



Northfield Public Library Director's Report February 2019

Director's Report

Submitted by Teresa Jensen, Library Director

- February is report time. Our State Department of Education Annual Report is being compiled, the Outreach Annual Report has been just about completed, and several reports for City Council will be presented in the next two months.
- Library Director Jensen and Library Services Manager Laurie Kodet, along with HR/Communications Director Michelle Mahowald and HCI staff have been working on a plan for the library to take over the function of the Link Center, currently administered by HCI. The Link Center, as it currently operates, provides resources to new residents of Northfield, with an emphasis on the Hispanic community. We envision an expanded scope for the Link Center if the Library takes it over in May. We will be presenting this initiative to City Council February 12, and ask for the Library Board's support at this meeting for us to take on. See our attached report for City Council.
- As part of the library's celebration of National Library Week, we will be asking City Council to approve fine forgiveness during the week of March 10-16; we are asking for Library Board support of this initiative also.
- The Arts and Culture Commission (ACC) will be bringing an updated Northfield Cultural Plan to City Council for adoption in March; the ACC has asked for the endorsement and support of many related Boards and Commissions, including the Library Board, included in our Board packet.
- Library staff, along with have been involved in the development and implementation of the City's first public art project; for more information go to www.mynpl.org/publicart . The next public art project will be the creation of new banners along downtown streets, and will involve the ACC and the Northfield Downtown Development Commission (NDDC) along with library staff.
- As a part of the IT Department's Strategic Plan we have been working to bring free WiFi to Bridge Square; this will become a reality by this spring 2019 at the latest.

- Upcoming event for Library Board participation; the City's State of the City address, March 18 at 6:30 PM at the Weitz Center; stay tuned for more information.

Adult Services

Submitted by Leesa Wisdorf, Adult and Youth Services Manager

As I write this, I finish my last full month as an employee of the Northfield Public Library. Tomorrow will be February 1, which means I have three weeks left as a professional librarian. This also means that much of the work I've done this month has been done, more than ever before, with the future in mind. The future of the staff who have taken on several of my collection responsibilities; have I trained them well enough to be comfortable and proficient in selection, order, cataloging and invoicing? The future of 2019 budgets; have the allocations been thoughtful, accurate and fair? The future of the overall NF collection; have I done as much deselection/weeding as possible is done so that the new person does not have to deal with full shelves, that requests are fulfilled, and new materials get purchased? The future Adult programming; do we have programs (and publicity) in place for February-April? The future of the Friends; does Laurie Kodet have everything she needs to be the new Friends liaison? And of course, will my replacement have everything they need for a smooth transition for the library?

The polar vortex meant that several January programs had to be rescheduled. The books discussion for "With the End in Mind" was delayed one week and will be held February 5th. The author program featuring Minnesota Book Award winner Cary Griffith was postponed until March 26th – this will be a fascinating program about two Boundary Waters books: ***Lost in the Wild*** is the story of two different people who were lost in the BWCA, and ***Gunflint Burning*** about the Ham Lake fire. Cary is a finalist for a second MN Book award this April for ***Gunflint Burning***.

Every Saturday morning in January, I facilitated the free Yoga program led by Bob Bruce. We had a roomful of appreciative participants - 18 brave souls showed up the 3rd session even with below zero temperatures! Free Zumba classes will be offered February – March on Saturdays from 8-9 in the Atrium.

This will be the third year we offer free February Friday Concerts in the Library beginning with guitarist Randy Ferguson, who played to a standing-room only audience on February 1. On February 8 we host the Linden String Quartet; February 15, the Irish Tunesters will perform, and we will end with the band 3AM on February 22 playing Americana Folk. We hope you can stop in from 12-1pm any Friday of the month for an hour of music.

Since this will be my last written report to you, I want to thank you for the opportunity to work at the Northfield Public Library and to serve the greater Northfield community. I was hired in 1995 as the Children's Librarian, working most of those years with Kathy Ness as my partner. Under two great directors, I was able to grow professionally and am proud of the ideas that became signature programs: Booker the Bookmobile, Books & Stars, Baby Lapsit, the Teen Advisory Board, and of course, the Magic of Model Trains. I have worked with wonderful staff, many whom I consider dear friends. I am excited and encouraged by the many new staff we have, with their outstanding customer service and great new program ideas. Your work as Library Board members helps to make this library one of the best in SELCO, if not in Minnesota. I believe in the power of lifelong learning, equal opportunity and the wonder of books. I love libraries and have spent my professional career in their sacred spaces. I look forward now to more time with family, but will see you in the stacks!

Submitted by Joan Ennis

- Northfield Reads is busy planning a number of speakers and book discussion through the spring. Since our focus is on race, with the book *A Good Time for the Truth; Race in Minnesota*, for our January event, we invited the community to attend one of the local Martin Luther King events. Many people attended the event at Emmaus Church.
- On January 8, I returned to Three Links for their Brain Fitness. I created some games as a follow up to my presentations on autobiographies in December. I listed authors and facts and asked them to match the facts to the person. I also encouraged them to think about what they would include if they were writing an autobiography.
- On January 15, The Contemporary Women Writers Book group read and discussed *The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn. This novel focuses on a true spy network that existed during both World Wars, with mostly women working in the network.
- On January 16, the Open Writing Group met. New members are joining the group and sharing their writing.
- On January 24, author Loretta Ellsworth spoke about her writing and her book *Stars Above Clear Lake*, a novel set in Iowa, involving big band music and POW camps during World War II. Although the talk was on a very cold night, we had a decent audience, and people were very interested in her research.
- I applied through SELCO to have a Minnesota Book Award winner speak at our library, and William Kent Krueger will be speaking here on April 18! I am looking for a larger space for his talk, because he will draw a big crowd.

Submitted by Jamie Stanley

Supporting diversity: Librarians who work in public libraries are stewards of spaces that allow (promote!) inclusion and diversity of thought and belief. Yet when a young mother with a toddler and baby on hip asked me to for an alternative book suggestion to the DiscoverReads

Adult Winter Reading Program challenge “Read an LGBTQ+ themed novel” because she did not support this movement, I was not prepared to respond.

The easy thing would have been to stamp the square on the card for this challenge, but this seemed facile and a dodge. Neither did I push her to read a book written by LGBTQ+ author. Rather I told her that I would need to think about an alternative challenge and consult other librarians. The upside of my response was that I wanted to respect her perspective (while buying some time to consider) and also honor the mantra of diversity embraced in the Northfield Library. The downside of my response was that it was unlikely I would have another opportunity to interact with this person.

Via e-mail, I shared this situation with other librarians along with a possible idea that reading a banned book might be an acceptable substitute. A variety of opinions from my colleagues emerged. An activist suggested that I recommend this person read any book written for adults or kids by a well-known author who also happens to be gay. Maurice Sendak for example. While reasonable, I would likely not do this, not being comfortable with where this conversation could possibly lead. Another staff member suggested that I should have given her the stamp, someone else thought the banned book idea acceptable.

This situation brought home to me that the bedrock statement of inclusion and diversity are important for the Northfield Library to publically affirm, but channeling this message person to person is a more nuanced endeavor.

Submitted by Tyler Gardner

- The first month of the DiscoverReads Winter Reading Program wrapped up on the 31st of January. There were about 40-50 entries in to the drawing and at least 20 people signed up to participate. There were likely more participants whose names did not get added to the signup sheet. The winner of the January drawing received \$100 in gift cards to different local businesses.
- I had at least three Tech Times for people trying to use older model Kindles and Nooks who were unable to get ebooks on to their device because of lack of Overdrive support or something similar. Unfortunately, we are unable to help these people get ebooks on their devices. Going to be looking in to updating out e-reader Libguide with updated information.
- I’ve taken the reigns on purchasing fiction DVDs from Leesa as she prepares to move out of her position.
- I received word from SELCO that our application for a program featuring James Bowey was accepted and approved. He will be here in April.

- A small group met to discuss our approach to Libguides. A number of unpublished Guides void of content have been removed as we work towards finding the best way to organize the Libguides. We are also working to decide which Libguides are worth keeping around.
- I briefly discussed the idea of putting a program together on how to use EbscoHost with Joan. It hasn't gone further than that yet but I am going to be working on a possible tutorial/information session on using it to search for magazine articles. Just want to do an introductory thing about how and why you might access this database.
- Nick Novotny showed me how to access the LibGuide HTML and CSS so I can make system wide changes to the website if we need to. I like technology.

Youth Services

Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Children's Programming Librarian

January was a banner month for children's programming. I'm passionate about (but also terrified of) trying new things that aren't entirely in my comfort zone, and always hopeful--but never sure--they will be successful. In January, these were a toddler obstacle course, a read-aloud for homeschooling families, and a "Family STEAMFest," where families could take on engineering challenges, engage with robots with the RoboRaiders (Northfield High's robotics team), explore different technologies like Arduino and LittleBits, and more (STEAM, for the uninitiated, stands for "Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math"). All were hits and programs I'll repeat in the future. For Catch a Chapter, the homeschool read-aloud, I read the first few chapters of four books and had copies available for kids who wanted to check them out. Every copy of every book got checked out--including 6 copies of a children's memoir about having polio as a child, a book I imagine few kids would choose while browsing. It was a delight to be able to do "storytime" for an older crowd, and good to learn that the homeschooling community really wants and appreciates library programming during their school day (we met in the morning). Our next Catch a Chapter is scheduled for March 8.

The STEAMFest was my first experience of offering something entirely out of my wheelhouse, and inviting and relying on community members to make something spectacular. The robotics students and teachers, Jim Pokorney, and Kathryn and Lydia Sopa all offered activities I'd never seen before. I had very little idea of what the program would look like. It was fantastic! Nearly 90 attended, and it really got the community mingling--young children interacting with high school students, caregivers and enthusiasts interacting with community experts. I'm excited to make this program annual, and to come up with new ideas for "fests" that draw on the talents of community members.

Collection-wise, the Northfield Rotary gifted us with \$500 earmarked for children's books in Spanish. This money has been spent, and once all of the books are processed I'll take and share a

picture (with the Rotary and to the library's social media channels, thanking the Rotary) of our refreshed children's Spanish section. The children's Spanish collection, both fiction and nonfiction books, has been moved to a more visible location at the beginning of children's nonfiction.

Coming up in February, I'll be booktalking to four third grade classes at Sibley, and four third grade classes at Greenvale will be coming in for tours and library cards. STEM Bunnies--a rabbit rescue nonprofit started by a ten year old boy--will be at the library on February 9.



Submitted by Layna Mestad, Youth Services/Teen Librarian

January was a month of planning and implementing outreach efforts and a new teen group. We had our first Teen Book Group meeting, and 3 teens attended. TAB members voted on *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely as this month's pick. The themes of this book encouraged important conversations related to racism, white privilege, and police brutality as told through two first-person narratives. February's book is *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon. This is a "read the book and watch the movie" meeting as the movie is available through our performance rights license. Yay!

TAB has been busy planning programming and YA reader's advisory related efforts. We received Teresa's approval to make in-the-stacks recommendation cards within the YA section. One of our TAB members had the idea, which we think will be a great opportunity for reader's advisory for teens by teens. It will look similar to the recommendation cards at Content Bookstore that are the size of a notecard and folded in half to hang off the bookshelf. I would like to make room for read-alike titles at the bottom of each card. This would help interested readers find similar titles to the one that is being recommended, especially helpful if the recommended title is checked out.

TAB is also planning a Teen Game Night which will take place in late February. This is an after-hours event on a Saturday night. We'll have pizza and snacks, board games, and we'll check out the Wii console from SELCO for a Wii tournament.

I collaborated with Northfield Middle School 6th grade teacher, Sarah Bloom, for a presentation to her students about research skills and best practices in early January. I was at the middle school for a day to talk with each of her classes about how to find credible sources using the CRAAP method (yes, CRAAP), the difference between databases and the web, and put these skills to practice with a search exercise. I had another 6th grade writing teacher reach out, and I presented to her writing class last week. I had a blast interacting with the kids, and we are excited about the potential of this leading to future collaborations between the middle school and NPL.

Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush, Technology Circulation Services Manager

A new year at the library means lots of new materials. Our selectors have a new budget in place and purchase many new materials for our lucky patrons. In January, 860 items were ordered from Baker and Taylor alone. Every day Baker & Taylor and Amazon boxes are delivered by UPS for staff to unpack. After they are unpacked and cataloged, circulation staff will process the new materials. This involves stamping identification on the book, printing a spine label and for books with covers, wrapping the covers with plastic. After they are processed, I will add them into the database and then they are ready to be put out for our patrons to browse or to fill requests.



Outreach, Shelving and Volunteer Services

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

Volunteer of the Month

Eve Webster

Eve has been volunteering in the library for many years. We really appreciate her smile and positivity! She helps make sure many of our children's programs run smoothly!

Thank you so much Eve for all you do!



City ID

We implemented an “on-demand” and appointment based model for processing City ID applications. Angelica and I are working with both Carleton and St. Olaf colleges to schedule a City ID program on their campuses.

Outreach

January has been busy with scheduling outreach programs. Angelica and I will be attending grade school conferences where we will promote library services and issues library cards in February and March. We have confirmed a visit to St. Dominic’s Church in March between services to promote library services, City ID, and issue library cards.

Professional Development

I will be purchasing materials for the bookmobile and have begun to learn how to use the acquisitions component of Horizon. Leesa is an excellent trainer and provided me with great notes. I am thankful to have had her mentor me in so many ways.

Submitted by Angelica Linder, Outreach Coordinator

We are off to a good start to the year with Spanish programs and Outreach activities.

On January 11th, we held our first Spanish Book Club – “Club de lectura” with 7 participants. Our first book was a biography from Colombian writer Hector Abad Faciolince “El olvido que seremos” Thanks to the support from the Friends of the Library, we could acquire the books necessary to start the club. Our Spanish Books from the club will be available for our patrons and open to SELCO system to be check out as a Book Club Kit.

Computer class in Spanish started on Tuesdays and Sundays with Javier Ramirez (Carleton student worker). In our first class we had 10 students, a good response, but we want to keep the class with just six students; this is why we are offering a class on Sunday.

I’m honored to say I’ve been asked to be a Judge on the 2019 Sidewalk Poetry, New Voices. This year is open to submit poems in Spanish. The kick off day was on January 26th, I translated and read the winning poems from 2018.

Zumba is back! Thanks to a generous donation from a patron whom enjoyed Zumba when we offered it during the 2018 Hispanic Heritage month.

February happenings:

- Spanish Book Club – Second Monday of the month at 7pm.
- Computer Class – Every Tuesday at 6:15pm and Sunday at 3pm
- Zumba- instructor Victoria Nolasco, every Saturday in February and March @ 8 am.
- Elementary School visits during conference to promote library services and issue kids library cards. Laurie & Angelica.

Northfield Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate

Programming

- January 10: Hosted Poetry Night: Faribault Poets (attendance: 25)
- January 18: Be Heard Minnesota Youth Poetry Slam (attendance: 100)
- January 19: Read poem ("Milkweed") at WINGS annual meeting
- January 26: Hosted 2019 Sidewalk Poetry Kick-off
- January 28: Read poem at 2019 Living Treasure Award celebration

Meetings

- January 9: Layna Mestad (teen writing group)
- January 15 & 24: Bridget Novak (poetry possibilities at Laura Baker)
- January 16: Alan Rubenstein (poetry recitation group)
- January 28: Nancy & Cindy Carlson, Wendy Smith, Dan Kallman (community dinner)
- January 31: Bonnie Jean Flom (sidewalk poetry)

Upcoming Events

- February 7: Poetry Night: Christopher Bakken (7pm, Northfield Public Library)
- February 15: Submission deadline for Writers Night
- February 28: Submission deadline for sidewalk poetry

Other

I've been asked to write a poem for the State of the City address event (March 18), to serve on the Creativity Committee for a community dinner in August, and to be the Content Expert for a GVP teacher's Master's degree capstone project on poetry.

