

# GRAL Director's Report

AUGUST 2022

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## ADVOCACY

-State Legislature (Regional Library Basic System Support et al.)

Hopes for a Special Session did not pan out. Lawmakers left St. Paul without passing major bills or making plans for a special session. This means no action on Regional Library Basic System Support (RLBSS) or other Minnesota Library Association (MLA) legislative initiatives until next session.

I am monitoring Minnesota Library Association meetings and will have an update when 2023 Legislative priorities come out.

-Local Elections (especially County Board of Commissioners)

The Library is locally funded by City and County property tax levies. Three County Board seats are open – with no incumbents running. The outcome of these races could influence our goal of an equitable funding scenario.

-Capital Projects Fund (American Rescue Plan)

I have been in touch with a member of the Governor's staff. The Facilities Maintenance Manager has obtained quotes for electrical upgrades in anticipation of this grant opportunity being available. No word on how this process will work from the Governor's Office at this time.

-Arrowhead Library System Request to Itasca County

At the direction of the ALS Board, Executive Director Jim Weikum is submitting a funding request to Itasca County seeking a \$10,000 increase over the FY 2022 support amount.

## **LIBRARY MANAGEMENT**

### **-IT issues**

An AC failure in the server room at Itasca County disrupted the Library Catalog computers and PHAROS public computer network for most of the day 8/1.

### **-Music Park Collaboration with KAXE**

Concrete was poured 7/5. The instruments are on order and will ship directly to the Public Works Department for installation. At this time, I am optimistic for the park to be 'up and running' this summer.

### **-RIVERFEST update**

I have an RIVERFEST update on the Agenda.

## **FACILITIES MAINTAINANCE / SPACE**

### **-Encompass Engineering visit**

On 7/25, the City Council authorized Mayor Christy to sign a Professional Services Proposal with Encompass, Inc. for exterior façade evaluation at the Library based on the recommendation of the Library Board and Facilities Maintenance Manager. Staff from Encompass were at the Library the next morning for an inspection – results are pending.

### **-Book drop**

The Catholic Community Foundation has agreed to support this project! New book drop hardware is on site and the Facilities Maintenance Manager is in contact with a local mason.

### **-New Flag Pole**

Public Works and Public Utilities crews installed a new flagpole (salvaged from the sports complex during the East Elementary constructions) near the bike rack.

## **FIRE RESPONSE**

I made 14 fire calls during July with 4 responses from the Library.

END OF REPORT

## July in Children's

Oh my, heavens to Betsy! This summer will forever be, in my world, the summer of Online Storytime. When I started this endeavor, I always said we would reconsider when views fell below 20 per episode. Well, as you can see from the statistics, that may be awhile. We put up Moose Storytime last Thursday, and it has garnered over 2800 YouTube views in 5 days. Our top video remains Squirrel Storytime, which has over 34,000 views! I invite you to play the game with me...check the views every, oh, 2 hours or so around the clock. Sleep deprivation aside, you will also be filled with wonder. Who is actually watching these things? 😊 I don't know what's happening, but I'm riding this wave as far as it will take us. (And, although prep time for each storytime is about 6-8 hours, it still is, in my eyes, time well spent.)

Scavenger hunts have also proved a popular summer pastime for our patrons. (Wow! What alliteration!) We have families waiting with excitement for the beginning of the week, so they can pick up their next scavenger hunt. It has been great fun for us, too, and I'm eager to get participation numbers in late August.

Artastic continues to be a highlight of the summer, with patrons eagerly scooping up 150 kits each month. Zoom workshops continue to be the norm, but we are joining other ALS children's librarians for an in-person picnic in August. Hooray!

We have been extraordinarily busy, particularly in the last two weeks. So many families, so many books! Last Thursday, I was sitting at the children's desk, marveling at the busyness. I counted heads, just those I could see, not including folks sitting on the floor in the stacks, or those too short for me to see over the bins. We had 35 people finding books, reading, playing, scavenger hunting, and just, seemingly, having a great time at GRAL. While it felt a bit of a madhouse, it was so joyful! (I don't know what was happening in the rest of the library, but never let it be said that the Children's Library doesn't know how to have a good time. 😊 )

I am in a mad scramble to get my ducks in a row for our Summer Celebration on August 17. Ordering, organizing, planning, and putting out fires is how I'm spending my time over the next two weeks. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, to you who are joining me for this day of fun! Remember, the Kona Ice is free, and will be flowing fast! Happy Reading!