



**Northfield Public Library
Director's Report
January
2021**

Adult Services

Submitted by Katlin Heidgerken-Greene, Reference Services Manager

Closing out 2020 and beginning 2021, many projects are wrapping up while others are starting fresh.

The Professional Development Collection at City Hall is in place and available for City Employees to access. The books look great and several have already been borrowed by city staff.

Northfield Reads will host a community book discussion of *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz on January 21 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Carleton professor Michael McNally will speak after discussion of the book.

The 2021 Materials Budget, which will guide our collection spending for the year, has been finalized and is now available for staff to begin spending the different funds. Selectors are always eager to order and fill any requests that have accumulated over the last couple weeks of the previous year, and to look ahead to what new titles are now forthcoming. Collections also change hands occasionally; for 2021 I have taken on the romance genre collection (previously Jamie, then Laurie purchased these) and have handed off to Laurie and Angelica the Spanish language collection, which fits well with Laurie's existing oversight of library outreach and the bookmobile collection. A transfer of knowledge accompanies this switching of collections, and an opportunity to learn both from the staff person who previously held the collection and from new research and digging into what the new selection area has to offer. It's a fun transition and chance to change things up.

I led the library's staff committees through a refresh process at the end of the year, with staff applying to committees they would like to join. The new committee rosters will serve for one year terms, with the idea to give all staff a chance to participate in work on special projects and with members of staff they may not work with closely on a regular basis. "New" committees (from Programming and Periodicals to Safety and Technology) will start meeting this month,

outlining their goals and scheduling regular meetings. I look forward to seeing what comes from everyone's committee work this year!

Another major project in December was getting ready to welcome new youth services librarian (teen focus), Catherine Stricklan, to the library staff. I created a reference training manual to help orient her in the first few weeks, and hope this will be a resource that can be continually updated for onboarding new staff in the future. She started work at NPL on January 4 and we are all glad to welcome her to the team!

Submitted by Jamie Stanley, Librarian

I signed up to work on the Programming Committee chaired by Laurie Kodet and the Safety Committee chaired by Becky Novotny. Below is a description of each committee.

Programming: This committee sets goals and priorities, shares ideas and strategies, and implements programs for the library and community outreach work. The group works with Library Director and supervisor team to set strategic direction as well as with the Public Relations Committee related to the promotion of program initiatives. It will meet monthly, for one hour.

Safety: This committee maintains the library employee emergency procedures manual, which includes information on what to do in emergency situations in the library that pertain to evacuation, weather, fire, workplace violence, contamination, or medical emergencies. It is also responsible for library safety equipment readiness, conducts severe weather drills and/or other trainings one to two times per year. This committee shares safety information with staff (COVID, workstation ergonomics, etc.) and plans safety training for the annual library staff day. It will meet every two months, for one hour.

I look forward to participating on these committees because it provides an opportunity for me to work with library staff from other departments on non-routine projects. The formal organization of these committees will, I believe, provide much needed structure and accountability to provide the training and support to undertake new endeavors within the library.

Submitted by Tyler Gardner, Librarian

In the month of December I finalized the Adult Winter Reading program. We are doing a Yahtzee themed challenge called Bookzee. Patrons pick up a card from the library and complete the challenges as they choose. There are two rounds of the game. One in January and one in February. Thanks to some support by the FFOL we will be able to offer prizes to our contest winners. Hopefully this year we will have more entrants in our drawings for prizes because it is much easier to complete a challenge that it was last year. This is mainly due to readers having freedom to choose the books they want to read and make them count towards the challenge of their choice. As the game stands currently, it would be amazing if someone was able to complete every challenge on the card. This would require a person to read 22 books in a month.

I also met with Teresa and Rob Hardy to discuss the future of the Poet Laureate Program. I am excited to be more involved with the Poet Laureate going forward.

I thought it would be fun to do some collection statistics for the collections under my purview. In 2020 we added 700 new DVDs to the collection. We added 90 CD's to the collection. We created, from scratch, a new vinyl collection with 136 vinyl records. I hope that sometime this year we will be able to put our listening station out for patrons to listen to vinyl in the library. We added 56 new graphic novels to our growing graphic novel collection. I am looking forward to working with new collections in 2021 and keeping the collections I have been working with fresh and lively.

Youth Services

Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Youth Services Librarian

In December, we tried something new: a kids' Graphic Novel Book Club event on Zoom. Interest was high on social media and registration was great, but we ended up with just four attendees. Still, it was fun to recommend books based on what the kids shared about their favorites and to witness their enthusiasm for what they've read. I hope to try this program again when we can meet in person, if not sooner. I think it has potential for greater success, but that screen fatigue continues.

This month, I visited a Sibley 4th grade class via Zoom as a "guest read-aloud reader," and read from one of my favorite new books of 2020, *Clan* by Sigmund Brouwer. I worked on organizing my personal folder, the Children's and Teen Programs folder, and other assorted folders on the T Drive so that recent Youth Services history and outputs would be more intuitive for incoming staff to navigate. I worked on weeding the collections that need space the most (especially picture books) and a collection I want to prioritize in 2021, easy readers. I'm excited to gain a new Youth Services librarian for many reasons, and a fresh pair of eyes on the children's collection space is one of them. Space and storage remain the biggest challenge facing the collection. Currently, we likely couldn't fit our highest circulating collection, Graphic Novels, on the allotted shelves if two-thirds of the books were ever all in stock at the same time. We will need to think creatively about space as we continue to build this high-demand collection. It's worth noting that youth today are growing up in a much more visual culture than we did, and that even our generations have become accustomed to images breaking up the text on the internet to help us get through long articles. Graphic novels are not "lesser" literature--as some in our generations imagine--and will increasingly need and deserve to take up more shelf space on the first floor.

The brightest moment of programming this month was a program that took just a few minutes to run-- a "Countdown to Noon" on Facebook Live the day of New Year's Eve. Counting down to noon is a child-friendly version of counting down to midnight, and staff enjoyed popping confetti, yelling "Happy New Year!", and singing "Auld Lang Syne" while Northfield households celebrated along. I took the moments leading up to the countdown to talk to kids about other new year celebrations--Chinese New Year and Hmong New Year--and some of the traditions that accompany those celebrations. Soon it will be the Year of the Ox!

Coming up in March, puppeteers Gustavo and Julie Boada will be returning to the library to tape a performance of "Loon's Song," a show informed by Ojibwe culture (Julie is Anishinabe). In April, I hope to hold a Teen Open Mic Poetry Night Zoom for National Poetry Month.

Circulation Services Circulation Services

Submitted by Kathy Rush, Technology Circulation Services Manager

We are having some big changes in the library with the addition of a new Youth Services Librarian and a new Library Director. But change is one thing that we do well. This week I withdrew 8 Nook tablets that we had in the collection. The Friends purchased these for us in 2012 and Leesa loaded each with over 35 books. They were popular with folks that wanted to try them out before purchasing their own. Today people are using Libby and overdrive for their ebooks and this collection has grown. I looked back to 1995 when all we had were books on cassette and we were not yet ready to purchase any Books on CD because this type of media was too new. Now folks are moving away from Books on CD to eaudio books. It was not too long ago that we had shelves full of VHS tapes, and now these are completely replaced with DVDs and Blu Ray Discs. But even this type of media is also changing with folks moving to streaming movies. So even though we are good at change, we are happy that one thing that hasn't changed, and that we continue to offer is our books.

Outreach, Shelving and Volunteer Services

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

Outreach & Programming

Planning is underway for **2021 Hispanic Heritage Celebration**. Angelica and Laurie met several times in December to formulate plans for a community committee including City staff, Rotary, St. Olaf, Carleton, School District, Age Friendly Northfield, HCI, and the Human Rights Commission. This committee will help plan and implement the 2021 kickoff event.

Programming Committee is meeting regularly and have been working on updating and creating procedures, instructions and equipment inventories. In the new year, the committee would like to define programming tracks to help ensure diversity in our program offerings. The committee is also investigating program evaluation options.

Bilingual Storytimes will resume on Wednesday, January 20 for eight weeks. Angelica and Laurie pre-recorded several storytimes which will premiere on Facebook in the coming weeks. Angelica is developing a live Zoom storytime for March 10th.

Other

Language Line Training – Angelica and Kara Trygestad, Communications Specialist conducted training on how to use the Language Line for the City Water Department and the Liquor Store staff.

Northfield Shares – Planned a virtual Evening of Entertainment for January 23 as their fundraiser, Angelica worked with Donna Rae Scheffert, President Leadership Tools Consulting, creating a short film about the power of the Granting process and what Northfield Shares is able to do, with a focus on the "Share in Northfield's Future Fund".

Greenvale Park Community School Advisory Council- Angelica attended the meeting where the focus was on the progress of the Greenvale Park Community School. The council met several new staff members: Greenvale Park Community School Co-Coordinator (Taylor Strelow), the Family Engagement Specialist (Heidy Ramirez), and the Promise Fellow (Diana Perez Guzman).

Age Friendly Northfield (AFN) - Laurie is serving on an Ad Hoc committee tasked to develop budget and grant processes. This committee is fine-tuning the contract between the City, AFN, and FiftyNorth (who serves as AFN's fiscal agent). Laurie looks forward to learning more about all of the work AFN is doing and striving to do.

Racial Equity Core Team- Laurie worked with a team to review and choose EDI training for the city. The team was unanimous in the choice. EDI training for all City employees will begin early in the new year.

Friends and Foundation of the Northfield Public Library (FFOL)- Laurie is the staff liaison. During the December 1 meeting the FFOL's granted the library \$3,000 to be used to boost the large print collection. The dollars will be split \$2,000 for fiction and \$1,000 for non-fiction. This infusion will allow for a much needed updating of the collection.

Fun Note- The staff was gifted lunch from Hideaway thanks to an anonymous donor. It was much appreciated by the staff.

Poet Laureate

Submitted by Rob Hardy, Northfield Poet Laureate
Northfield Poet Laureate 2020 Annual Report

“Northfield, Minnesota, a hotbed of poetry.”
—the editors of *Third Wednesday Magazine*

Readings

January 15. Joanne Esser. Content. Attendance: 6. In person.
February 6. Rebecca Fremo. Northfield Public Library. Attendance: 15. In person.
March 12. Larry Gavin. Northfield Public Library. Attendance: 40. In person.
June 17. Becky Boling, Heather Candels, D.E. Green, Rob Hardy, Steve McCown. YouTube.
October 29. Steve McCown. Facebook Live.

Public Poetry

“Alloy.” 2020 Living Treasure Award.

“Bloom.” State of the City Address and Northfield High School graduation.

The Poet Laureate also read a poem in memory of Sarah Moyer (Greenvale Park Elementary educational assistant) at a school board meeting in January, and poems in honor of Teresa Jensen and Alyssa Herzog Melby at the December Arts and Culture Commission meeting.

Judging

Red Wing Arts 2020 Poet Artist Collaboration.

2020 Northfield Sidewalk Poetry Competition.

2020 Minnesota State Poetry Out Loud Finals.

Workshops, Residencies, Classes

Laura Baker Services Association poetry club. Aldrich House. January-February.

Panel Discussion. Cannon Valley Elder Collegium class. Led by Jim Holden. January.

Miscellaneous

- Facilitated the creation of a collaborative poem for installation on the Riverwalk steps.
- Determined locations for sidewalk poems as part of the 2020 east side street project.
- Attended several meeting on the future of the Poet Laureate program.

- Negotiated with COMPAS to book poet Danny Solis for a Hispanic Heritage Month virtual reading in September.
- Recorded videos of poems for Emily Lloyd to post on the public library's Instagram during National Poetry Month (April).

Losses in the Northfield Poetry Community

Brent Christianson. Died May 13, 2020. The author of several books of poetry; a participant in poetry workshops at 50North; and a reader at the 2019 Northfield Poetry Festival.

Harold David Walters. December 14, 2020. David was a member of a poetry group that started meeting at the public library in early 2019. He read at the 2019 Northfield Poetry Festival.

Achievements by Northfield Poets in 2020

Five Northfield poets—Becky Boling, Heather Candels, D.E. Green, Rob Hardy, and Steve McCown—had poems published in the Summer 2020 issue of *Willows Wept Review*. Five Northfield poets—David Walters, Julie Ryan, D.E. Green, Rob Hardy, and Steve McCown—had poems, read by Cathy Wurzer, featured in videos as part of End in Mind's Pandemic Poetry Project. Four Northfield poets—D.E. Green, Becky Boling, Steve McCown, and Rob Hardy—had work published in the September 2020 issue of *Lost Lake Folk Opera*.

Steve McCown published his first book of poetry, *Ghosting* (Shipwreckt Books). Published poems in *Lost Lake Folk Opera* and *Willows Wept Review* (for which he received a Pushcart Prize nomination). He had two poems selected in the 2020 sidewalk poetry competition, and had a poem featured in End in Mind's Pandemic Poetry Project.

Becky Boling published poems and prose in *Visual Verse*, *Persimmon Tree*, *Lost Lake Folk Opera* (short story) and *Willows Wept Review* (for which she received a Pushcart Prize nomination). She had a poem included in the Red Wing Arts 19th Annual Poet-Artist Collaboration, contributed to a collaborative poem curated by Kwame Alexander for NPR, and had a poem featured in End in Mind's Pandemic Poetry Project.

Susan Jaret McKinstry had a poem included in the Red Wing Arts 19th Annual Poet-Artist Collaboration.

Julie Ryan had a poem featured in End in Mind's Pandemic Poetry Project.

Leslie Schultz had poems published in *Third Wednesday*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *MockingHeart Review*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *Poet Lore*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Hawai'i Pacific Review*, and *The Orchards Poetry Review*. She was the guest associate poetry editor of the Winter 2021 issue of *Third Wednesday*.

Rob Hardy's poem "Letter" was chosen for the 50/50 Prize by the editors of *Third Wednesday* literary journal. He had poems published in *Third Wednesday*, *Willows Wept Review*, *Lost Lake Folk Opera*, *Poems from the Lockdown* and *Red Wing Arts 19th Annual Poet-Artist Collaboration*; prose published in *Critical Flame*; and a translation published in *Metamorphoses*. He had a poem featured in End in Mind's Pandemic Poetry Project.

Florence Dacey had a poem included in the *Red Wing Arts 19th Annual Poet-Artist Collaboration*.

Mar Valdecantos was awarded a \$6,000 Minnesota State Arts Board individual artist's grant. She plans to mentor and support immigrant and refugee poets and writers with public performances as a goal.

Diane LeBlanc won *Mid-America Review's* Fineline Competition with the poem "Possum," which appears in *Mid-America Review* 40.1. Her collection *Edgeless* was selected for publication by Terrapin Books in 2021.

D.E. Green had poems published in *Visual Verse*, *Willows Wept Review*, *Lost Lake Folk Opera*, and featured in a video created by the End in Mind Project. Doug also participated in several virtual readings.

Heather Candels had poems published in *Willows Wept Review*.

David Walters had a poem featured in a video created by the End in Mind Project.

I would like to extend my thanks to **Teresa Jensen**, the recently retired director of the Northfield Public Library, for her crucial role in getting the Northfield Poet Laureate program off the ground, and for shepherding it through its first four years. Under her leadership, we received two SEMAC grants to support the program and gave poetry a newly prominent place in Northfield's civic life.

Looking Ahead to 2021

Before leaving her position as library director at the end of 2020, Teresa approved a \$1,500 budget (\$125 a month) for the Poet Laureate. I would like to host at least two readings—either virtually or in-person, if possible—featuring poets who have books published in 2021: Diane LeBlanc (Northfield) and Michael Kleber-Diggs (Minneapolis). Michael read in Northfield two years ago, and his book *Worldly Things*, won the Max Ritvo Poetry Prize and will be published by Milkweed Editions. I would use some of the budget for honoraria for readings.