



# STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** January 6, 2025

**TITLE:**

Library Director's Report

**AGENDA ITEM SUBMITTED BY:**

Bonnie Pierson, Library Director

**PROGRAMMING:**

On Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, Forty-six people attended the library's quarterly history talk featuring Bastrop-local Brad Weber, who gave a presentation on German prisoners of war that were incarcerated at Camp Swift during the Second World War. The talk focused on the arrival of the famed Afrika Korps prisoners at Camp Swift and discussed aspects of their captivity and experiences of their time in Bastrop County until their eventual release in 1946. Brad Weber holds a master's degree in military history and is a volunteer at the Bastrop County Historical Society Museum specializing in Camp Swift history.

On Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, Youth Services Librarian Eva Bernal and Children's Services Associate Ariel Dirienzo attended Bluebonnet Trails Parents as Teachers Holiday Party outreach event. Staff was able to connect with 107 people by sharing information in both English and Spanish about library services and programs, such as Storytime and bilingual youth programs.

On Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, thirteen teens participated in Elves Workshop, creating handmade gifts for the holiday season during the weekly Teen Thursdays program. Projects included tea bag Christmas trees and fingerprint magnets, allowing teens to express their creativity while making thoughtful presents for their families.

Bastrop Public Library's annual Open House was, once again, a big success. 675 people attended and just over 125 graham cracker houses were given away that day, with 257 people choosing to decorate a house in the library. Additionally, Eighty-eight Take Home Kits were given away. Five live musicians performed holiday music throughout the day. The Friends of the Library provided refreshments. The Library is beyond grateful for the Friends, Library Board, and community members who volunteered their time to prepare and execute the event.

Seventy-seven houses were left over after Open House. The library reached out to the Bastrop County Food Pantry and donated all the remaining houses as complete Take Home Kits. The kits were picked up by the Food Pantry on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>.

At the December program, the Library Book Club chose their favorite book of the year. Out of twelve titles, they chose *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon. It's a historical mystery set in

18<sup>th</sup> century Maine. It explores themes such as shame culture, women's rights and empowerment, and justice.



**NOTEWORTHY:**

On Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, the library was contacted in regard to the video relay service for the deaf and hard of hearing. A third party will be updating the equipment with assistance of the City of Bastrop's IT department.

The library began offering discounted memberships to non-resident veterans, seniors aged fifty-five and over, or individuals with disabilities on Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Family memberships also began being offered on the same day.

The library has added faxing as an available service due to consistent community interest. Patrons can send outgoing faxes at the Bastrop Public Library for no charge with the assistance of a library staff member.

**UPDATES:**

Friends of the Library update.

Dr. Clementine Msengi author event on Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup>

Angela Castillo author event on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>

Photo ID library cards: no new information currently.

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK:**

"I did not know you offered tutoring (Tech Tutor) services. It was really helpful. I appreciate every one of you for all the help."

- Patron, applying for rent assistance

"Before we got here, my son—Ethan—wasn't excited about coming to the library. But now that he knows he can borrow Minecraft and LEGO books, he's so excited!"

- Caleb, patron

"It's so great that we can so easily come and make copies."

- Patron

"I've gotten a lot of seeds from the Seed Library, and now it's time for me to donate!"

- Sylvia, patron