

Northfield Public Library Director's Report May 2019

Director's Report

Submitted by Teresa Jensen, Library Director



April has been a very public arts-heavy month for me, as the city arts and culture liaison. The team of Rick Swearer, Howard Ostrue and Keeley Swearer has been working steadily on plans for the art info kiosk, which will be placed at the southeast corner of 6th Street and Division; Rick has been busy making clay molds, then pouring glass into the molds to create his glass blocks for the kiosk; Howard is figuring out the steel framing, and Keeley is working on the display boards and coordinating with City IT for the placement within the sculpture of the digital screen. Katlin Greene and I visited Rick's studio a couple of weeks ago to see the project, and the process; these photos are from that visit. Rick and I speak at least a couple of times a week to touch base, or to puzzle out issues that arise as the project gains speed. (Where should the power go through the sculpture? What should the base be constructed of? Will it need a lightning rod?) We are aiming for the kiosk to be finished by DJJD weekend.

At the same time, I am representing the city for the Artists on Main Street initiative from Springboard for the Arts, with Alyssa Melby, chair of the Arts & Culture Commission, leading the Public Art Review Committee (PARC) for the project. A number of Northfield residents participated in a Call for Artists, and they will be constructing art or performing art this summer and fall within an area of downtown defined specifically to fit within the river corridor. We are at the stage where artists have been notified of their budgets and will be checking in with the project's PARC group monthly on the status of their project.

Just open this week will be a competition of sorts to design a new banner for downtown Northfield to replace the existing standard “Historic Northfield Since 1855” banners. The banner is being funded by the Northfield Downtown Development Council (NDDC); I have been working with that initiative’s PARC to write the scope of the project (Silkscreen or digital printing? Fabric or vinyl?)

Lastly, I have been working to finalize the vendor selection for the construction of the monument sign at the new Fire Station; City Administrator Ben Martig and I have worked on a feasible, sensible design that coordinates well with the design of the newly renovated building. All fun, but very time-intensive!



Adult Services

Submitted by Katlin Heidgerken-Greene, Reference Services Manager

The month of April, my first full month at NPL, was a busy and interesting one.

Collections:

With the help of Narayani, our Carleton student employee, I have been doing a “first pass” weeding of the adult nonfiction collection and withdrawing a lot of old and outdated materials. This will make room on the shelves for the new items we continually purchase and for more current materials in many subject areas.

I’ve also now begun a very thorough weeding of the Large Print collection, and along with Joan and Jamie, will be evaluating that collection, coming up with a collection statement to guide our selection and de-selection going forward, and working to refresh that area with some new and more appealing titles.

As I am getting more comfortable with my selection duties, I am enjoying ordering for Nonfiction books, Nonfiction DVDs, and Spanish Language collections. With Angelica’s encouragement, I added a few Spanish language titles to our Lucky You! collection—the non-reservable bestsellers near the service desk downstairs. I am excited to see how they circulate and if we should be buying more in the future.

Public Services:

I am enjoying working both the Reference Desk upstairs and the Children’s Desk, and have been fielding some interesting and challenging questions as well as getting to know our patrons. Highlights in April included handling the application transaction for my first City ID on-demand

request, taking my first Tech Tutorial appointment, and being trained to drive the Bookmobile! This month, I also had the opportunity to meet with Susan Lohmann of NACPAC about programming, promotion, and collaboration with the library around Advanced Care Planning issues. I look forward to working with the group on some future library programming and to helping this information reach a library audience.

Other ongoing projects I began this month included working to assess our technology and digital library services, in preparation for future strategic and improvement plans, and convening a Public Relations committee which will focus on streamlining and systematizing our program promotions and library branding for more cohesive, and hopefully, more effective, results. Finally, I enjoyed and learned a lot at our Staff Training Day on April 26th—we had some great sessions and left invigorated and re-energized for Spring!

Submitted by Joan Ennis

Director's Report for May 2019 – Submitted by Joan Ennis, Reference Librarian

Our April snowstorm caused us to cancel two programs on April 11. Bestselling author, Beverly Lewis talk was cancelled. We had many calls, asking if she would reschedule, but she was at the end of a Midwest tour and could not reschedule. Her publicist sent autographed bookplates to give patrons. Local author Jim Holden was also scheduled to speak that evening, and his program was cancelled.

Fortunately, the weather was good on April 18 when William Kent Krueger came to speak, as part of SELCO's Minnesota Author Tour. Because he is so popular I reserved the Middle School auditorium for the event. We had 130 attendees. He is a very personable speaker, and talked about the importance of stories, his writing process, and his newest book, to be released next fall, titled *This Tender Land*. We received very positive feedback from the audience.

The Contemporary Women Writers book group met on April 16, and we discussed *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly. We had a very good discussion about the parallels of the space race and the Civil Rights Movement. One of our newer members invited the group over to watch the movie the following week, and six of us watched the movie at her home.

The Open Writing Group met on April 17. We have a core group of writers who come regularly and submit writing to share.

Northfield Reads present a program on April 4, "Whiteness and Privilege in Minnesota." The presenters were Professor Adriana Estill and Sarah Carlson. We had 40 attendees.

Submitted by Jamie Stanley

April was a month devoted to Outreach activities. I hosted five events over the span of five weeks. Six events if you include the week of April 28th.

April 1 – Mystery Movie Night – Penthouse with Myrna Loy (1933)
April 9 - Three Links Apartments – Presentation topic: Victorian Women Travellers
April 15th – Mystery Book Group Discussion: The Bishop's Wife by Evie Mettie Harrison (2014)
April 18th – Millstream Commons Book Group – Plainsong by Kent Haruf (1999)
April 23rd – Three Links Apartments - Brain activity related to presentation topic on April 9th.
May 2 – Millstream Commons Book Group – Travels with My Aunt by Graham Greene (1969).

The Outreach programming work that I do is fun, is valuable and it also requires substantial preparation that culminates in an experience, the quality of which cannot be foretold, as so much depends upon participation by the group.

After leading the above named groups for a few years, I understand the importance of careful consideration when suggesting books and discussion topics that will appeal to different group members. When people are asked about what books and subjects they may be interested in, the results are mixed and often far from ideal due to an inherent group dynamic. Some people freely express their preferences and prejudices while others do so with hesitancy or not at all. For example, a number of members of the mystery book group clearly prefer British or American mysteries written in the early to mid-twentieth century by then well-known authors that have since faded to obscurity. Fortunately, this cohort are game to read mysteries outside their preferences as there are an equal number of book group members with much less familiarity with the mystery genre and may not even know (or care) what constitutes a mystery.

To illustrate my point, the Mystery Book Group discussion of The Bishop's Wife on May 15th was one of the best discussions the group has had in my recollection. I suggested this title in an effort to diversify our book readings and when I suggested it, the group was supportive. Fortunately, it was a calculated suggestion that paid off. The reason for the success of this discussion was that this book is set in modern day Utah in a “progressive” Mormon community and written by a practicing Mormon. As a debut novel, the book has many of the hallmarks of a first time effort, clumsy writing, a story line that gets bogged down, etc. What appealed to the group was that everyone was interested in the Mormon community and had some opinion about Mormonism. So much so that the conversation had to be redirected back to the book itself.

Would a book discussion that wandered away from the book itself be considered a success? In this case, I think it was. The subject of Mormonism served as springboard for the discussion and with some nudging the discussion eventually circled back to the book. It just took a little time. A reminder to me to be patient in that every book or subject discussion unfolds at its own rate.

Submitted by Tyler Gardner

In the month of April we added over 40 movies to the adult video collection and about 20 CDs to the adult music collection. I also ordered a poetry book recently published by a St. Olaf graduate who is now working out of the Portland, Oregon area. The movie display for the beginning of the month was “Strong Female Leads” which carried over from March’s display. Currently the display is Animated Features and includes some of my favorite movies from one of my favorite animation studios, Studio Ghibli. Studio Ghibli is the brainchild of Hayao Miyazaki, one of the most prolific and esteemed animator, writer, and director of the genre.

On the 1st of April, with the help of the FFOL, we submitted an application for a Legacy Grant through SEMAC to fund the 2019 Hispanic Heritage Celebration. The review for the grant proposals will be on May 2nd, with winners posted and notified on May 22nd. On April 25th I went down to SELCO for the first time to attend a grant writing workshop hosted by Stephanie Gerding, Author of ALA’s *Winning Grants*. I was able to meet other SELCO librarians at the workshop and we shared our experiences and perceptions of the grant writing process. I learned some valuable information about how review boards weed through grant proposals.

The library was lucky to be offered a free SELCO sponsored program which I helped coordinate and host on April 2nd. Documentarian, photographer, artist James Bowey came to speak about Refugees in America. The presentation included found poetry made up of the transcripts from interviews Bowey held with refugees in Minnesota and a photograph of the refugee accompanied the poems. The crowd was very interested and it sparked some thought-provoking discussion that represented both sides of the argument on refugees and immigration. Personally, I was glad to see and hear dissenting opinions from some members of the crowd, even though I may not necessarily agree with them.

I had a chance to attend an FFOL meeting and introduce myself to some of the FFOL members who were present. It was good to get up in front of a group of people who support the library and talk a little bit about myself and what I do for the library.

Youth Services

Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Youth Services Librarian

In April, National Poetry Month, we kicked things off with a well-attended Saturday program in the atrium called “Silly Poetry for Kids of All Ages,” which I’d like to make an annual event to complement the Library’s & Laureate’s other National Poetry Month celebrations. Being a fan and occasional writer of silly poetry, I also had fun offering a month-long drawing for kids to win their own personalized silly poem by me on the subject of their choice (some of my favorite supplied topics were “Fennec foxes” and “a dragon who tries to play guitar and fails.”) I’d also like to make this drawing annual.

I visited Greenvale and Bridgewater to deliver more booktalks, and Head Start for a special storytime on a day when parents & caregivers joined their children's classes. St. Dominic's preschool class visited the library for a story and a tour, and LOTS of stories and tours are planned for May: three classes coming to us from Northfield Nursery School, one from Head Start, and one from the Spanish-Spanish-English section of preschool at NCRC. I'll also be making visits to each Hand in Hand preschool class. After those, the first grade classes from Bridgewater, Sibley, and Greenvale will be making their annual visits.

I had a great opportunity to train Northfield's two Early Childhood Navigators in early literacy and in how to present early literacy skill-building storytimes. The Navigators go into, and form relationships with the many unofficial 'daycares' in the Latino community (often a family member watching several other family members' kids). They will be providing early literacy training to the caregivers based on my handouts and training session with them. Unfortunately, two April outreach events with the bookmobile--Healthy Kids' Day and Earth Day--were ones we decided to cancel due to the weather.

On the deck for May, in addition to class visits: Page training, Truck and Tractor Night, stories and summer reading info at Thursday's Table, training our BookBike storytime volunteers, and a Saturday Superhero Storytime.

Submitted by Layna Mestad, Youth Services/Teen Librarian

There were no snowstorms that cancelled teen programming in April--woo hoo! The two big teen programs for April were Teen Game Night and Self-Defense Class for Teens. We had great attendance at each. There were 18(!) at game night where we played board games, dusted off the library's Wii system and played some Wii sports, and ate pizza thanks to the Friends of the Northfield Public Library. Our TAB members did a fantastic job of promoting this event, and it serves as a great example of the importance of having a youth lead board at the public library. There's even interest in hosting another game night in the future!

The self-defense course was taught by local Rice County Deputy, Jeff Mullenmeister. There were 8 teens and 2 adults in attendance. Jeff started the course by talking about the different social cues to be aware of if someone is about to attack, and the importance of general awareness of your surroundings. He followed this up with physical demonstration and practice. We received great feedback from parents/caregivers in attendance. My hope in offering this event was for teen participants to feel empowered and confident in defending themselves if needed (hopefully they never have to use these skills).

May teen programming will have a mental health focus as May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Anime and Manga Club will screen *Orange*, an anime with a storyline that sheds light on



depression. We recently purchased colored pencils per the request of our Anime & Manga Club regulars to create/practice manga art during our meetings. Rahul, our youth services Carleton student worker, will host a Kanopy Film Festival screening two movies with a focus on mental health. Our teen book group will read *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, which ties into TAB's collaboration with the Northfield Union of Youth's Mental Health Board for a movie screening of the book's film adaption. Bridget Novak from the Northfield Arts Guild will have her art station available for movie night attendees to stop by and make something before and during the movie (as art is great for the wellbeing). There will also be pizza, and the Mental Health Board will lead a discussion post-movie.

Lastly, the YA shelf recommendation signs are now up in the YA section! Take a peek next time you're in the library to see some YA book recommendations from our TAB members. Also related to the YA collection, the 2019-2020 Maud Hart Lovelace nominees are purchased and will be shelved in their normal location at the beginning of the YA collection (copies are also available in the Juvenile collection).

Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush, Technology Circulation Services Manager

On Friday, April 26 we closed the library for our 2nd annual staff training day. It was a great day of sharing new ideas and getting information to staff, new and experienced. We began the day with a chair yoga with Amy Machacek Shonka from Heartworks Yoga Studio. It helped to get our



bodies ready for a day of learning. Afterwards, we had a session on First Aid & AED Training by Rebecca Schoephoerster an EMT. She talked about first aid and CPR and then gave us a demo on our own AED and how to use it. Kurt Wolf and I gave a talk and walk around explaining new emergency door overrides, Incident/accident reporting, and opening and closing procedures. Right before lunch Police Officer Thad Monroe did a safety talk and walk-through of the building. He is great at

explaining what to do in case of a dangerous situation at the library.

We had a great lunch from the Hideaway and during lunch Emily Fulton from Union of Youth gave a wonderful talk on the history and current programs that are happening at the Key and Union of Youth. Also during lunch time we had a talk and power point from Anika Rychner, who is Program Director for the CAC. Since we will be working very closely with the CAC with our new Link Services – this was very useful to hear what the CAC does and how we can work together.



After Lunch, one of our Shelves, Kathryn Sopa, gathered the shelves together for a separate training session and the rest of the staff split up in two groups. One group went with Steve to get a refresher training on the bookmobile and the other group met with Eric Johnson who went over the important set up information for the Book bike. At the end of the day, Laurie and Angelica spent an hour talking about Link Services and looking at the new webpage that they have been working on for this new service. Thank you to our staff for their work putting the day together and presenters for their great presentations. I believe all of the staff enjoyed the day and came away with new ideas and challenges.

Outreach, Shelving and Volunteer Services

Submitted by Laurie Kodet, Shelving/Outreach Services Supervisor/Volunteer Manager **Volunteers-**

April is volunteer appreciation month. Volunteers enable the library staff to accomplish so much and help keep our building and materials looking great. I sent an email to more than 100 volunteers to stop by during National Library week and pick up a token of our appreciation.

Outreach-

The bookmobile was onsite for tours on National Bookmobile Day (April 10th) and again on April 26th for library staff training day. Steve Maus give tours and reviewed operations with staff members. The weather caused us to cancel two bookmobile events on Saturday, April 27th. We hope the snow is finished for the Spring. Angelica and I visited St. Dominic's Church on Thursday, April 18 after services, to promote library services and City ID. We spoke to 20 people and issued 2 new library cards.

On April 10, I attended 2019 MN Summit & President's Award Luncheon. Where I received on behalf of the library, the Presidents' Community Partner Award from Carleton College. The brochure stated, *"The Northfield Public Library is an inclusive and welcoming space – an excellent venue and*



partner for blending college and community events. The library hosts Carleton College interns, work-study students, is a site for academic civic engagement courses, and partners with us to offer municipal identifications to college students.”

Link Center-

The Link Services webpage is complete and launched on May 1st. During our April 26th staff training, Angelica and I shared information with the staff on the webpage. Our staff has begun to requesting input from community organizations and will be creating our first Link Services bilingual newsletter.

Outreach

Submitted by Angelica Linder, Outreach Coordinator

Highlights of April 2019:

During the month of April, we begin collaborating with The University of Minnesota Extension on their pilot project on Community Capitals Framework, basing the Community Conversations on Cultural Capital in Northfield. Our library is the local convener for a series of 4 conversations to explore, learn more and connect with others around our community assets with the focus on Cultural assets. We have a diversity panel, leaders in our community. Lisa Hinz, Extension Educator, leads these studies circles.

I have been part of the Outreach committee for the Community dinner “Northfield Shares a Dinner” our goal is to bring neighbors from all of Northfield to connect and share a meal together at one long community table; Northfield Shares wants a place at the table for all, serving a thousand people. The Community dinner is going to be on Sunday, August 25th in downtown Northfield.

Apart from the outreach visits, I have been working on translating the Link Services web page and getting things ready for the Link Newsletter, which the library took over starting on May 1st.

On April 20th, the library held a Spanish Immersion Event featuring spring activities; there were 27 attendees.

Northfield Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate
Events

April 4. Justin Watkins (author of *A Mark of Permanence*). Co-sponsored by Cannon River Watershed Partnership. Attendance: 12

April 17. Jimmy Santiago Baca. Kracum Performance Hall. Co-sponsored by Carleton College. Attendance: 75.

April 23. Michael Bazzett (reading from his translation of the *Popul Vuh*). Attendance: 12.

April 28. Great Lakes Poets Laureate Reading at Zenith Bookstore in Duluth. Readings by Joyce Sutphen (Minnesota Poet Laureate), Kimberly Blaeser (former Wisconsin Poet Laureate), Sheila Packa (Duluth), Deborah Cooper (Duluth), Ellie Schoenfeld (Duluth), Jim Armstrong (Winona), Ken McCullough (Winona), Howard Paap (Bayfield, WI), and Rob Hardy (Northfield). Attendance: 35.

Upcoming Events

May 1. May Day at Prairie Creek Community School. Unveiling of the school poem the Poet Laureate wrote with the children in January 2018. The poem has been engraved on a large piece of locally-sourced hardwood for display in the school.

May 2. Daniel Dietrich. Northfield Public Library. 7pm.

May 9. Leslie Schultz. With concertina player Jake Minar Bastyr. Hot Spot Music. 7pm.

May 16. Anders Carlson-Wee. Content. 7pm.

May 20. Great Lakes Poets Laureate Reading. Content. 7pm.

May 30. Great Lakes Poets Laureate Reading. Winona Public Library. 7pm.

June 4. Steven Schild. Content. 7pm.

Poem in Your Pocket Day

During the week of April 15, I was a poet-in-residence in the sixth grade at Northfield Middle School. I taught eleven sections of sixth grade writing. On Tuesday, April 16, I taught Monika Burkhead's five classes, on Wednesday, April 17, I taught Caitlin Robertson's one class, and on Friday, April 19, I taught Sarah Bloom's five classes. The lesson was on kennings and riddle poems. There were 350 children in the 11 classes. Although National Poem in Your Pocket Day was observed on Thursday, April 18, we moved Northfield's observance to Thursday, April 25. Fourteen businesses participated this year. Thank you especially to CakeWalk, Content Bookstore, Goodbye Blue Monday, The Hideaway, Northfield Yarn, Quality Bakery, and Tandem Bagels. These businesses offered discounts or free items to 6th graders who came in and recited a poem. The businesses reported that from 10 to 40 children took advantage of these special offers on Poem in Your Pocket Day.

Sidewalk Poetry Judging

For the third year, the Northfield Poet Laureate served as a judge for the Sidewalk Poetry competition, along with Diane LeBlanc (St. Olaf), Becky Boling (Carleton), Angelica Linder

(Northfield Public Library), and Joel Olson (Northfield Public Schools). The process was once again expertly coordinated by Bonnie Jean Flom.

Artists on Main Street

The Northfield Poet Laureate was awarded a \$750 Artists on Main Street grant to commission the creation of an artist-designed poetry post for installation along the Riverwalk. A poetry post consists of a frame for the display of poetry (a poetry box) mounted on a post. Here's an example of a poetry box and a decorated post before installation:



Image credit: <http://www.poetryboxes.com/news/own-the-boards-article-part-2/12222014>