



Northfield Public Library Director's Report March 2018

Director's Report

Submitted by Teresa Jensen, Library Director

February was been an extremely busy month for library staff, with several initiatives underway. Two of these initiatives are the City ID program, and the launch of our new bookmobile.

We have complete the design process for the Municipal/City ID and the design has been submitted to our IdentiSys representative to create a proof and begin manufacture of the card, which will take 20 business days to create. Cost for the program, including card manufacture, but not including staff time or postage, is a little over \$4,000. At this point we anticipate the implementation date to be at the end of April.

With the arrival of the bookmobile we are working to introduce the new bus to the community. We had an open house/reveal to the community on February 23, with City Councilor Suzie Nakasian speaking on behalf of Mayor Pownell. Friends Treasurer and past president Bill North spoke for the Friends, reminding us all of their vital support for the library through the years. Bookmobile contributors representing Northfield Rotary, Northfield United Way, and Taylor Truck Line were also honored guests at the event. We plan on bringing the bookmobile to City Council on March 13, and to the Library Board on March 14.

Adult Services

Submitted by Debby Nitz

February was a busy month with our 4 Fridays of music concerts. Around 150 patrons and staff enjoyed music from a variety of Northfield musicians. I noticed there were regulars who attended all 4 concerts! I think these were well received. We have 2 adult programs coming up in March – Native American author Marcie Rendon speaks on March 12 about her new book “Murder on the Red River” and retired City Administrator and history buff Tim Madigan speaks on Thursday March 15 on the “Myths of the 1960s”.

We are in negotiations with Graywolf Press to bring National Book Award Finalist and Minneapolis Poet, Danez Smith to the Northfield Public Library for National Poetry Month either end of April or first of May. Stay tuned! We plan on having this in the atrium as it will likely be a packed house! We have heard if we get him it will be a coup!

We are about to launch a new film streaming service called Kanopy. This was suggested to us by a library patron and we trialed this in Jan. It was well received by staff. With Kanopy, patrons will find “30,000 of

the world's best films, including award-winning documentaries, are and hard-to-find titles, film festival favorites, indie and classic films". We hope to have the link to this soon on our website. It will be free with your library card but access will be limited to 5 viewings per month per patron.

As I prepare for my retirement I am busy weeding the nonfiction collection. I'm especially looking at books that have been in the collection for 20 plus years to check on condition and relevance. I'm preparing a talk for staff for our Staff Day on April 6 on using the microfilm newspaper collection and our resources for researching Northfield history.

Submitted by Jamie Stanley

Sex and the Romance Novel

Romance novels account for 53% of all mass-market adult popular fiction paperbacks; this is a surprise to most people. Of the fiction genres that I manage for the Northfield Library, romance is the one I am least familiar and comfortable with. To develop and maintain a balanced collection that reflects the variety of romances in the market and appeals to romance novel readers in Northfield I have undertaken a long term educational project to learn as much about this fiction genre as I can.

To dispel the most common misconceptions about romances: They are NOT about sex. In order for a book to qualify as a romance in the purest sense, the focus of the story MUST BE the developing relationship between the heroine and the hero. The relationship is the main character of a romance. In women's fiction, the focus is on a particular woman or women and she may have one or more relationships during the course of the book. This is the reason that the work of popular authors like Danielle Steele is women's fiction, not romance. In women's fiction, the woman "does not need to get her man" as is the case with romance fiction.

Additionally, the fuss about sex in romance novels is hypocritical. Sometimes, there may be sex between the hero and heroine but their physical relationship is accompanied by an emotional commitment, in service of the developing relationship between the characters. Once the romance between them starts these protagonists are monogamous. Contrast this with a number of books written by both men (Eric Jerome Dickey, Sidney Sheldon, Harold Robbins) and women (Jackie Collins, Iris Johansen) that include graphic descriptions of sex devoid of emotional content. The plot in these works of fiction are as deep as they need to be but they could hardly be considered works of literary fiction. Romance novels are considered fluff and trash while the popular fiction novels that often top best-sellers lists are not.

Submitted by Joan Ennis

I have been very busy with Northfield Reads, Hot Reads, St. Dominic History Day projects, and author speakers this past month. Northfield Reads has met and planned four events in March, focusing on the ideas in the book *Revolution Where You Live*, by Sarah Van Gelder. Events are

planned each week in March, focusing on groups in Northfield making a difference on a local level, and ways to build bridges within our community.

Hot Reads for Cold Nights, our adult winter reading program ended on March 4. We had close to 40 participants, and winners were pleased to receive \$5.00 gift certificates to local businesses. Participants filled out a short description of the books they read, which were kept in a notebook for participants to browse.

After providing a History Day Hullabaloo for St. Dominic seventh graders in December, I have been in contact with the class, along with several mentors. We met with the students at St. Olaf Library, Carleton College Library, to show them databases and materials available at the colleges. We have met the students in their classroom to help them focus on their thesis statement and organizing their research. They will present their research projects on March 15 at the school, as a play, website, or display.

We had several author speakers in February. Peter Geye, who won the Minnesota Book Award in fiction last year spoke on February 5. Local author Sharon Henry spoke on February 8.

Another local author, Reginald Haslett-Marroquin spoke on February 12. Unfortunately I had to miss the speakers on February 5 and 8th because of illness, and was looking forward to hearing both of them.

The Open Writing group and Contemporary Women Writers book group are going well and continue to draw new members.

Communication & Web Services

Submitted my Layna Mestad, Library Assistant

My first Director's Report! February was a busy month for communication and web services since I took over Ian's responsibilities. I have been getting acquainted with web logistics and teaming up with Steve Maus on the communications side of things. Steve makes the event graphics, and I post them to our website, calendar, and Facebook page. Steve is now in charge of Tech Time, and doing an awesome job leading it. Tyler is our new Tech Time recruit and will be meeting with patrons in need of tech help-thanks Tyler! All of this was previously under Ian's umbrella (what a champ), but since the shuffling of positions some of our responsibilities look a little different.

I'm getting the opportunity to help Emily with children's programming when needed. I covered a Family Storytime last month (if you heard what sounded like dinosaurs on the main level, that was me). I'm looking forward to cover my first Baby Storytime in a couple of weeks, and I'm at the beginning stages of planning a book group for teens with Emily. This is a project that I'm really excited about, so be on the lookout in the coming months!

Children's Services

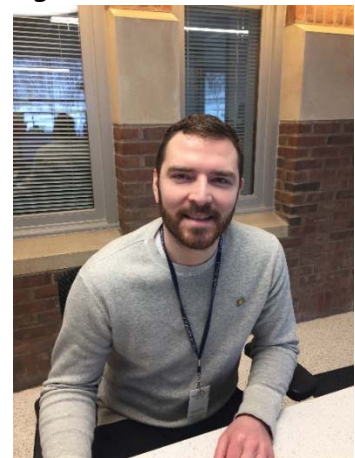
Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Children's Programming Librarian

In Children's Services, this month's chief joy was getting every third grader at Greenvale Park Elementary a library card, and having all 3rd grade classes tour the library and check out one book each! Many thanks are due to Anne Balluff for making the cards. . What's more, each child now has a punch card kept at the Children's Desk--for every visit, they get a punch, and when they get all ten punches, they get a bookmark from the library and a new book from Greenvale Park. The cherry on top was that the class visits were accomplished on the same day as the Bookmobile reveal. The kids were excited to be the very first children to see it. For the record, we were approached by Greenvale for this program. I intend to share its success with Sibley and Bridgewater staff to see if they would be interested (and have the funding available--Greenvale Park handled the cost of the buses, and the library already pays for every first grade class to visit later in the Spring). Booking or designing upcoming programs for March (Spring Break month for schools) was also paramount. We have the National Eagle Center coming on Spring Break week, as well as Bridget Novak from the Northfield Arts guild. The first Saturday of Spring Break-- March 24, from 2-4pm, we're holding a "Great Book & Puzzle Swap"--where families can bring in a book or puzzle they're ready to let go of, and "shop" for an equivalent number of items from other families' contributions. I'm hoping to generate a lot of buzz for this event, so please share it with any you know who may be interested.

Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush Vizina, Technology Circulation Services Manager

I am pleased to introduce you to Tyler Gardner our new Circulation Clerk I. He grew up in Arkansas where he received his undergraduate degree in Writing. He moved to the cities and attended St Catherine's where he received his library degree. He is engaged to Sarah who is working in the music department at St. Olaf. They are planning a move to Northfield as soon as they can find a place and a wedding in the Fall. You will see him greet you at the circulation desk and he will also be helping patrons with technology appointments and working with the library webpage. WELCOME TYLER!



Shelving and Volunteer Services

Submitted by Laurie Kodet, Shelving/Volunteer Manager

I am taking an independent study this semester focusing on worksite wellness. I accepted the position of co-chair of the City's wellness committee and so my study will be beneficial to city staff. I interviewed staff across departments asking about wellness habits, participation in worksite wellness programs, and asked for ideas and input on programming. I found the staff all be very welcoming and openly shared their opinions and ideas. I also want to share, that when asked about feeling supported by management staff in regards to worksite wellness – they each responded positively. The information I have collected and am researching will help shape our worksite wellness and the hope is to increase participation and continue to offer ways to promote wellness for the city staff.

I am working with the library's outreach and as part of that have joined Angelica Linder, Outreach Coordinator in meeting with community organizations to learn more about possible partnerships. We meet with Laura Tiano, Growing up Healthy; we discussed the possibility of bringing the bookmobile to Tuesdays in Park. Angelica and I attended a cultural diversity workshop presented by Patricia Fenrick from Minnesota Department of Human Services. Patricia is a fantastic presenter who clearly conveyed cultural differences and how our culture guides how we see, act, and react to situations.

Visioning, developing, and scheduling outreach using the bookbike and bookmobile have been a priority for me over the past few weeks. The bookbike will be present at Riverwalk Market Fair from June thru September. Staff member will take a turn and a storytime will be part of our presence this year. The bookmobile is scheduled for Books & Stars events, Healthy Kids Day and Truck & Tracker night – with more to come.

The new bookmobile arrived on Thursday, February 15th. Steve Maus, Leesa Wisdorf, and I spent the day learning the ins and outs of our new bookmobile. In addition to driving, we took the bus to the Street shop so that Ryan Kiefer (City's mechanic) could learn the specifics for maintenance. The bookmobile was revealed to the public on February 23rd. The event ran from 10:30-noon, Teresa Jensen, Bill North, Friends & Foundation of Northfield Public Library, and Suzie Nakasain, City Council each spoke and the bus was open for viewing.

Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate

Events

- Saturday, February 3. Helped organize the local preliminary round of the Be Heard Minnesota Youth Poetry Slam Series, held at the Kracum Performance Hall at Carleton

College. Three Northfield high school students (Alondra Pérez, Rayanah Richmond, and Chris Lazaro) advanced to the state semifinals in the Twin Cities in March.

- Monday, February 5. Read an original poem for the 2018 Arts and Culture Commission's LivingTreasure Award event.
- Thursday, February 8. Participated in an evening event hosted by Cathy Wurzer and The Convenings to further a discussion of living well at the end of life. Participated in an interview with Cathy Wurzer and wrote and read a poem for the event that Wurzer and The Convenings shared on Facebook. Announced a call for submissions for a collection of poetic "living wills."
- Thursday, February 15. Helped organize and host the Civic Poetics Festival at Carleton College, which featured readings by Heid E. Erdrich, Matt Rasmussen, Anders Carlson-Wee, Sun Yung Shin, Gretchen Marquette, and Michael Torres.

Other Activities

- Wrote an "all-school poem" for Prairie Creek Community School, based on meetings and brainstorming sessions with Prairie Creek students in January.
- Met with a local poet (and previous Sidewalk Poetry winner) several times to give feedback on his poetry and suggest possible markets.
- Promoted the Sidewalk Poetry Competition through Facebook posts and emails.