

Programming and Outreach

Youth Programs - We hosted 14 programs in November and 14 programs in December for kids and families, with attendance of 199 and 294 people. Highlights include 2 handmade holiday gift programs at 1000 Islands. We provided supplies and instructions for children to make sustainable holiday items like ornaments, reusable wrapping paper, and bird feeders. During Planters for a Purpose on December 4 we offered a night time storytime and drop in holiday craft, each attended by 25 people.

Storytimes moved online for the last part of December and first 2 weeks of January, but will return to in-person on January 18th. Capacity was reduced further for January and February. Toddler Times will move to our "take home" model for January and February as this is a high-touch and highly interactive program with challenges in providing mitigation practices.

School Partnerships - We had 5 teacher pack requests in November and December and hosted 2 field trips with Park students. Kindergarteners were visited at school and 4K students stopped by the library with a special gift and to explore the Library of Lights.

Our biggest partner program with our school partners was the Stone Soup Service Project held with Park first grade classes in November and December. We piloted this program in 2019. In November I met with students at the library to share the book Stone Soup and introduce their school service learning project. They then invited all classrooms at Park to donate food items to contribute to holiday meal kits, collecting items for 25 meals. On December 13th I visited the students at Park and we worked on putting the meal kits together. We were joined by reporters from Fox 11 and WFRV in the morning to highlight the students work and library partnership. Park principal Kenneth Kortens and students also spoke with the reporter. Midwest Carriers added to the event with their generous donation. In a matter of a few days their staff donated and built 50 meal kits. They also worked with Lamers Dairy to donate milk and eggs. With a semi and holiday music blasting, their staff helps us distribute meal kits to 75 families on December 13.

Adult Programs - We held 8 adult programs in November with attendance of 59 and 4 programs in December with attendance of 32. November was National Novel Writing Month, where aspiring and establish writers challenge themselves to write 50,000 words in one month. We serve as a designated NaNoWriMo location and hosted 2 Write-in events that month. December's Upcycled Holiday Ornaments workshop gave adults a chance to get creative turning discarded books into a variety of ornaments. James continues to offer seniors technology training in a classroom and one-on-one capacity at the Thompson Center in Appleton. He will resume work with St. Paul when COVID case numbers in our area are much lower, due to the close contact nature of his work with residents.

Winter Break Book Bundles - One of my favorite projects in December was our Winter Break Book Bundles. Offered for all ages, people could submit a request for a bundle and use a form to tell us what type of books and movies they enjoy. Staff then went to work building personalized bundles for each person. We added a small activity, a prize, and a snack to each bundle. In total we had 86 book bundle requests in the 2 weeks we had the form opened – 17 adults, 15 preschool, 37 school-age, 13 middle school, and 4 high school. This resulted in approximately 500 items going out in these bundles. I plan to offer this service seasonally for all ages in the summer and during winter break.

Administrative Updates

Hoopla - As a result of our materials budget line increase in 2022 we will be able to begin offering Hoopla digital materials to Kaukauna patrons. We are currently the only OWLS library in our area not offering this product. Hoopla is a "pay per use" model service, versus OverDrive which is license based. Items are also available on demand, no long hold lines. Hoopla offers over 1 million titles for all ages, books, audiobooks, music, movies, and television shows. Users download the hoopla app or access it from a desktop computer and use their library card to create an account. The

library is billed monthly based on what was borrowed. The average cost per item is \$1.75 per circ. Following staff training on January 27 we will initiate a soft launch of the service on February 1, giving staff time to train with the product in real time. Our official launch to the public will be February 14. Hoopla projects that at our chosen borrow limit of 5 items per month per patron, we can expect to spend approximately \$5,000 in 2022. This is a conservative amount, but leaves room to increase borrows if demand allows or offer promotional borrows throughout the year.

Lucky Day - The materials increase in the 2022 budget will also see the addition of a Lucky Day collect of adult materials. Lucky Day items are high demand, high interest titles that are not used to fill hold lists. A patron will walk into the library and find an item they may have been waiting for with no line, it's their "lucky day!" Items will be available for 2 weeks with no renewals. As with hoopla, we are also the only library in our area not offering a lucky day collection at this time. We look forward to building the budget for both services over time.

Marketing Plan Update - Thanks to Jenny's efforts the library now has a free non-profit access to the graphic design program Canva. Multiple staff use Canva to create quality graphics for social media, or website, and printed items. The Pro version increases our access to free stock photos and graphics. You'll see more inclusive images in our marketing and on our website thanks to this access. Work continues on our Marketing Plan. I met last week with my cohort advisor to discuss how to approach the plan and resources for research. One focus on the campaign will be to identify City households that do not have library cards and directly target them with information and a way to encourage registration with reduced barriers. Outreach events will be focused in those sectors of the City that have the lowest rate of library card registration. I will be meeting with library marketing expert Kathy Dempsey next month for her feedback.

Creator in Residence Program Update – We are excited to launch a Creator-in-Residence program from Summer 2022. This will kick off a revitalization of our community art collaborations, including the use of our display spaces. We are currently accepting applications from local creatives for this residency, which will take place June 13-August 5. Residents will be asked to share 3 workshops with the public during their 8 weeks with the library. They will also be able to share their work through displays and optional office hours. The Bank of Kaukauna will be the sponsor of this event, supporting a stipend, reimbursement for program supplies to the resident, and funds for marketing and overall program development. We are accepting submissions through February 25 and will select our resident in mid-April. Beginning next fall, library gallery space will be available for area artists to apply to share their work in the space.

Friends & Foundation – The Friends of the Library Book Sale took place at the end of November. The next Friends meeting is February 10 at 6pm. In 2022 the Friends will host our book sales in April and November, and participate in the spring and fall Citywide rummage sale outside the library. Friends aspire to create more engaging volunteer opportunities and host 2 events targeted at member recruitment, one in Spring and one in Fall. Spring's event will be a "Thank you for being a friend" Golden Girls-themed event. Details coming soon!

Planters for a Purpose, the annual Foundation fundraiser, was held on December 1. We provided a family storytime, various youth crafts, and a live auction of planters made by volunteers. Throughout November and December, we also sold ornaments, smaller decorative items, coffee mugs, craft kits, and tote bags. Funds raised will support the Learning Garden

In December we held an additional fundraiser, The Art of Giving. Students at Park Community Charter School decorate small carts with holiday art that donors received as our thank you for their gift. Donors chose what they wanted to support, including Summer Learning Program, the large print book collection, teen activity kits, and Ghost.

We received a number of other kind donations to the Friends in November and December through CommitChange in honor of friends and family as gifts. Friends funds raised at this time are focused on supporting Summer Learning Program – performer fees, purchase of prize books, and promotional items for school visits in Spring.

Ashley and I will be meeting with Colleen Rortvedt, Appleton Public Library Director, and Kara Sullivan, Executive Director of the Friends of Appleton Public Library to discuss how Appleton has built a successful organization, defining roles of members, recruitment volunteers, and administration. We will be discussing that conversation further with the respective Friends and Foundation boards.

Homegrown Training and Workshop – Ashley, James, and I attended a workshop hosted by the UW-Extension called Home Grown, and offered to librarians across the Fox Cities. The day long training focused on identifying who entrepreneurs are, how to connect with them, what their needs are, and ways that libraries can support entrepreneurs and their contributions to economic development. I look forward to developing scaled services to support small businesses and entrepreneurs through networking and partnerships, stronger resource sharing, and educational opportunities for business owners. One of the PLA sessions I will be attending in March focuses on a nationwide initiative led by the American Library Association to create a toolkit to support libraries in this goal. I look forward to bringing ideas and resources back from that experience as well.