



Northfield Public Library Director's Report November 2017

Director's Report

Submitted by Teresa Jensen, Library Director

Public libraries hold a special place in the community, and are more important than ever to the well being of their cities. They are the keepers of tradition and the catalysts for change.

Libraries are also safe and welcoming places, and to reinforce this basic principle we updated our Patron Conduct Policy last year, and the city adopted this as a departments-wide policy. We expect the library to be an environment free from harassment for our staff and our patrons.

In this age of newly revealed but long-repeated allegations of sexual harassment and more in the national news, we have the expectation that there would be a heightened awareness of what is acceptable or unacceptable behavior. When we are faced with actions by individuals that go against our policy to provide a safe and welcoming library, it can be disorienting and troubling for staff and patrons.

Policies are tools that help us uphold basic common-sense rules, with common-sense consequences. In the case of harassment, our Patron Conduct Policy reinforces the library as a safe, welcoming place for all.

Adult Services

Submitted by Debby Nitz

We had a busy month of programs in October. We offered 8 opportunities for adults which included: Navigating the College Process; Yoga on all 4 Oct. Saturdays with Bob Bruce; Poetry reading with Northfield Poet Laureate Rob Hardy; Clearing out the Tough Stuff with Decluttering expert Kate Buckmeier; Writing class for children's writing; Computer classes every Tuesday for Spanish speakers; Tablet Astronomy with a St. Olaf Physics Professor (we used the library iPads for this!); The Band Relativity on a Friday night (with over 70 in attendance!). We have some good programs coming up in November too! – Fermentation on Nov. 2; Open Writing Group on Nov. 9; Author Frank Weber Nov. 13; Bob Jacobel speaking on his Antarctic research and climate change on Nov. 14; Poetry reading with Rob Hardy Nov. 16. The computer class for Spanish speakers continues on Tuesday evenings. I am already working on programming for Jan. and Feb. Adult patrons seem to like our programming so our goal is to offer at least a few offerings each month.

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Submitted by Jamie Stanley

Have you heard about booktalking for adults?

For years, youth services librarians have provided booktalking services for children and teens but this type of programming for adult audiences by public libraries has largely been neglected until recently. There has been a resurgence of interest in booktalking for adults among public libraries for a variety of reasons, including demographic trends in the U.S. which project that the number of Americans ages 65 and older will more than double from 46 million (2016) to over 98 million by the year 2060. *www.prb.org/Publications/Media-Guides/2016/aging-unitedstates-fact-sheet.aspx

What is a booktalk?

Put simply, a booktalk is a commercial for a specific book, or to use another analogy, like a movie trailer. It can range from two or three sentences to two or three paragraphs in length. The booktalk usually consists of a brief description of the story of the book and the characters in it. Booktalks are written in such a way as to pique the interest of the audience so that they will want to read the book. Given that the booktalk is written with the intention of attracting readers the booktalk differs from a book review in that it passes no judgement on the title.

Developing and performing booktalks take both time and effort. In addition to the necessity of selecting individual titles, a cardinal rule of booktalking is that the talker read the book in full.

It is our intention that we develop a booktalking program for adults, particularly for use in outreach settings with seniors, and as it relates to our strategic planning goals. Our plan is to being a pilot at the three Links Apartments and develop from that first effort. The benefits to the community and to the library are many and I look forward to an opportunity to work on this program.

Submitted by Joan Ennis

- Kevin Strauss presented his second writing class on October 9 and 16. He focused on writing for
- Children. We had 15 participants in the class. The writing workshops were funded by a legacy grant that Rushford Public Library and Kevin received.
- The Open Writing Group met on October 18, and the group is off to a good start. Twenty three participants have signed up for the group. We will meet once a month.
- On October 24, I presented a program on Asian themes in fiction at the Three Links apartments.
- The residents enjoy the talks and checked out many of the books I brought over.
- I am working on purchasing fiction e-books for Overdrive, in addition to purchasing regular books for our collection.

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- Forensic psychologist and author Frank Weber will talk about his work and his new fiction book, *Murder Book*, on Monday, November 13.
- I applied to have one of the Minnesota Book Award winners speak at the Northfield Public Library, and Peter Geye will be speaking on February 5! Geye won the Minnesota Book Award for novel and short story category in 2017 for his book *Wintering*. Previously, he wrote *Safe from the Sea* and *Wintering*.

Children's Services

Emily Lloyd, Children's Programming Librarian

In October, a pirate history program with MN Jack Sparrow was a real hit. While geared to kids, some adults without children attended, too! Attendees got to touch actual shipwreck artifacts, including a 16th century doubloon. "Jack" freely stayed for two hours after the formal program to answer the flood of audience questions. But the true pinnacle of the month, for me, was the success of our first Storytime in Spanish. Volunteer storyteller Teresa Ruiz Sorroche had a robust turnout, and we received two lengthy thank-you notes from attendees asking for more. Teresa will continue to do storytimes in Spanish in November and December. Finally, Allina Health will now be displaying our new Early Literacy brochures and encouraging families to take them. I'm glad to see them traveling further out into the community.



Submitted by Leesa Wisdorf, Reference Manager and Children's Services Librarian

We hired our new College Student Worker, Jacyn Schmidt, to assist the Reference and Children's departments during the 2017-2018 school year. Jacyn hails from California and is a Freshman-- this will be her first real taste of winter. Jacyn has been working with Debby Nitz on an inventory of the historic Northfield pamphlet file and in identifying Northfield holdings for a new easy



reader booklist the elementary schools are using with parents of 1st grade readers. The Friends of the Library held their annual fundraising Trivia Bee at the Grand on Friday, October 27. The foul weather reduced the audience numbers, but fun was had at the evening event where 12 teams vied for one of 3 top prizes. The team "WHOM" took first place. Approximately \$2,000.00 was raised from team fees, bead sales and audience tickets. Thanks to the Grand, local businesses that supplied prizes, Michele Reese & friend & Mary Closner for selling beads, to Christian Hakala

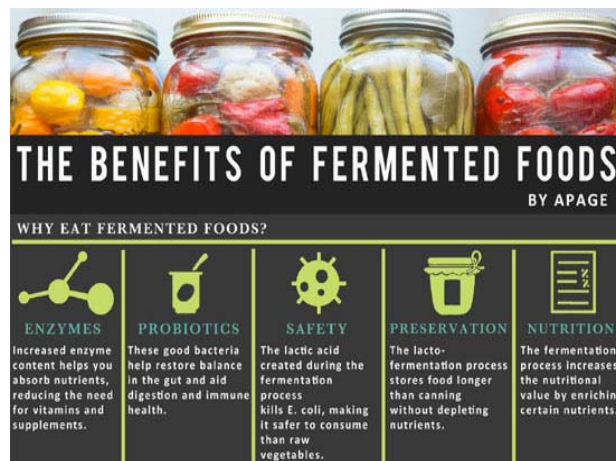


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for “bee-ing” the evenings host/score keeper, and to Jessica Peterson White who was Quiz Mistress of the event.



First place team—“Whom” from Carleton College



Last spring at the Weitz Center Earth Day celebration I met gardener Hal Eckhart at our Seed Exchange exhibit. Hal is a gardener extraordinaire and new to the Northfield community. He is also a big believer in the benefits of fermented foods. As we talked that night, Hal asked if we’d be interested in a program on fermentation. 7 months later, with the last of this year’s veggies getting put up, Hal will present an informative and inspirational program from 7-8pm in the Bunday Room. Please join us for Fermented Foods!

I sent out my 2nd reminder to all past “engineers” and have started working on a schedule of volunteers for the 2017 Winter Walk Model Train Show that will be held on Thursday, December 7th. Library Board members, here is your chance to participate—please join us for a shift of “Greeting”!

Web Services

Submitted by Ian Holms, Reference and Web Services

The website continues humming along. I’ll take this opportunity to plug our library blog yet again. If you haven’t subscribed, please do—even if just to ignore it in your inbox! I’m currently working on a minor update to the website that will show the open hours for whatever day it is. Click on the hours and it will take you to the full schedule. I am continuing to work with Layna and other staff members to seamlessly transition web control should I take a full-time job at another library. I believe that you wouldn’t even notice I’m gone. I am working with the IT department to change the backgrounds on the public computers in a way that will make them more user friendly. The essential applications will be better labeled and more visible and there will be higher contrast between icons and the background.

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Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush, Technology Circulation Services Manager

I enjoy sharing library statistics. I have watched this particular statistic grow through the years. I keep track of how our patrons 'self-serve' themselves. What I mean by this is how many books are checked out on our self-check-out machines and how many renew their items themselves online or on our mobile app. In 2013 we had one very big self check machine and we did about 40% of our circulation on this one machine. In 2014 we added a new slicker model and it went up to 59%. In 2015 while we were at our temporary library in city hall and down to one self-check we still did 57% of our circulation on that one unit. In 2016 with the opening of the new library and with 3 self-check machines 71% of our patrons used our self-check machines and their did own renewals online. This year we have tracked 75% of our library circulation is done either on the self-checks or online. This frees up the library staff to work on other projects and programs. Some patrons enjoy coming to the desk to visit with the staff and have us check out their materials. We enjoy these interactions and are always ready to serve our patrons anyway we can.

Shelving and Volunteer Services

Submitted by Laurie Kodet, Shelving/Volunteer Manager

On September 15th, David Greenfield and I were a presence at the Carleton Activities Fair. We had a flurry of students visit with us and ask about the BookBike. We issued 71 new library cards between 5:00-7:00 that evening, which broke my record from last year of 70. It is a fun way to inform the students where the library is and that our services are available to them.



Bye Bye Booker-- On September 30th, the library held a book sale and good bye event for the bookmobile. Zubby Hassan volunteered at the event, assisting Emily with the book sale and crowd control.

On October 26th, library volunteer Dustin Beltramo boxed up the remainder of the books on the bookmobile. Dustin packed 17 boxes, which were then sent to Better World Books.

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New Volunteers --Elijah Tilstra started volunteering recently. I have watched Elijah grow up, he was a frequent library patron. He is considering going to library school. He will be shelf reading, dusting, and shadowing library staff. We will give him an overview of the different types of jobs in a public library. It is so fun to have him here.

- Siti Hassan (Zubby) started her volunteer hours by working the Bye Bye Booker book sale. Zubby is new to the community and excited to be volunteering in the library.
- Gladys Ehn began volunteering in late September. Gladys is semi-retired and was looking for something fun to do as a volunteer. She is currently working in our book on cd collection, where she is cleaning and inspecting cases, dusting the shelves and keeping the shelves neat.
- Susan Dean's first day of volunteering was on October 10th. Susan comes to us with lots of technology and database experience and skills. She loves to read mysteries and so she is currently working on shelf reading and looking at the condition of our mystery collection.
- Patricia (Pat) Jorstad's first day of volunteering was October 19th. Pat retired about 10 months ago and wants to get more involved in the community. Her first project for the library is working on the Easy Reader collection- shelf reading, clean, and looking at the condition of the collection.
- Margit Johnson started volunteering in October. She is delivering materials to a library patron who is homebound. Margit may also be assisting Emily with outreach to area preschools and more.

Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate

The Poet Laureate organized and/or participated in four events in October:

(1) **Poetry Reading and Workshop by Leila Chatti** (October 5). Leila Chatti, the 2017-28 Ron Wallace Poetry Fellow at the University of Wisconsin, was in town on October 5 to give a class for about 30 students at St. Olaf, a poetry workshop for 15 students at Northfield High School, and a reading to an audience of 25 people at the Northfield Public Library. The Poet Laureate hosted Leila for dinner on Thursday evening, showed her around Northfield, and took her to Martha's Eats and Treats on Friday morning. Her accommodations at the Alumni Guest House were provided by Carleton College (with funding from the English Department). St. Olaf paid a \$200 honorarium for the class, and the Poet Laureate paid a \$300 honorarium for the workshop and reading.

(2) **NER Vermont Reading Series** (October 16). The Poet Laureate participated in a reading at the Marquis Theater in Middlebury, Vermont, as part of a series featuring *New England Review* contributors and Middlebury college students. He shared the stage with essayists Lizzie Apple (student) and Jericho Parms, and poet April Ossmann. The event was organized by Carolyn Kuebler, the editor of the *New England*

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Review. About 50 people were in attendance, including Northfield sidewalk poet and former City Council member Patrick Ganey, who now lives in Middlebury.

(3) **“A Mob of Scribbling Women”** (October 19). This feminist reading and discussion group, co-organized by local writer Harmony Neal, drew 12 participants.

(4) **Poetry Reading and Workshop by Neil Hilborn** (October 26). Neil Hilborn, poet and YouTube sensation, gave a poetry workshop for 16 star-struck high school students at Northfield High School on October 26. Neil led them through a poetry prompt, answered questions, performed two of his poems, and posed for photographs with students. In the evening (after dinner with the Poet Laureate, Jessica Peterson White, and high school student Hannah Pahs), he performed his poetry for a crowd of 50 people (mostly under the age of 25) at Content Bookstore. He also signed copies of his book and posed for photographs.

Total participation in Poet Laureate-related programs in October: ±198 people

The Poet Laureate also met with Paul Niemisto, the conductor of the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra, to discuss the narration the Poet Laureate is writing and performing for the CVRO’s December production of *The Nutcracker* with dance students from Northfield and Cannon Falls.

Feedback of the Month

“It was nothing short of inspiring.” —NHS student, on Leila Chatti’s poetry workshop

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