



Northfield Public Library

Director's Report

January 2020

Director's Report

Submitted by Teresa Jensen, Library Director

This year we will have the distinct pleasure of adding a new format to the library. It's not very often that you get to do this; after all, what is left? We have books, electronic resources, including games, databases, streaming movies and music; books and music on CD, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, microfilm, maps.

Okay, strictly speaking, it's not a *new* format—not to the library, and not to the world. It's vinyl! We have been monitoring the circulation of our Compact Disc collection, which peaked in circulation in 2017 and dropped substantially in 2018 and 2019. We've done some investigating on other libraries' re-emerging vinyl collections, and have thought about how we define what we will collect, and how. We are hoping to capitalize on getting the word out in Northfield to tap into Northfielders' personal collections for donations; we are planning on interviews on KYMN and with the Northfield News, and we will be building our music vinyl collection with part of our music collection budget. We are also planning on building a listening station for people to play records in the library (with headphones) for their enjoyment. The success of this new collection will be all about good PR and letting people know it is available. Tyler Gardner will be our point person for this new initiative; read his take on it in his entry for this report.

Adult Services

Submitted by Katlin Heidgerken-Greene, Reference Services Manager

Working during Winter Walk's *Magic of Model Trains* show was a major December highlight for me. I was excited to see the setup and preparation unfold throughout the day on December 12 and to help with breaks for the various model train engineers, which did mean learning how to control a switchyard layout at one point (with Steve's help). While my contributions were minor (I was in charge of making events flyers and signs), it was a great event and I was glad to learn from Laurie about her steps in the planning process. My family stopped by to see the trains and my son Nathan was completely fascinated.

We were on a storytime break during December (there were several special children's programs during the month to compensate), and I took the chance to devote some time to several other projects in addition to planning for Winter Storytime Session:

- With staff input, I created two new tools for staff to use for programming (a checklist for hosting programs, and a program map to lay out initial plans and ideas). These are both

being reviewed by Program Committee members for feedback and edits and we hope to roll them out soon.

- The PR committee is getting closer to a finished poster and web banner template. Once completed, we will host staff training on how to use the templates for graphics made in house.
- I met with key staff members about library social media and we are working on a posting schedule for 2020, which will help us keep track of what we are posting, see what is most successful, and engage more with our community.
- The first library programs are being recorded for NCTV, and we will refine our process in the coming weeks. The library has set up a fairly rigorous schedule of taping with the City's Communications Department and I am eager to see how this develops.

I'm looking forward to a busy January, with weekly Saturday Family Storytime, a decluttering/organizing program on January 23rd (Decluttering Strategies that Keep it Simple with professional organizer Kate Buckmeier) and gearing up for a program-heavy February. Happy New Year!

Submitted by Jamie Stanley

As the year winds down, the inevitable flurry of "listacles" appears in the media. Best movies, best articles, best photos, best places to visit, best recipes, and of course "who we lost". I do pay attention to the "listacles" of the best mystery, romance and science fiction book titles, and it is satisfying to discover that I have acquired many of the titles listed, but I do not feel beholden to buy them all if they are available from other libraries within the SELCO library network.

I am however, much more interested in articles that discuss trends within the publishing industry for the book genres I am responsible for buying. Fortunately, three print publications received by the Northfield Library, including Booklist, published by the American Library Association, Library Journal, and Publisher's Weekly offer "roundups" of the niche fiction genres on a yearly or biannual basis.

Of particular interest to me are trends in Science Fiction, or as fans prefer to call it, Speculative Fiction. . This genre is one of the most misunderstood, commonly associated with aliens, planets, spaceships and robots. Yes, there are many works of fiction that have been published in on these subjects, but Speculative Fiction is much more. It holds up a mirror to the present, visualizes a future world, imagines an alternate one, and tells the story of how society might get from here to there.

An example is the dystopian themed novel. For decades, dystopias have been written about many subjects of very recent concern, including climate disaster. Post-apocalyptic works continue to be written and are enormously popular, but within that framework, new works that address more topical issues about real-world issues are being written. Threats to derail geopolitical peacemaking efforts by nefarious means (think bioweapons), the rise of totalitarianism, authoritarianism and religious fundamentalism, the insinuation of social media

driven culture including the attendant erosion of privacy and monetization associated with social media currency, the widening wealth gap, the role of artificial intelligence in society. All are fodder for new speculative fiction novels.

Offsetting these dark scenarios are some positive developments that are also making their way into new work. As marginalized people; including non-binary, transgender, and asexual people gain recognition and representation in society their counterparts are gaining increasing visibility in Speculative Fiction. Issues associated with identity, labelling, female rage, who gets to be protagonist, and how a story is told given the above are being reconsidered.

It's an exciting time for both writers and readers of Speculative Fiction and I look forward to keeping abreast of work to be published in 2020.

Submitted by Joan Ennis

I am planning a Winter Crafts Roundup on Saturday, January 11. Local businesses will provide demonstrations of crafts, and participants will have a chance to try new crafts. Northfield Yarn will provide demonstrations of knitting, wet felting, and spinning. Reproduction Fabrics will demonstrate English piecing. Sketchy Artist will demonstrate an art project. A local rug hooking group will demonstrate rug hooking. The businesses are happy to participate and introduce people to new projects, during the long winter.

A week ago, a ten year old girl asked to see older photos of the Northfield Public Library. She wanted to see what the little cubby looked like, in the children's area. We found a photo.

The Contemporary Women Writers book group met for a holiday gathering on December 17. We met at a member's home, and people brought appetizers and desserts. I prepared a list of quotes from the books, and members tried to figure out which books they came from. It was a fun way to review the books. The December gathering is a nice way for members to socialize more and get to know each other. Several members shared that when they were new in town that looked for book groups at the library as a way to get to know people.

The two writing groups, the Open Writing Group, and the Memoir Writing Group, are going well. It is fun to watch members become more comfortable sharing their writing and making progress on their work.

Submitted by Tyler Gardner

Leading off the highlights for the month of December is the decision and preceding conversations about curating a vinyl collection for circulation and in-house listening at the library. Despite my own interest and sizable collection of vinyl records, I was initially hesitant towards the idea. But my concerns, costs and level of community interest, aside I have high hopes that we will be able to build interest in the collection and provide an opportunity for our

patrons to hear high quality musical offerings both in our space and at home. The hunt has begun for a quality audio receiver, turntable, and headphones to provide an optimal experience for the budget we have allocated for the hardware. This is very exciting for me because I am listening to music pretty much every minute I am not at work, it will be a new way to use the budget for our CD collection, which I predict will see ever-falling circulation as time progresses, and it will offer up something new to the community. We also discussed putting some feelers out in to the community to do some sort of donation drive for vinyl records. There is still some discussion to be had about what we will take should we get donations from the community. A few of the words we were throwing around in discussion were things like “timeless” and “enduring” to describe the albums we would like to have for checkout and in-house listening.

Another thing that I worked on was the Adult Winter Reading Program (AWRP): DiscoverReads 2020! It runs from January 2nd to February 29th and the theme of this year’s AWRP is a like a treasure island/treasure map. The patron will pick up a Treasure Map card graciously printed by Bill North at the Carleton print shop. They will then complete a series of sequential reading challenges. Each book read will earn an entry in to a prize drawing at the end of February and if patrons find the treasure (complete all challenges) they will earn one extra entry in to the prize drawing. This year’s AWRP is a good bit simpler than last year. Based on some of the anecdotal feedback I got from participants last year there was just too much going on with the bingo card. Too many challenges and some of them too difficult. The challenges for this year are much more clear-cut and there are far fewer of them. The challenge requires the patron to read five books for completion. We wanted it to be more accessible for people who are, understandably, unable to read 10 books in one month.

Youth Services

Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Youth Services Librarian

December kicked off with book talks at the middle school and Sibley Elementary and a successful first Music & Movement class with Early Childhood Suzuki teacher Arielle Loy. In the Children’s



Area, I introduced a few new things: a take-home early literacy game for caregivers to use with children at home (printed on super paper—no check-out involved, simply a free hand-out) and the Special Day Gong. Kids who are having a special day—first haircut, birthday, library card, sleepover at grandma’s, etc—are invited to tell us about it at the children’s service desk, and then gently “bang” a gong to celebrate. The early literacy motivation behind this is that talking and sharing details helps build vocabulary and skills that get one ready to read, and raising a finger when you can

no longer hear the gong's vibrations helps build listening skills. Young children especially enjoy ritual, and I hope this will become a special part of their experience now and fond memory later of spending time at the library.

In addition to a sing-along during Winter Walk, December programming included several options for families during schools' winter breaks. For the 40 LEGO Challenge, kids were given a random grab-bag of 40 LEGO bricks and challenged to design first a space or hovercraft, then an amusement park ride using all 40 bricks each time. Kids were invited to share their work with the group, and explain how they tackled some design challenges given the bricks they had (for example, how to balance both sides of a spacecraft without being able to build it symmetrically). I prompted them with questions and many were thrilled (and quite prepared!) to share their design process. This was a fun alternative to our traditional drop-in LEGO club. The programming highlight of the month, though, was a visit with MN Jack Sparrow, a dynamic performer and educational presenter that saw an all-ages audience of 89 people. We learned that phrases like "Can you break a twenty?" are derived from pirate practices, that some pirates wore eye patches in order to acclimate one eye to pitch darkness in case they needed to head below deck in a hurry, and so much more. MN Jack Sparrow passed around genuine artifacts/"treasures" like a dagger (well-buried in coral) and coins fused from years under the sea. Jack's is the first library program filmed by the City for sharing over local TV and online—I look forward to seeing how the video came out.

Finally, in non-youth-related outreach, I was honored to be asked to read poems written by residents of the Manor, Parkview East and West, Cannon Valley, and other Northfield Retirement communities at a special holiday program held in the community's chapel on Cannon Valley Drive. The poems were based on forms I taught residents at two poetry workshops in fall, but with a holiday twist. A few memorable lines include "I am a Christmas tree; children love to gather around me" and "I'm a string of holiday lights; usually, at least one part of me isn't quite working" ☺ In January, among other programs, I'm looking forward to "All About Dogs: a Visit with a Professional Dog Trainer" with local trainer Shahar Fearing and a professional canine companion, where families will learn the correct way to approach service dogs and other doggy etiquette. We'll also have our second annual Family STEAMFest—a drop-in program offering families a number of STEAM experiences and challenges, from augmented reality masks to interacting with robots and the high school robotics team.

Submitted by Layna Mestad, Youth Services/Teen Librarian

The annual Winter Walk Train Show was the kickoff for our December teen programming. Our TAB members designed the Winter in Northfield train table, Bridge Square popcorn stand and all! We had a total of 6 TAB members volunteer that night. We decided to relocate the TAB train table from the atrium to the children's section (across from the hold shelf) in hopes of encouraging more people to venture through the children's area. It worked! It was a great night,

and one that I'm excited our TAB members were able to be a part of. The Winter Movie Marathon was a great program to start Winter Break. Special thanks to the Friends who supplied the hot cocoa bar and popcorn. We had 13 people



attend the showing of *Elf* in the morning, and 4 people attend *The Chronicles of Narnia: the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* in the afternoon.

Given the popularity of *Elf*, I'm hoping we can offer an interactive version of this movie next year for families, similar to what we did for the *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* film earlier in the year.

Looking ahead to January, I'm excited about two outreach programs with the local schools. I will be going to the middle school again this year to talk with the 6th graders about research strategies, highlighting how to check for the credibility of sources using the CRAAP method. I did this outreach collaboration last year with 6th grade writing teacher, Sarah Bloom, and was thrilled that she reached out this year in hopes to do it again. I will also be going to St. Dominic's in January to give book talks to the 6th and 7th graders. Many outreach opportunities to look forward to!

In YA collection news, I purchased titles on voting and American elections, in addition to women's rights for the young adult non-fiction collection during the latter part of this year due to significant events coming up in 2020 (the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, and the presidential election). There was a need in our young adult collection to purchase titles on these subjects (specifically the election materials). There is always a group of first



time voters come each election as well as people who want to have a better understanding of the election process, and it's important to have resources on hand that can fulfill this particular informational need. The books found in children's non-fiction on understanding elections is a resource that I know many young adults and adults use to better understand the process (I have!), but our collection was lacking that sweet spot between children's non-fiction and adult non-fiction, the latter of which can be dense when you're looking for basic information. The content of the YA titles I purchased go more in depth on what the children's titles offer, but in a way that's approachable and encourages the browsing of topics within the book. Some of the titles I purchased: *Votes of confidence: a young person's guide to American elections*; *Voting rights*; *How to be an American: a field guide to citizenship*; and a number of titles in the Changing Perspectives series by New York Times Educational Publishing such as *Women's Roles* and *Identity Politics*.

Circulation Services Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush, Technology Circulation Services Manager

Besides the new books the selectors at the library purchase every month, in January comes new periodicals. We have a committee at the library that meets in the summer and looks at the suggestions received by patrons and staff and decide what magazines should be cancelled because they are not going out, and what new magazines we should add. We like to add a variety so that everyone can find something they like. For 2020, we are adding about 24 new magazines from Air & Space to The Hill. We are adding kid's magazines like Ranger Rick and teen magazines like Teen Breathe and Otaku. Another big change for our magazines is that we have decided to circulate our magazines like our books for three weeks. So next time you check out a magazine you can take your time. If there is a magazine that you think we should have, please make the suggestion and we will consider it for 2021.



Outreach, Shelving and Volunteer Services

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

2019 Winter Walk- Model Train Show



The Winter Walk- Model Train Show was held on Thursday, December 12th. It was once again a fun-filled night thanks to staff, volunteers (Library Board Members: Cathy Oehmke, Mason Randall, Brad Schanffner; FFOL Board Members: Sarai Moreno, Mary Steen, and Becky Benedict), and train engineers. There were 12 displays setup throughout the building, a sing-along in the children's area, and Officer Wade Murray with Operation Lifesaver (train safety) giving away conductor hats and more. More than 2,900 visitors stopped by to see the trains between 3:00-8:00 p.m.

Thank you to the Friends and Foundation of the Library for their continued support of this event. Thank you to Lily Warden, library staff member and artist for the creation of our new train show graphic.

Highlights:

A successful year with new programs, new projects and changes for the upcoming year.

Our Spanish Book Club started with 12 members and continued steady with 7 to 8 members. With the help of the FFOL and some grant money, we were able to purchase books necessary for the Book Club, and created a Spanish Book Club Kit available to patrons or other libraries on request.

Angelica continues to be a part of the Greenvale Park Community School Advisory Council: where we, as a whole, look for the best solutions, sharing our own resources and expertise, to help families in the community utilize the community resources depending on their needs; as well as for the Advisory Council members to share our updates from our agencies/organizations.

Angelica and Laurie are a part of the Racial Equity Core Team for the city. This group meets monthly and is tasked with creating a racial equity plan for the city to use as a guide throughout departments and policies. This continues to be educational and thoughtful work. “Racial equity means closing the gaps so that race can no longer predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all”.

A new project has emerged after the Hispanic Heritage Celebration excitement. The community has showed interest in having another place where they can dance, and hear Latin music in town. Angelica proposed the idea of Latin Dance Night as a fundraiser and the Friends and Foundation of the Northfield Public Library (FFOL) love this idea of offering a night of Latin dance, food, drinks, kid’s activities and more.



The Friends & Foundation of the Northfield Public Library
Love Your Library Fundraiser Latin Dance Party

Saturday, February 15, 2020

Doors Open: 6:30 p.m.

Live Music: 8:00 p.m.

Northfield Armory

519 Division Street S., Northfield

Angelica and Laurie are compiling statics and putting together the 2019 Outreach and Programming Report. This report serves as a guide for our 2020 outreach and programming plans.

Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate

December Activities

December 7. Participated in the Laura Baker Services Association annual gala, reading poetry written with LBSA clients and talking about the collaboration with LBSA, facilitated by LBSA art specialist Bridget Novak.

December 16. Met with Cecilia Cornejo to talk about a poetry collaboration making use of material collected as part of The Wandering House project in the summer of 2019.

December 18. Met with Marie Gery about poetry programming for the fall of 2020. Participated in monthly “poetry club” with LBSA clients.

I also wrote and completed the final report for the Northfield Poet Laureate’s 2019 SEMAC grant, and discussed a budget and possible funding sources for 2020 with Teresa Jensen.

Upcoming Events and Activities

January 16. Poetry reading by Joanne Esser (Content Bookstore, 7pm).

January 18. Hosting the annual Sidewalk Poetry Kick-Off (Northfield Public Library, 2pm)

I have been asked to serve as a juror for the 19th annual Poet/Artist Collaboration, formerly hosted by Crossings at Carnegie in Zumbrota and now hosted by Red Wing Arts. I have also been asked to talk about the LBSA collaboration for a spot on KYMN radio as part of LBSA's public awareness campaign.

Events Scheduled for 2020

January

1/16: Joanne Esser (Minneapolis), author of *Humming at the Dinner Table* (Content)

February

2/6: Rebecca Fremo (St. Peter), author of *Chasing Northern Lights* (Northfield Public Library)

March

3/12: Larry Gavin (Faribault), author of *A Fragile Shelter* (Northfield Public Library)

April

National Poetry Month: Poem in Your Pocket Day; reading by Rob Hardy (Northfield Public Library, details TBA); other events TBA

May

5/15: *The Sister of the Wind*, a theater piece about Northfield-born poet Grace Fallow Norton (Northfield Arts Guild dance studio)

5/21: Danny Klecko (St. Paul), author of *Hitman Baker Casketmaker* (Content)

June-December

Programming by Penchant (Northfield Women Poets) TBA

What Trees Know, poetry and music by Emilio and Dante DeGrazia (place and date TBA)