



# Library Department Head Report

May 23, 2016



Our winter and spring have been filled with programs and activities. The Library continues to focus on the goals identified in our strategic plan, and on creating a welcoming place for our community.

## Strategic Plan Implementation Update

The Library Board, Library staff and representatives from the Friends of the Library and the Library's volunteer Program Committee gathered input from the community and developed a revised strategic plan for 2014-2017. We continue to respond to the following requests and suggestions.

### **Service Priority # 1: *Parents will feel supported in preparing their preschoolers for learning success, and primary students will develop a love of reading and learning.***

- **Saturday Story Times continued through the winter**, thanks to the generosity of the Library Foundation. This winter and spring the attendance ranged from 26-67 each Saturday, split between 2 sessions. We will continue Saturday story times through the summer. We are the only Library in the area that is open on Saturdays during the summer, so we continue to draw families from throughout Itasca County.
- We have seen many **class visits** already this spring and a few more are scheduled before the end of the year. Several Southwest and Murphy 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes have been walking or taking the bus to the Library regularly, and we have had many visits from area preschools.
- Our newly developed space just for 6-12 year olds, with dedicated computers, display space and furniture has been a hit.
- We participated in the statewide Once Upon a Reader program featuring the book *10 Pigs: an Epic Bath Adventure* and hosted a visit from the author, Derek Anderson.
- Our winter reading program, *Reading is Snow Much Fun*, had 413 children sign up, and 197 returned their completed logs to receive a free book.
- Our summer Reading program, ***Read for the Win***, running mid-May through July 30, kicks off on May 21 with a special flag-making workshop presented by artists from the Creativity Tank.
- Summer Programs coming up included: Climb Theater performing *The Tortoise and the Hare*, a magician, music, regular Friday art classes, Cake Decorating, and a Lego building club, among others.

### **Service Priority # 2: *Individuals will be supported in their personal search for knowledge and development of skills and careers.***

- Our **recent winter and spring programming** for adults has included such programs as: *Book Publishing in Minnesota*, *Organizing 101*, and *Ice Fishing Tips*



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- We started a new afternoon series called “**Get Your Ducks in a Row**” which covered a variety of life topics. The programs attracted anywhere from 30 -70 people each session. We are repeating some of the programs this summer.
- On Feb 18<sup>th</sup> from 4-6 pm we **celebrated the solar installation with an Energy Fair**. People were able to stop by any time and learn more about solar installations, talk with manufacturers and installers, and talk with people who have existing installations.

### **Service Priority #3: *Individuals will have access to online resources that connect them to their community and the world***

- Our public computers continue to be used often by people taking **online classes**, those doing homework for local classes, those taking exams for professional licensure, as well as those with daily needs such as email access and a myriad of other communication and printing needs.
- Our public **wireless** network is in constant use by people bringing their own devices.

### **Service Priority #4: *Individuals will enjoy varied options that enrich their leisure time, broaden their world view, and inspire their creativity.***

- **Legacy-Funded Programs:** We have hosted several programs arranged by Arrowhead Regional Library System including: *Minnesota’s Titanic Connections*, *History of the Minnesota State Fair*, *Artaria String Quartet*, and *Minnesota’s Fabulous Firsts*
- **A commitment to cultural diversity in programming and displays continues.** We collaborated with the Human Rights Commission this winter to host a travelling display, *Tracks in the Snow*, from the Islamic Resource Group. It tells the stories of Muslims in Minnesota, and provides a local follow up to the “Muslim Journeys” programming we did 3 years ago. We had about 45 people at each of the two accompanying presentations, and many people viewed the exhibit set up in the Library.
- Dr. Anton Treuer shared stories from his new book on the Red Lake Nation.
- **Rapids Reads**, our Community Read project, wrapped up in early May with the appearance of Margie Preus, author of *West of the Moon*
- **Alternate Formats are very popular:** Circulation of downloadable ebooks and audio books is high. **Our patrons downloaded 19,067 titles in 2015.** There are more than 9200 audiobook titles and 9900 ebook titles available to all holders of an ALS library card. We also provide access to 100 online magazines through Overdrive and online children’s books and games through Tumblebooks. All of these are available through our web site.
- Circulation of print, audio and video items also increased last year to 172,919 items.
- The teen summer reading program will run during June and July. For teens, summer is the best time for reading for pleasure. Programs include a photography contest, *Minute to Win It* and a games day.



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## **Service Priority #5: Individuals and organizations will experience a comfortable, safe, quiet and welcoming place.**

Our meeting room is heavily utilized by organizations large and small. Our quiet study rooms are used by individuals seeking a quiet space or a space for 2 people to meet and work. The next upgrade project is to re-upholster or replace the large comfortable chairs, which are showing their age.

## **Service Priority # 6: Individuals will find opportunities to work together, share ideas, discuss, and collaborate.**

- The teen Anime Club continues, bringing teens together monthly to watch an anime movie and talk about anime and manga.
- Our tables and study rooms provide spaces for working on group projects.
- We provided a documentary film series that offers opportunities for discussion on current topics

## **Building, grounds and meeting space**

- The demonstration solar project installation was completed in early February. (Thanks to contributions from the City of Cohasset, the Library Foundation and the Blandin Foundation).
- We replaced the deteriorating sidewalk lights in front of the building. The new lights are LED and are more energy-efficient
- After a break-in in April we are looking at installing wireless security cameras around the building

## **Reusable bags**

Earth Circle donated a large box of assorted reusable bags for customers last fall as an experiment, and it was so successful that the Friends of the Library provided inexpensive bags with the Friends logo. For Environmental reasons, we no longer provide plastic bags at the checkout desk.

## **Passports**

We began accepting passports on December 1 and the service was popular beyond our expectations. While we were expecting around 80 applications each month, December through March ranged from 121-170 each month. It was not until April that the number fell to 87. May continues to be quieter. People have commented on the convenient hours and location and the “family friendly” atmosphere.

*Note: The Library catalog is being migrated to a server in the cloud on May 24-26 so customers will not be able to search for, reserve or renew books, or have access to databases.*

**The Library continues to be very busy, with many people attending programs, borrowing materials, using computers, asking for information, or just hanging out!**