

A blue silhouette of a town skyline with various buildings and a church steeple, set against a green horizontal bar.

Northfield Public Library Director's Report December 2019

Director's Report

Submitted by Teresa Jensen, Library Director

I've been thinking—struggling, actually, for ways to engage the Library Board in a manner that recognizes the value of the Board's collective wisdom; we have had wonderful exchanges when we have presented the Board with policy changes or additions, but often it seems like our Board meetings are presentations of information (budget, for instance) with not a lot of discussion. Last month, at the end of our November meeting we had an impromptu discussion that really encouraged me to find a way to tap into the Board heart and brains, for lack of a better way to put it, and so I will be proposing two changes to our monthly meeting. One change will be to add a regular report, in the reports part of the meeting, from our teen representatives—you guys are great members to the Library Board, and we would all appreciate hearing a report from you all as a part of the Mayor's Youth Council, and for you to have a chance to tell us what's going on at the high school, especially in ways that we can be a better partner with the school. The second change will be to ask a question to the Board to elicit ideas and input on ways to help us in our decision-making at the library. Every month will be a new question, and it will be a part of the agenda that you all get a few days before the current meeting date. I hope you will find this intriguing, engaging and a valuable use of the Library Board.

Adult Services

Submitted by Katlin Heidgerken-Greene, Reference Services Manager

This month, I redesigned our library Events calendar flyer as a booklet, with English and Spanish integrated into one document and more event descriptions included to help feature our programs for the month. It will continue to evolve, but so far, feedback has been very positive!

Weekly Saturday storytime continued in November, with attendance numbers growing steadily over the fall session. I had several families tell me they hope we will keep offering the Saturday storytime. One parent said that they are making sure to attend and have been spreading the word to their friends so that we can keep supporting it! That has been wonderful to see, and attendance has climbed from 10-12 people at the beginning to 18-20 over the final weeks. I filled in for one of Emily's Thursday family storytimes this month and it was fun to have repeat attendees come back for my Saturday one that weekend. We are on a break over the holidays, but Saturday storytime returns January 11, 2020!

I co-hosted the fall book discussion for NACPAC (Northfield Advanced Care Planning Advisory Council) November 12. 6 people attended. While small, the group had a great discussion of our book, *Driving Miss Norma*, and I consider that a success! A couple people commented on and checked out books relating to advanced care planning that I had displayed. I will be updating NACPAC's booklist and we will have our next discussion (title to be determined) in June.

The library's climate change booklist has also been updated to reflect recent purchases, and a pollinator exhibit display will be coming to the library in February to accompany the next Northfield Reads selection on the theme.

I am working on planning several programs, including our February concert series, an artist program in January, and a decluttering/home organization program (still working on details).

November also brought a Novelist training that 4 staff members attended, EXCITE training at MN Department of Education, and the start of a Supervisor Training series for the City of Northfield. In December, I look forward to hosting Beth Kallestad this Wednesday for What's in the Bin?, a recycling and waste reduction program, and to helping Laurie with the Magic of Model Trains/Winter Walk on December 12

Submitted by Joan Ennis

November was a busy month for programming. On November 12, I gave a book talk to Three Links residents on mysteries set in Australia or Scotland. The residents liked the variety and checked out many of the books I brought over. Two weeks later, on November 26, I returned to do a Brain Fitness activity with them. I brought the game Clue, to fit in with the theme of mysteries. Surprisingly, none of them had ever played before! It took them a little while to understand the game, but then they really liked it! They asked me to bring the game back and play another time.

On November 12, we had a Northfield Reads program. (Northfield Reads is focusing on climate change this year) We facilitated a discussion on *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver. Emily Mohl, St. Olaf faculty member, talked about monarch butterflies and their migration routes. Nancy Schumacher also talked about the importance of milkweed for monarch survival. We are planning another event focusing on a journal article about climate change, to be held at the library on February 27.

On November 13, the Open Writing Group met. Some of the members are working on longer projects. It is helpful for them to share their continuing progress. The group members are supportive of each other and give helpful feedback.

On November 14, local authors Karen and Dennis Vinar gave a presentation on their 2nd edition of their book *How Did You Find Me After All These Years*. They presented their first edition a year ago.

They were high school sweethearts in the late 1950's, had a daughter who was given up for adoption, and went their separate ways. They reconnected in 2014, and then married and have written a book about their story.

On November 18, the Memoir Writing Group met. Orlo Otteson talked about voice and setting in writing, and members shared what they had been working on for the past month.

On November 19, the Contemporary Women Writers Book Group met and discussed Paula McLain's

Circling the Sun, a novel based on the life of Beryl Markham, who was the first aviator to fly solo, nonstop across the Atlantic from east to west.

Submitted by Jamie Stanley

November 14th, I attended a free one-day program titled Program Evaluation hosted by the SELCO Library Network in Rochester. Sara Richter, Senior Statistician who works for Professional Data Analysts, Inc., a business headquartered in Minneapolis, presented this program.

Although Professional Data Analysts work most frequently for the health care industry, the interactive workshop I attended reframed the process used by the company to provide an industry neutral approach; a process that involves designing data gathering tools to collect and massage data and convey clear concise messages about what it reveals. In other words, a methodology that includes consideration of what data to collect to meet program goals, and how to use this data to tell a story to a target audience.

The story is usually summarized as a data snapshot also called a dashboard or visual summary. Elements of the data snapshot focus on telling the data story to the intended audience within the context of what success as defined by the organization (library) looks like. Data findings are therefore contextualized. If a program needs revision given the findings, a theory of change model is developed and included in the data snapshot. This model will elaborate on the suggested changes aka interventions to the existing program that will address how and why they will result in the desired (improved) change or outcome in the program; an outcome that will yield data that supports the organizations definition of success.

The PRISM theory of change model was discussed at length in the workshop. Predicated upon program goal/s (aka the outcome), the evaluation process is deconstructed by establishing evaluative criteria, constructing standards of evaluation, measuring and comparing those standards and synthesizing and integrating the results to identify which changes to the program (interventions) will support the goal(s) of the program.

Making sense of the data collected, selecting and using the best infographics that tell the story were also covered in this information rich workshop.

This was a useful workshop that I believe can help Northfield Library staff with program planning.

Submitted by Tyler Gardner

The highlight of October was being a panelist for the Minnesota State Arts Board Touring Artist Grant. A month ahead of the panel review I received a list of 25 grants to pre-review before meeting with the review panel in October. During the review panel, we discussed each applicant and made comments on the record about strengths and weaknesses of different proposals. It was an eye opening experience to be on the other side of the grant process, reviewing them instead of writing them. The big takeaway from the whole experience was the subjectivity of answers based on the reviewing body, and the necessity and impact of succinct, no frills answers to questions and prompts on the grant application. Going forward, as I survey the grantscape and search for opportunities that could benefit our community, I will be able to look back on my experience as a reviewer and answer questions that more precisely address the questions posed on the grant application. While it is good to have a narrative that reflects our community values, it is just as important if not more important to respond to grant application prompts with answers based on evidence and our ability to fulfill the requirements of the grant.

I have started to put together the things that I will need to bring the Adult Winter Reading program to life. I am going to be reaching out to staff soon about possible ideas for challenges. I am wanting to do a Treasure Hunt theme and have patrons navigate a series of sequential challenges that are arranged on a treasure map. The finer details are being hammered out.

I also went through some of the post-HHC feedback, budget, photos, surveys, etc to get an idea of what our follow-up to SEMAC is going to look like. Will be working on that throughout

November and December with the help of Laurie and Angelica. It is due December 15th.



I also have been communicating with Katlin regarding the February Noon Concert Series. I have a friend who is in production at Classical MPR who used to work with state-wide musical education groups as part of her job. I reached out to her and she provided us with some great names to reach out to for performances. At least one has already

responded and is on the docket for February. Sprig of That.

Youth Services

Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Youth Services Librarian

November offered several interesting outreach opportunities in Children's. In addition to storytime at Head Start, I participated in Sibley Elementary's Read-a-Thon in the Dundas Dome and taught an Early Literacy basics class as part of a babysitting training camp for middle schoolers. In the library, our third Arty Pants Storytime revolved around sound and music. We talked about vibration, listened to a variety of instruments, and made kazoos after sharing a story. On a Saturday afternoon, storyteller Jean Wakely presented "The Purple Sandwich Quilt Story," an all-ages program. Wakely displayed a pictorial, interactive (pop-up surprises) quilt her mother had made, each little vignette having its own story revolving around life at the one-room schoolhouse at which Wakely's grandmother taught and mother attended. While attendance was small--nine people--three kids were so transfixed they could hardly contain their questions, and Wakely answered all in pro form, acknowledging their insights and observations. Wakely's mother made 14 "story quilts," and I'd love to have Wakely back to present on another one, perhaps for an older crowd: in particular, she mentioned one that revolved around stories from the Holocaust that piqued my interest. In the children's area, we introduced an emergency diapers and wipes program sponsored by the Friends. Bilingual signs in the area and bathrooms let caregivers know we can help with emergency supplies if they're in a bind. When I mentioned the offering at November's Library Board meeting, one member mentioned that he's had to leave the library on more than one occasion for lack of a diaper! It's a small courtesy, another way to make tangible the library's commitment to thoughtful, thorough service. While not related to Children's services, in November I also presented a staff training on service to LGBTQIA+ patrons, attended the EXCITE training bootcamp, and participated on a library team with Katlin, Karin, and Sue that won second place at the Trivia Bee! In December, I'm looking



forward to our first of several Music & Movement programs with an early childhood Suzuki teacher, booktalking with Layna, a visit from MN Jack Sparrow, and several other events to round out the year and keep kids engaged over Winter Break.

Submitted by Layna Mestad, Youth Services/Teen Librarian

November was an exciting month of trying new programs for the young adults in our community. At the beginning of the month, we hosted our first YA author at the library that we've had in years. *The Calculus of Change* by Jessie Hilb was our teen book group selection from October. Jessie's author visit/meet & greet was a blast! Content Bookstore sold copies of the book, and it was great to see the interaction between

our book group members and the author whose work we read and enjoyed.



The Stranger Things Escape Room was the second program we hosted, and it was a huge hit! The library has never hosted an escape room program before, so hosting one with a popular theme like Stranger Things was a good place to start. There were two sessions offered on one weekday evening with 10 slots available for each. All slots were filled and the participants showed up decked in Stranger Things merch, which just added to the Hawkins Middle School AV Club vibe. Each session had 45 minutes to “escape the

room,” and they each did so with just over 6 minutes left to spare. They both successfully saved Will from the Upsidedown! We’ve had adults express interest in this program, so I’m working on scheduling a date for an adult audience.



The last half of the month has been spent preparing for two outreach collaborations, 6th grade book talks and TORCH post-secondary resources talk, both scheduled for the first week of December. Emily and I will tag team for the 6th grade book talks, each talking 15 books. We’re excited to offer a variety of books that we believe will appeal to the range of readers and interest levels of the students. TORCH reached out to the library in hopes we would provide a post-secondary resources talk with TORCH juniors and

seniors. Katlin updated the nonfiction college/scholarships material in our collection, and I plan on highlighting a number of resources (some library related resources and some not) that will help connect them to post-secondary related information (scholarships, major/career descriptions, different post-secondary education options, etc.). I am thrilled about these school collaborations, and hope these partnerships continue to grow!

Circulation Services Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush, Technology Circulation Services Manager



It is my pleasure to introduce our new Circulation Clerk 1 – Jeniffer Rosas. Jeniffer lives in Northfield and graduated from Northfield High School in 2018. For the past year she has been a Rotary Exchange Student in Argentina. She had a wonderful time! In January she will start attending NCC (Northfield Community College Collaborative). In her free time she enjoys spending time with her two nieces who are ages 3 and 8. Please say hello when you see her at the desk.

Outreach, Shelving and Volunteer Services

Submitted by Laurie Kodet, Shelving/Outreach Services Supervisor/Volunteer Manager and Angelica Linder, Outreach Coordinator

2019 Trivia Bee

The Friends and Foundation of the Northfield Public Library hosted their annual Trivia Bee at the Grand on November 1. Jessica Peterson White volunteered once more to host the event as Quiz Mistress. Fifteen teams competed and many spectators enjoyed the event. All prizes are donated from local businesses and volunteers organize and run this fun-filled night. Thanks to all who donated your time and dollars in support of the library – the event raised more than \$3,000!



Day of the Dead Celebration

- October 28 – November 3: An altar was set up to honor loved ones who have passed away; staff and patrons were invited to participate by adding to the altar.
- October 30 (57 attendees)
 - Presentation on the history of Day of the Dead

- Demonstration on how to make Papel Picado (a Mexican folk art)
- Performance by Kalpulli Ollin Ayacaxtly Azteca Dancers de Northfield
- November 2 (102 attendees)
 - Craft and children's activities
 - Face painting
 - Performance by Arts Guild Baile Foklorico



Other

On November 4 and 6, library staff toured the Northfield Community College Collaborative. The director, Katie Theis shared their mission and discussed possible collaborations.

The Spanish Computer Class Fall session has ended; there was an average of 5-6 students each week. The class will begin again on Mondays in mid-January.

Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate

Events

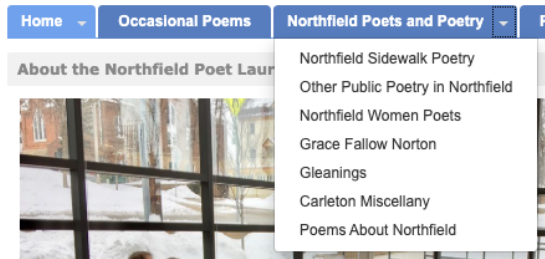
November 5. Poetry Night: Steve Schild, author of *Eros in Autumn* and *These Humans* (Northfield Public Library atrium). Attendance: 6.

Other Activities

- continued leading a once-a-month (third Wednesday) poetry group at one of the Laura Baker group residences.
- met with Andrei Sivanich, Bridget Novak, and Wendy Placko to plan a poetry presentation (with brief video) at the Laura Baker annual gala on December 7.
- met with members of Northfield Women Poets (Penchant) to learn more about their history as a group.

Northfield Poet Laureate: Home

The Northfield Poet Laureate is sponsored by the City of Northfield and funded by SEMAC, in partnership with the Northfield Arts and Culture Commission.



- made changes to the Northfield Poet Laureate LibGuide (website), adding pages on the history of poetry in Northfield:

<http://guides.mynpl.org/PoetLaureate>

- met with Greenvale Park Elementary School teacher Mary Beth Youngblut about working with her class to create a special sidewalk poem for installation outside the new school building.
- scheduled poetry readings for January 16 (Joanne Esser @ Content Bookstore) and February 6 (Rebecca Fremo @ Northfield Public Library); and began trying to schedule a reading for March (Klecko).

The major activity for December will be to complete and submit a final report to SEMAC for the 2019 grant.