

## **Northfield Public Library**

### **Director's report**

June 2021

*Submitted by Natalie Draper, Library Director*

June! June was a wonderful month. We saw the success that was Northfield's first Pride celebration in Central Park. We kicked off summer reading and are so happy to see so many familiar faces returning to the library and books ad stars has been attracting big audiences to the parks to sing, dance, enjoy storytime, visit the bookmobile, and be entertained together as a community. I had so much fun at Patchouli and Terra Guitarra Wednesday night, seeing kids and adults dancing and twirling with purple streamers. It's amazing to me how much entertainment the library provides for this community.

In July we're looking forward to adding Hoopla to our online library, which will come in handy for folks heading off on summer road trips or beach vacations, and we've added the ability for folks to reserve meeting rooms online through the library's website. The new monthly email newsletter "Shelf Life", in both English and Spanish, will be launching in July. You can sign up for it now on [our website](#).

It is also budget season! I have submitted the request for funding from Rice County and entered my first budget for the city of Northfield, with the support of our excellent team here. We are not looking at any cuts to department budgets at this time, so we are planning to get input from an architect as to making some much needed improvements to office space. Staff are squeezed in pretty tightly and if the pandemic taught us anything it's that we could use a little more wiggle room between desks. In addition to office space, we'd like to add a bit more to the budget for technology upgrades, high demand electronic collections, and staff development to allow for several to travel to the Public Library Association conference in March. Coming out of the last year and change of turmoil and pivoting, it's an especially important time for staff development, both as a means to unpack everything we've learned, share with colleagues across the country, and to chart our path forward.

### **Circulation Services**

*Submitted by Kathy Rush Vizina, Circulation/Technology Services Manager*

This month we say goodbye to longtime Circulation Staff member Anne Balluff. Anne started 16 years ago as a Substitute Circulation Clerk. Her real job was working for the school district but came to the library when someone was on vacation or out for illness. In 2016 she was hired as a Circulation Clerk 1 and had regular hours each week. She retired a few years ago from the school district and was able to work more hours at the library. She has always been friendly and helpful to our patrons. She is a very proficient processor of new materials. She has been responsible for ordering supplies for the library. Anne and her husband George are moving closer to their Daughter, son in law and two delightful grandsons. We will miss her at the library and wish her well on her new journey.



## Reference Services

*Submitted by Katlin Heidgerken-Greene, Reference Services Manager*

- Library meeting rooms are open! You can now book meeting rooms online from our [website](#). (You can also call the library and we are happy to help.) This will streamline processes for staff and patrons and help people access our spaces more easily. A library card is not required for booking.
- Shelf Life, the library's new monthly e-newsletter, will go out in mid-July for the first time. We will feature a monthly column from the director, interesting resources and event highlights, staff reading recommendations and library news. Sign up to receive library emails [here](#) to stay up to date.
- Wondering what to read next? While there are lots of ways we get the word out about books, from staff reviews to displays, now you can also find some help right in the library catalog. This month we added reading recommendations (title, series and subject read-alikes) to the NPL catalog. Search a book you like and click "You Might Also Like These" for some suggestions of other library books to try next.
- Riverwalk Market Fair—I attended the fair with summer intern Corrie Zoltai on June 19 with the Book Bike. We counted 296 people that stopped by or interacted with us. Corrie handed out virtually all of her make and take craft bags to many excited kids and I checked out lots of kids books to folks and even signed up a few new library cards. It was a beautiful day to kick off our library presence at the RMF!

*Submitted by Jamie Stanley, Reference Librarian*



At least three or four times a week I see families, usually seniors and their adult children, walking around the second floor of the library on what appears to be a sightseeing trip. They are often visiting extended family and are exploring downtown Northfield. The library being an anchor building and located across the street from the jaw-dropping rubble that was the Archer House, is a major attraction in Northfield

Occasionally people ask whether the Northfield Library was originally a "Carnegie" – yes, and when it opened –1910. The next comments are almost invariably about how pleasant it is inside, which is an oblique way of asking about renovations of which there have been three. Thankfully, there are two books kept near the Reference Desk that I can consult, or share with visitors if there are additional questions.

*Everlasting Influences: The Centennial History of the Northfield Carnegie Public Library 1910-2010, and The Enduring Thing We Do Today: A History of the Northfield Public Library, 1898 – 2016.* Both titles were written by local resident Bruce Colwell and strike just the right balance of historical narrative, fact

and photo. They tell a compelling story of how the Northfield Library came to be, where it's been and where it's going. It is a story worth sharing with visitors and local residents alike. June was an incredibly full month with so many high points.

## **Youth Services**

*Submitted by Catherine Stricklan, Youth Services Librarian*

- June kicked off with Pride in the Park. It was my privilege to assist Emily in planning and pulling off the event, and my Pride storytime was joyous and well-attended.
  - I created a rainbow tulle backed "LGBTQIA+ 101" display in the downstairs display cabinet, and witnessed at least 3 families having conversations about it over the course of the month.
- Family storytime at Central Park has been a blast, and it has been a good challenge to figure out what books and activities will appeal to a large, spaced out group.
- I partnered with Keepsake Cidery and delivered an Apple-themed storytime on location at the cidery. It was a small but fun group, and I'm hoping to partner with them in the future, hopefully in conjunction with a larger event.
- The Teen Summer Reading Challenge began on June 7. We have 80 teens registered (including an absolutely wild amount of rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders!) This year, teens can complete 20 challenges to win a free book, a cupcake from Cakewalk Bakery, and to be entered in the grand prize raffle. Some of the challenges for the teens have become great opportunities for me. For instance, one challenge is for teens to get a recommendation from *\*me\** personally, which gives me the chance to interact face to face with them and learn what they are interested in reading. It is growing my RA skills and helping me get to know local teens and their reading interests: win win win!

*Submitted by Emily Lloyd, Youth Services Librarian*

June's programs were pleasantly successful. Our Teen Summer Reading Challenge kick-off party with tie-dye and snacks was attended by 18 teens, many of whom I didn't know. Yay! We also held TAB elections this month, and have a brand new President, VP, and Secretary. We have had a lot of growing interest in TAB and I'm very excited to support this group of excited kids. Other programs in June included: Jackbox Games (5 teens) and Dungeons and Dragons (4 teens).





A “Pride in the Park” celebration planned and hosted by the Library was held on Saturday, June 5, in Central Park. The outpouring of community joy, enthusiasm, and emotion was more than we imagined. At our peak count, 397 people were at Pride at 2:30; total attendance was likely high in the 400s. It was an unforgettable day with youth celebrating and feeling supported by their community, and older Northfield residents (one in tears) confessing that they never

thought they’d see a Pride event in their hometown. This will not be the case for future generations of LGBTQIA+ Northfield residents: “Pride in the Park” will now be an annual tradition in Northfield.







As of June 30, 402 youth have registered for the Library's Summer Reading Challenge and completed 1,130 challenges (this number does not include teen challenges). Challenges range from "Read or listen to an audiobook for 20 minutes" to "Check out a book of science experiments and try one" to "Think of something you're really good at and teach someone else how to do it." We just drew our third Reader of the Week, and kids have been thrilled to display a "Reader of the Week" yard sign (or poster, if they have no yard) during their week and see the mayor congratulate them on social media (attached is an example of the image we post on social media and the mayor shares to her account).

## Meet Allia Doherty!

10 years old

Prairie Creek  
student

Likes *Wonder*  
by R.J. Palacio  
and cross-  
country skiing

- Weekly morning storytimes in Central and Way parks and pre-show storytimes at Books & Stars have been well-attended, as was a program by Dazzling Dave the Yo-Yo Guy in Central Park. July programs for kids include a Graphic Novel Book Club and STEM Mystery Bag Challenge. Bruce the Bug Guy will be visiting us in August.
- Books & Stars attendance was as high or higher than in previous years for our first two shows, Justin Roberts and Salsa del Soul. People are really ready to enjoy outdoor shows and bookmobile visits with their community! The presence of Age-Friendly Northfield's Red Chair project has been a boon to many attendees with mobility issues, including groups attending from assisted living communities.
- Extensive projects and visits with Summer PLUS and Summer BLAST students have been planned and will start when these programs begin on July 19.
- \*We're partnering with the Northfield Arts Guild to offer preschool concept activity kits and online book readings this summer with the goal of helping kids get ready for kindergarten. The Guild, who received a WINGS grant for this project, compiles and distributes art and book kits with links to videos of myself and Jennie Eubank (of the Guild) reading a related book in English and Spanish. In June, we received 35 kits on "Colors" to distribute at the library—others were distributed at the Guild, the CAC, by Growing Up Healthy, and at other locations. July's kits are themed around Shapes. Children's make and take kits of all kinds continue to be popular: we offered 200 scratch art kits at the library and 70 craft kits (designed by intern extraordinaire Corrie Zoltai) at the Riverwalk Market Fair this month, and both went quickly.

## **Outreach Services**

*Submitted by Laurie Kodet, Library Services Manager & Angelica Linder, Outreach Coordinator*

- A few volunteers are back to work for the library. Pete and Mike have returned and are assisting with Home Delivery and we have some new folks helping to keep the library's landscape looking good.
- Angelica and Corrie (Summer Intern) took the bookmobile to visit the YMCA on June 17 where 36 children enjoyed a storytime and learned about Summer Challenge and other library programs.
- Angelica, Corrie, and the bookmobile also visited Greenvale Park Community School on June 24 and July 1. 43 students checked out materials, listened to storytime and learned about the Summer Challenge.
- The Friends & Foundation of the Northfield Public Library (FFOL) contributed \$2,200 to the Hispanic Heritage Celebration, and with their contribution the event is fully funded.