient Egypt. (Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.)

Meetings/Trainings/Community Outreach

- Heinlein attended the Beechwood Neighborhood Association meeting in November. I brought a cart of library books for the child care service. This was requested by the Neighborhood Association, and they reported that they are happy with this arrangement.
- Staff from the School #33/YMCA afterschool program visited the library and spoke to Heinlein about their need for having a book club. We discussed a few books, and they decided on Last Stop on Market Street. Holds were placed on books and a copy of the book video. Staff brought students in the program to the library to watch the movie and discuss the book. The staff expressed gratitude to be able to use the library for this purpose, and they said they would like to work with us to provide more book clubs in the future.
- Nesbitt had an “I Am Thankful For…” program right before Thanksgiving. Kids were given a paper with a turkey and the words “I Am Thankful For” and were asked to write what they are thankful for. They wrote some really sweet things and some funny things, too. One child simply wrote, “Internet and plumbing!” Most children said they are thankful for life, family, mom, grandparents, pets and friends. We hung all the thankful papers up on our wall behind the circulation desk for patrons to read.

Anecdotes/Other

- A very funny and memorable interaction Nesbitt had with a child this month was on the Monday after Thanksgiving break. This boy asked where she was the day after Thanksgiving since he wanted to see her. She responded that she wanted to see him too but she had the day off. The boy then asked innocently, “because you were still full?” The kids at Sully keep us laughing daily with the things they say.
- As a librarian one never knows what the next question will be. One day Heinlein was asked who the tallest person in the group was. A tape measure could not be located, so the children stood next to each other for a photo. We all looked at the photo to figure out who the tallest was. We did have some discussion on the height of someone’s boots, but in the end we all agreed on the tallest in the bunch.
- Sightings of our painted rocks still show up on our Sully Library Rocks Facebook page from time to time. In November someone found one of our rocks in Perinton. This rock was painted by an adult in one of our previous adult rock painting programs.
- An individual came in to the library to ask for resume assistance. She had a job interview the next day and was asked to bring a resume with her. While she can speak English well, it is not her first language, and she sometimes has difficulties with the written part. She was very worried about not being able to get her resume done in time for her interview, and she did not want to go to the interview unless she had the requested resume. Heinlein assisted her in putting together a resume, and she was very relieved she had the needed document. She did go to the interview the next day, and she did get the job.
- Another memorable interaction this month involved one of our regular adult patrons. She comes in a few times a week with her children to check out movies and play in the children’s area, and we’ve gotten to know her over the past year. She was very upset when she stopped in one day and asked Nesbitt if she could
use the library phone to call her father. Her phone ran out of minutes and she needed to call him at the hospital after finding out he was admitted and had cancer. After tearfully making the call and speaking to her father, she expressed so much gratitude for being able to use our phone, stating she was not sure if her father would survive much longer. What was striking about this situation was that in her panicked state, she still thought to walk over to the library for help. It wasn’t that she knew we would have a phone... it was that she knew we would be willing to let her use it and give her a kind word and a hug before she left.

- One day after school, a regular young patron came hopping in to the library. He went up to the desk where Carmen Gonzales was sitting and said, “the thing that makes me the most happy in life is to come in here and see you sitting at the desk”.

- Tim Ryan decided to assist a few of our younger patrons at the Sully Branch Library that were in need during Christmas time. First, a family that uses the library every day and includes 4 teens and 4 children had been discussing wanting a video game system for their home. They all use the library every day for the computers and for our DVDs, and books. Ryan overheard them discussing asking Santa for a gaming system for Christmas, but that they didn’t think they would get one since they have asked in previous years. Ryan realized he had an old Nintendo Wii system in his basement, so he contacted the kids Aunt and asked her permission to give the kids the gaming system for Christmas. She said that would be great and she thanked Ryan for being so good to her family. Ryan then brought in his Wii system and gave it to the kids who were very excited and happy. Ryan also noticed that one of Sully’s every-day patrons puts a lot of holds on Wii U games. Ryan asked this patron if he was interested in having his old Wii U game systems to keep, and the patron replied with an excited “Yes.” Just another small example of what Sully is about and that we are a family, staff and patrons alike.

**Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Lori Frankunas reporting**

**Programs**

- The November Mix and Mingle menu was homemade turkey pot pie and sweet potato pie. The teens were very thankful, especially because Ms. Nyshia is a great cook!

- 30 day Thankful Journal Program- Teens filled out sheets of what they were thankful for during the month. At the end of the month, the journals were put together so the Teens who did them could keep them.

- Frankunas collaborated with the Children’s librarian on an intergenerational program called It’s a Charlie Brown Thanksgiving. Based on our outreach with the Episcopal Nursing home, we managed to have a group of seniors in addition to Kiwanis to participate in the event. One of our favorite moments out of the event was when a senior who appeared to be suffering from dementia expressed to the writer that she enjoyed the event, and held up one of the yellow jelly beans on her plate, and proceeded to tell me “I think I like these” as her face lit up with excitement in trying the different colored jelly beans that she was given. Many seniors began engaging in conversations about school with the children and sharing their own personal experiences. (Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.)

- A yearly tradition in November, we made Stone Soup with the help of Reverend Lori Staubitz from the Montgomery Center. This year we had more of the older tweens and teens join us. We filled the library with
the smell of this delicious soup. Since all the children, tweens and teens helped to make the soup, they all stayed to get a taste of it. Yummy!

- Children have been improving so much with the help from Miss Charly, the tutor at Phillis Wheatley Community Library. They are using strategic and critical thinking to help them succeed. In honor of their hard work and dedication we gave them a party and certificates to show them how much they improved. We are measuring progress from the start of the semester to the end of the year.

**Anecdotes/Other**

- An elderly patron came in with some mail she had received. She didn’t understand what she had to do and came to the library for help. She said “I know I can come to the library and get the truth.” We helped her decipher the letter and she left with a better understanding of what she needed to do.

- Gateway Music Festival Presents The Gateway Brass Collective at Wheatley. The Gateway Music Festival’s mission is to connect and support professional classical musicians of African descent and enlighten and inspire communities through the power of performance. An older Lady from the Episcopal Nursing home thanked Staff for having the Gateway Brass collective perform at Wheatley. She shared that this is the second performance their nursing home has been to this year within the library, and that they enjoyed listening to a professional performance. Another elderly woman from the Episcopal Nursing home shared some of her history, stating that she used to be a trumpet player and that due to her age she has not performed within the last 5 years, but that she really enjoyed attending the performance because it was an activity that she was able to connect with and relate too. (*Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.*)

- Tequan entered the library on November 6, thinking that he would be able to vote at Wheatley. Tequan expressed an interest in identifying a voting location since this was his first time voting. Staff proceeded to identify a voting location close to Tequan’s residence. He was provided with a map and directions to get to Mt. Olive’s Baptist church. With a huge smile on his face, Tequan returned to the library after voting to inform staff that he voted by showing staff his I voted sticker.

- Kwanzaa was really special this year. Reenah Golden was the coordinator for Phillis Wheatley Library and she put together a fun program for Ujima. There were drummers, dancers and speakers from the community. Children created art to put in the Story walk. Lots of people showed up and it was a true community event. (*Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.*)

**Winton Branch, Kathy Wolf reporting**

**Programs**

- Mayukwa from Building Families First was an engaging speaker who connected with both the children and the adults to his culture. He is originally from Zambia and goes home often. He told of how when he is in Zambia a popular delicacy is caterpillars, and when he talks to his American friends about that, they are rather grossed out. When he talks to his Zambian friends about Americans loving to eat shrimp, they get grossed out. Kathy Wolf thought this was a great way to make young children understand about cultural differences. We did a lot of drumming and singing and dancing. At the end he let all the kids play his drum. Everyone participated! (*Priority #1 Promote Learning and provide fun, creative and innovative educational experience our diverse communities.*)
On New Year’s Eve we hosted a Make a Noisemaker program that lasted all day. We had quite a group industriously working on their noisemakers. Everyone seemed to have fun and will be sure to keep their parents up half the night with their creations.

For this month’s book discussion for the Friday afternoon group, we discussed *Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton. We always pick one classic title and the group enjoyed the book very much. With a smaller group, the discussions become more personal with members sharing personal anecdotes that Pat Finnerty doesn’t think they would necessarily share within a larger group.

Our Monday evening group discussed *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance. People had very strong opinions about this book and the subject of poverty. Many of the members have a background in social services and felt strongly that we, as a society, need to do everything we can do help people in need. We discussed ways we can help within the Rochester community.

Community Outreach/Meetings

The Browncroft Neighborhood Association used the library’s meeting room for their bimonthly board meeting, of which Wolf is now a member. One of the items discussed was how can the two organizations support each other. The library can host these meetings, which are held on the second Tuesday every other month. The BNA can post our program brochure on their website and add our events to Nextdoor.com. They are also writing a letter in support of the controversial gate across the parking lot when we are closed.

Wolf was approached by Carolyn Keeler, the School Librarian at #12 School to provide library information at a table at their Math and Literacy night on December 12, from 5:30-7pm. It was a fun evening, where we distributed library card applications, reading lists, and Tangram sets and some picture/puzzles that people could create with their tangram sets. She was stationed just across the hall from Carolyn’s spot and down the hall from Santa himself! The evening was not as well attended as everyone expected, so there was ample time to chat with Carolyn, and we decided that come spring, Wolf might be able to come to the school for some presentations. We talked about how we might want to present to kids of different ages. It sounded like it would be a lot of fun. This is a very exciting prospect!

Anecdotes/Other

A gentleman came into the library who needed math skills books to help him with his upcoming nursing exam. We had several books to help him brush up on his skills. Pat Finnerty asked him to come back and let us know how he did on his exam.

Finnerty also helped a Russian immigrant who just moved to Rochester with his resume. He was applying for a machinist position and was very grateful to receive the help from the library.
**Selected Meetings & Outputs, November 11 - January 18 (Uttaro)**

**Standing Meetings**
- Brie Harrison; Sally Snow; Ana Suro – one-to-one meetings (monthly)
- Tolley Reeves - one-to-one meetings (bi-weekly)
- FFRPL Executive Director Ned Davis (monthly)
- City Chief of Staff, Alex Yudelson (monthly)
- City Senior Management Team (monthly)
- Monroe County Assistant County Executive, Michael Molinari (monthly)
- Central Library All-Staff Meeting (monthly)
- MCLS System Services and Operations Committee (monthly)
- New York State Library – Department of Library Development conference call (monthly)
- Public Library System Directors’ Organization (PULISDO) conference call (monthly)
- RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)

**Other**
- City Budget Director Chris Wagner, Budget Analysts Suzanne Warren & Sarah Boyce, Brie Harrison
- Children’s Agenda Brigit Hurley
- Monroe County Rec & Ed Committee Budget Hearing
- Monroe County Legislature Budget Hearing
- Reynolds Board Meeting
- Wicked Squid Studio’s Josh Pettinger, Dr. Reeves, FFRPL staff, and imagineYou staff
- NYS Census Information Session
- Greater Rochester Quality Council Quality Training for Leaders
- GRASA Director Christina Dandino and reps from RIT Computer Department
- Roc the Future Executive Team and Convener’s meeting (2 separate meetings)
- NYLA Public Libraries Section conference call
- City Neighborhood & Business Development staff
- International Sister Cities of Rochester intern opportunity interviews (5)
- Author Vivian Vande Velde, FFRPL’s Ned Davis and Rebecca Fuss
- RPL Branch Planning Advisory Committee
- Roc the Future Early Grade Literacy Team (3 meetings)
- RMSC President & CEA Hillary Olsen
- GRASA Program Locator meeting with Chris Dandino & Stephanie Fitzgerald (United Way)
- International Sister Cities of Rochester Board meeting
- City Education Team Meeting with Sandra Simon and Daniele Lyman-Torres
- James Smith, Deputy Mayor
- Webster Director Terri Bennett
- Southern Adirondack System Director Sara Dallas (conference call)
- Penfield Librarian Lyla Grills (MCLS mentoring program)
- 911 Hyper-Reach Communication System Training
- Tuesday Topics Presentation
- Pioneer Library System Presentation on Bed Bugs, with Sally Snow & Frank Russo
- Diversity Series training at Henrietta
Email Activity
November 2018

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