

Director's report

Submitted by Natalie Draper, Director of Library Services

- Update on sales tax ballot issue: Working on informational materials with city communications and Friends of the Library. Assuming all clears the legislature, we will likely see three questions on the ballot, including the library's exterior project, for voters to approve in November.
- The library has added hearing loop to the Bunday Room in April, and it has been added to service desks and passport office. The flooring in the Bunday Room and Pye Room has been updated as well. Collections on the second floor have been adjusted to provide better flow and more space for teens, and "cozy" seating areas have been added to the new mystery room (formerly DVDs) and between Romance and Sci Fi. Board members who would like a tour are welcome to schedule that with me.
- The Minnesota Dept of Education (MDE) has granted additional funds for the community facility grant we are working on, which brings the total budget for interior improvements to \$500,000. We will be completing a master plan for the library interior, renovating children's, completing additional work on our public meeting spaces, and replacing worn furnishings.
- I have been appointed to a non-voting role reserved for a public library representative on the Governor's Workforce Development Board. I look forward to participating and will include periodic updates from that as it relates to our work. I will also be working with the census civic engagement project in some capacity in preparation for the 2030 census and will have more to share on that after I meet with the project team. Libraries rely upon a complete count for accurate data for many purposes, as do other government and nonprofit organizations, so we have an interest in supporting census efforts and libraries are often integral partners to complete count efforts.
- I presented at the Heritage Preservation Commission a high level overview of the library's preferred concept for the exterior site work we are proposing to voters. The HPC will need to issue a certificate of appropriateness for the plans when we are further along so we want to be in open dialogue with them before we get too far down the road in case there are concerns. Changes become more expensive the later in planning processes we get.
- Our 3rd annual Celebrate Asia Pasifika event was a roaring success with nearly 1,000 in attendance throughout the day. It has grown every year and the success is a testament to the excellent relationships we have with our academic partners, and the hardworking and creative staff of the library. It was a beautiful day to showcase our talented students and their diverse cultural traditions that enrich life in Northfield.

Staff reports

Leadership Team

Submitted by Laurie Kodet, Library Services Manager

Staff

We are excited to share that Nora Becken will be re-joining our team for the summer. Nora worked at the library for two years and then headed off to Grand Forks for college. She will be shelving, learning check-in, working on projects and more.

Passports

Passport agents accepted 123 applications and took 149 photos in April.

We created the sticker below to give out to folks (especially kids).



Submitted by Tyler Gardner, Emerging Technology Librarian

Had a fun and informative day at the Public Library Association Conference in Minneapolis. I attended a session on how we can leverage sustainability efforts at the library to combat loneliness. By activating members of our community to work towards a shared cause, in this case something climate or sustainability focused, we create an environment where people working towards a common goal can develop social ties.

*An **included community** is a community in which every person is seen, heard, and engaged.*

Productive meeting with the SELCO Overdrive Collection Committee. At my suggestion we have committed to spending a large sum of money from RLTA funds on Spanish language materials in Libby

Outreach Services

Submitted by Angelica Linder, Outreach Services Manager, and Karin Bartlett, Steve Maus, Francisco Murillo, Library Assistants, Alexis Kreft, Outreach and Adult Programming Librarian

*An **Invited Community** is a community that feels at home in their library*

Hosted a Spanish-language candle workshop on March 5 with 15 participants. A second session is planned for May due to continued interest.

Sabios Cantores continued weekly rehearsals in collaboration with Giving Voices. Their spring performance at Imminent Brewing drew more than 80 attendees and included participation from the St. Paul Sabios Cantores and a Peruvian folklórico dance group. The Spanish Book Club continued meeting regularly.

On April 30, the Oasis program hosted *Día de los Niños/Día del Libro* with Pamela Michelli, an Afro-Latina artist from Puerto Rico who integrates dance, literature, and community programming. The event included storytelling and activities for families.

Alexus – Hosted Adult LEGO Craft Night on March 31, where participants created coral reef habitats using LEGO bricks.

*An **Included Community** is a community in which every person is seen, heard, and engaged*

In collaboration with Carleton professor Ingrid Luna, the library hosted Bëngbe Uaman Luare: Our Sacred Place, featuring Indigenous artists from Colombia. The photo exhibit was on display March 11–25, with a presentation on March 12.

Participated in a bilingual community panel at St. Olaf, where students engaged with local organizations and community work.

Natalie and Angelica appeared on ArtZany (KYMN Radio) during National Library Week to highlight upcoming programs and projects.

The HHC committee continued meeting. Natalia joined the group and supported logistics, outreach, and media coordination.

Francisco – Rafael and Gerardo resumed programming. Rafael led the Spanish conversation table on Fridays and a computer class, while Gerardo led Spanish conversation on Wednesdays and English conversation on Saturdays.

A Connected Community is a community with access to needed resources for all

Offered a hybrid Spanish-language tax program on March 21 with four attendees.

Kaitlin continued expanding the bookmobile large print collection to support older adult outreach through visits and lobby stops. Additional materials are being added to Oasis.

On April 4, attended the Seed Coalition Presidents' Awards Celebration with Alexis and Natalie.

Joined the Growing Our Roots board in March.

Completed a photo shoot for the Xavier Tavera Latino Community Art Project, a community-based portrait project documenting Latino residents. Exhibit planned for August.

Karin – The bookmobile large print collection launched on April 23 and was well received, with strong interest in new titles.

Karin met with the Jefferson Square Townhome navigator and added a summer stop on the fourth Thursday rotation. She also coordinated with all bookmobile stops to share Summer Reading information, generating strong early engagement.

Francisco – In April, circulation staff Natalia and Lily visited Hand in Hand Preschool at the Northfield Community Education Center.

Met with Friends of Downtown Northfield to discuss participation in Third Thursday block parties planned for September.

Tabled at the Earth Day Celebration, reaching approximately 150 community members, with multiple checkouts and two new library card sign-ups.

Tabled at St. Olaf's Rolvaag Library during National Library Week, resulting in 12 new library cards and 2 renewals.

*An **Empowered Community** is equipped for the changing world*

Participated in ARSL training on Financial Literacy Programming in Libraries on March 19.

Spoke to a first-year “Adulting” class at St. Olaf (24 students) about library services and engagement opportunities. A student later shared:

“I recognized you from coming to speak to our class—you inspired me to get off campus, visit the library, and look for ways to get involved in the community.”

Met with external reviewers as part of Carleton's CCCE decennial review process to provide community partner perspective.

Alexus – Planning continued for the third annual Celebrate Asia Pasifika event, with three food vendors confirmed: Tin Tea, Young Man (Balinese-Hawaiian food truck), and Bangkok Sweetheart. Circus Manduhai will open the event with support from the Friends of the Library. ASL interpretation will be provided for speakers and emcees to increase accessibility.

Met with Candace Godfrey at the Northfield Community College Collaborative to discuss expanded library support for student research needs and potential classroom instruction in fall.

Bookmobile and outreach visits included:

- Library pop-up visits to A Great Day Farm (Marzo 18 and April 15)
- Preschool visits to Hand in Hand (April 15, 17, and 22), serving 80+ children
- Older Adult visits (March 19 and 26 and April 16 and 23)
- Healthy Kids Day at YMCA (April 18),
- St. Olaf Rolvaag Library tabling for Library Week (April 22)
- Earth Day outreach event (April 25),



Lego program



Hand and Hand – Preachool



Sabios Cantores Northfield



Vladimir Garrido and Angelica Linder
Sabios Cantores Northfield



Photo Exhibit and presentation-Bêngbe Uaman Luare: Our Sacred Place



Technology class in Spanish winter class 2026- St. Dominic Church

Youth Services

April - May 2026

Submitted by Amy Nelson, Youth Services Manager, Emily Lloyd and Cat Sebright, Youth Services Librarians

*An **invited community** is a community that feels at home in their library.*

Cat writes, "In April, the young adult collections were relocated to the space formerly known as the Mystery Room. Now all of the YA collections (including YA non-fictions!) are in one space, and teens have a new and larger space to gather. We are utilizing signage, book displays, and decorations to slowly make the space appear more visibly teen-centric.

The two winter D&D campaigns have wrapped up as of the end of April. This is the first time that we've had two campaigns run simultaneously. It cost twice as much to pay a second teen to lead the additional campaign, but teens reported that two smaller groups were much more enjoyable to participate in than one large (often loud and unruly) group."

Em reported, "There are certain events we hold at the library that tend to attract kids and families who DON'T regularly come to the library, and the annual Potato Derby (on March 14 this year) is one of them. It's great to see youth who are motivated to participate in and extremely engaged at a library program, and it also assures me that we ARE being heard (people know what's going on here!) publicity-wise; some people just wait until Their One Passion comes up and then make it here, where they feel as home as can be, sprawling on the floor and craning their necks to witness every millisecond of a potato car race. This collaboration between the library, St Olaf's STEMQuest team, and Family Fare (speedy spud donors) has become well-loved and known to the point that Prairie Creek Elementary asked me for information on moving parts because they've decided to hold a Potato Derby at their school, too."

*An **included community** is a community in which every person is seen, heard, and engaged.*

Em writes, "Spring Break for kids held lots of variety in programs: a visit from The Works where kids learned about different properties of light and built their own kaleidoscopes; a celebration of *KPOP Demon Hunters* (movie) with lots of things to make, do, sing, and dance to; a drop-in LEGO Glasses-making program at the Library Oasis, and the mini-golf course planned by Cat and teens. April saw two Earth Day-related programs: a performance of Heart of the Beast Theater's new puppet show "Trees Are Cool", and an intergenerational program on Pollinators where attendees made their own bee houses."

Cat said, "The teens spent a few hours a month from January to March creating props for a mini-golf course. This was a long dreamed-of project, and it was exciting to see it come to fruition with 6 mini golf holes set up for 2 hours of walk-in golfing over spring break (for all ages).

TAB always has ideas for new and unusual programs, and we've been able to bring some of them to life recently. Over spring break we had a teen Karaoke Party, where participants bravely got up in front of their peers and belted out their favorite songs. Even more successful was the first-ever "Creator Club," a place for teens to show off their creations. We had a great turnout and a broad array of creations: illustrations (physical and digital mediums), original music, minecraft creations, fan fiction writing, short films, and even a ghost hunting documentary. The current crop of teens is very creative and it's exciting to have a monthly/bi-monthly place for them to show off their talents."



In April, Cat represented teen services at NPL by presenting at PLA on "How to plan an escape room for teens." This 20-minute presentation on the How-to stage was a speed run (as the teens say) of the 3 escape rooms Cat and the library teens have collaborated on since fall 2023. The presentation went well and seemed to be well received. Amy adds, "it was difficult to judge how many people were "attending" programs at the how-to stage, but at one point, I counted 75 people listening!"

*A **connected community** is a community with access to needed resources for all.*

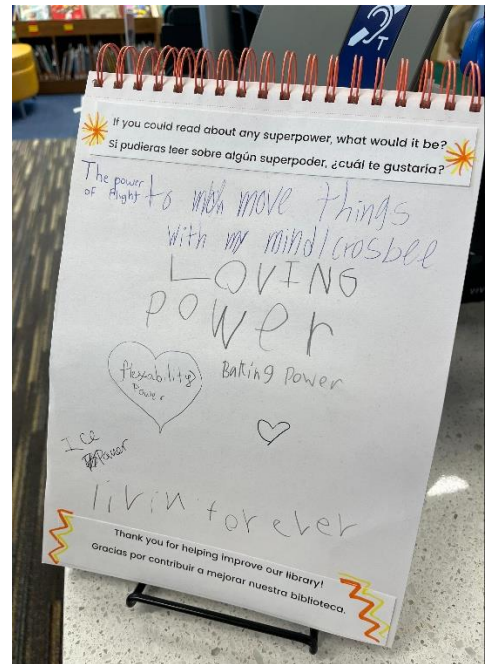
Tyler had some funding available towards the end of a grant related to financial literacy, so we were able to purchase a new book pack, some board games for children, pretend cash registers, and a market stand to enhance the opportunities children and caregivers have to interact with topics related to financial literacy.



*An **informed community** is a community that understands what their library offers and shapes their library with feedback.*

Em pointed out to Amy that someone had answered the most recent question we've featured on the Children's Desk "If you could read about any superpower, what would it be?" with "Loving power." No notes, little friend, no notes.

Amy, Cat, and Emily all attended the Public Library Association conference in Minneapolis April 1-3. We attended so many inspiring sessions and speakers. We are grateful to the Public Library Association for making so grant opportunities available (Cat and Emily were both recipients), the Friends and Foundation of Northfield Public Library for sponsoring the entire staff's attendance at one day, and the Library Board for supporting a robust professional development budget to allow us to learn from colleagues across the US and even the world! Amy says, "I still feel like I'm processing what I heard and saw at PLA and look forward to continuing to reflect so we can use the knowledge we all gained to continue refining and improving our work."



*An **empowered community** is equipped for the changing world*

From Amy: work continues with ISG, Inc. on plans for a refreshed children's area equipped for a changing world. 😊 That isn't exactly the three so called "prongs" of the grant, but essentially, we hope to have increased capacity for flexibility to allow us to adapt to whatever future needs the library has supporting education, workforce, and healthcare needs in the community. We should have images from the architects to share soon and hope to place our shelving order before the end of May. It will still be several months until the units are fabricated and installed, but I am so excited to begin crossing from planning and dreaming into executing the vision. Enjoy a little sneak peek!

