



January 27, 2021

From: Margaret Jeffries, Library Director

To: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: Library Semi-Annual Report

The St. Helens Public Library has and continues to find ways to serve the community during the pandemic.

Curbside Service – The Library began offering curbside service in June. Patrons call or place holds online and can then safely pickup their materials during our curbside hours. Several ways to assist patrons in making selections are available. We have expanded the “book rivers” that stream by on our online catalog that feature new titles in various categories. For patrons who do not have computer access, we have new items on display in our front windows. And, of course, our staff is available during phone hours to offer reading suggestions.

Enhanced Social Media Presence – The Library’s Facebook page is bursting with content to engage our patrons – book recommendations, activities to do at home or online, and more! Follow us!

Genial Genealogy – Our Reference Librarian continues to help with the planning and publicity for this monthly group that now meets online on the first Monday of the month.

Digital Library Cards – We continue to offer a digital library card which provides access to all our online resources – eBooks, audiobooks, digital magazines, music to stream or download, and databases. Anyone can apply online at no charge. Our social media team created a tutorial to show you how to sign up. It’s on our webpage.

Family Storytime Videos – Our youth librarian creates a weekly storytime that is posted to Facebook that you can watch at your convenience. Families appreciate being able to read, rhyme and sing along with Miss Gretchen.

Youth Programs – Last spring, we purchased an online platform called Beanstack to use for our Summer Library Challenge. Our Youth Librarian also created a winter reading program for youth with prizes for reading milestones that just finished this month. Take and Make kits are back. These are weekly activity kits for kids families to do together. In February, the annual Bookmark Design Contest is launched with physical and online options. The community selects the winners and their designs are distributed during the Summer Library Challenge.

Joint Activities with the Recreation Department – When the weather allows, our Youth Librarian collaborates with the Rec Department to creates activities for families – activity kits, a story stroll, and activities in the Parks were featured last year. Starting in February, they will resume nature activities in McCormick Park on Thursdays.

Makerspace Update – The makerspace continues to take shape. Furniture and equipment are starting to be put into place. Recently, the Library received a \$5,000 sustaining grant from NW STEM Hub to expand hands-on educational programs at the Library. We previously received a \$20,000 grant from this organization. These funds will be used to add to our Library of Things collection, and to expand STEM-based activities and programming for children.

Public Computers – The layout for public computer area is being modified for social distancing and the addition of barriers between workstations. Ten new computers are being installed – six for the public’s use and others for print management and online catalogs.