



Library Department Head Report

November 25, 2013



Our summer and fall have been filled with programs and activities around the Library. We continue 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, supporting organizations, and staff developed a strategic plan in early 2009 and we continue to implement that plan. Library Board members and staff met in April to review progress for the year and develop action plans for the upcoming year. The Board is planning to go through the process again and develop another strategic plan early in 2014.

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

- We added access to **Tumblebooks**, online interactive children's books, to our website and in the Library, thanks to support from the Friends of the Library. Most of the online books are picture books geared for young children.
- **We added a second Story Time each Saturday**, thanks to the generosity of the Library Foundation. Average Saturday attendance during October and early November was 75 people, now split between 2 sessions instead of jammed into one. We are the only Library in the area that is open on Saturdays, so we have drawn families from throughout the County, and farther east.
- We have monthly **Family Movie Nights** with attendance ranging from 5 to 70.
- Our Summer reading program, themed "**Dig into Reading**" was popular
 - 752 children signed up to track their reading, and 51% returned a completed book log.
 - 15 Programs for kids and families were attended by 1120 people
 - **Summer programs** included.
 - Visits by Lake Superior and Minnesota Zoo Animals, Cake Decorating, Gardening (and Worms) Dinosaurs, and a fun science workshop led by the Mad Scientist
 - An outdoor music series for families, with lunchtime programs by Sam Miltich and Friends, the Half-Eaten Burritos and the Simple Guys
 - We are collaborating with KAXE to use the large tent whenever possible during the summer so we can accommodate larger crowds.
- The **Smart Play Spot**, installed by the Children's Museum of Minnesota, continues to be very popular, especially on cold or rainy days. The Interactive play areas provide letter/number/sound and other early literacy skill reinforcement opportunities.
- We have seen many **class visits** already this fall. Several Southwest 3rd and 4th grade classes have been walking to the Library regularly, and we have seen an increase in the number of visits by preschool and Headstart classes. From early September through the middle of November, we have had 19 class visits totaling 444 students.
- Our **Winter Reading Program** begins in mid-December, with a kickoff craft workshop on December 14. The theme is "**Snow Better Time to Read**" starring Melvin Moose
- **Coming up this winter** is another fun Snowfolk festival. On February 1st we have both indoor and outdoor activities planned. Later in February we will have a juggling show.



Library Department Head Report

November 25, 2013



GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

Goal 2: Individuals will be supported in their personal search for knowledge and development of skills.

- Our **recent programming** for adults has included such practical programs as:
 - Hearing loss: What causes it and how to fix it
 - Living off the Grid
 - Trapping
 - Real Food Cooking
 - Investment Clubs
 - Aquatic Invasive Species
 - Issues around non-ferrous metal mining
 - Continuing Civil War discussions (Gettysburg address discussed on November 25 at 7:00 pm) part of the ongoing series started in early 2012,
- We provide people with **instructional or informational** materials for the practical necessities, such as building a deck, home repair or remodeling, cooking and crafts
- **Upcoming programs** include:
 - A memoir of the Peace Corps in Panama,
 - Celebration of progress during National Novel Writing Month.
 - Autism
 - Somalis in Minnesota
 - Costa Rica (David Lien)

Goal 3: Individuals will have access to online resources that connect them to their community and the world

- We have been offering **beginning computer classes** this winter and spring, turning our meeting room into a computer training space. We had 7 participants in each of the 5 classes in September and October -
- Classes are: *Computer 101 for Beginners, Internet 101 for Beginners, Email 101 for Beginners, Using Google Tools, Social Networking 101 for Beginners*, We will repeat the series next spring.
- Our computers continue to be used often by people taking **online classes**, or doing homework for local classes.
- **Online Databases** provide 24/7 access to a wealth of research and learning opportunities.
- **Use of our wireless access** throughout the building is increasing as more people are using laptops or tablets. Use of our computers is declining slightly.

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

- **Legacy-Funded Programs:** We have been able to host several programs arranged by Arrowhead Regional Library System including:
 - **Alabaster Falls**
 - **Song Writing Workshop for teens**
 - **Metal Tooling workshop** for kids and families
 - We continue to offer **museum passes** good for a variety of attractions throughout the region, including the Forest History Center, the Judy Garland and Children's Museum, and the Minnesota Discovery Center, as well as the Duluth Depot and the Duluth Children's Museum



Library Department Head Report

November 25, 2013



- November is **National Novel Writers' Month**, and we are supporting writers in their creative endeavors. We held a kick-off and introduction Friday, Nov. 1, We are offering 2 programs by writers during November, opening the Riverview Room on Saturdays for writers to gather and discuss, and will celebrate progress on Friday, December 6.
- We were one of only 2 Libraries in the region registered for **International Games Day** participation on November 16. We had 12 people come in for an afternoon of board games, video games and family fun!
- We encouraged teen creativity with songwriting and cartooning workshops and a photography contest. Our **Teen Advisory Board** develops some great programs, including the recent party in celebration of the new "Hunger Games" movie. The Teen Winter Reading program will have a zombie theme.
- We collaborated with ICC to bring one of the "Shared Text" speakers to the library. Nick Buettner, part of the Blue Zones project to study long-lived communities, shared research on healthy living.
- **Rapids Reads 2014** is in the planning stages for April, 2014. The book chosen is *Turn Here Sweet Corn*, a memoir of organic farming and the struggle to maintain the family, the small farm, and the community, by Minnesota author Atina Diffley
- **Alternate Formats are very popular:**
 - Circulation of downloadable ebooks and audio books jumped. **Our patrons have downloaded 12,359 titles this year as of November 17.** This compares to 10,400 for all of 2012. On that date there were 6,029 audiobook titles and 6,065 ebook titles in the catalog. These are available to all holders of an ALS library card.
 - We are expanding our collection of *Playaway* audio book devices, thanks to the Library Foundation, and continue to build our collection of DVDs and books on CDs, both popular formats.

Riverfront Energy Center:

- The Energy Center, using heat from wastewater discharged from the UPM Blandin plant, now provides the major heat source for the Library when temperatures are as low as 0 degrees.
- Work on the solar installation will proceed as funds are obtained. (\$40,000 needed) The bases and poles for the remaining two sunflowers have been installed. The next phase will be purchasing the sunflower graphics add-ons and assembling the units
- An educational Dashboard has been developed by QA graphics. This provides an interactive educational experience and remote observation of energy consumption and CO2 production. The dashboard is accessible from the [Library's website](#), and using a touchscreen computer in the energy building. There is also an iPad app that allows the dashboard to be viewed on an iPad. The Library Foundation raised money for the Dashboard and the initial pole installation
- We held an open house to show off the Energy Center and the Dashboard on September 6 during the First Friday Art Walk, and had 25 visitors.
- The Unit has been shut off since Nov 12. because the Blandin plant is shut down. It should be turned on again on November 26



Library Department Head Report

November 25, 2013



Building

We are working on finding alternative LED lights to replace the current bulbs in the 26 pendant fixtures. These should use less energy, and be easier to maintain.

Library Supporters

Friends of the Library continues to raise money through the used book store in the Library lobby, run by volunteers

The Library Foundation completed a Chair Affair Fundraiser, raising over \$8000.

Friends, Foundation, staff and many volunteers spent many hours collecting, sorting and selling for the annual books sale in August. The sale raised about \$7000.

Process Management Study

We are participating in a Lean Library Management study of the Arrowhead Library System led by consultant John Huber. We are examining handling and delivery of materials all over the region, and purchase and processing of new materials. The goal is to reduce the amount of staff time spent handling items, and to reduce the time it takes for an item to be delivered from one library to another.

Communication

We send out an email newsletter to about 550 people once or twice each month, highlighting upcoming programs. 4 Library Staff members contribute to a weekly library column in the Herald Review. We talk about programs on KOZY and KAXE radio stations and many of our adult programs are recorded by ICTV and replayed for several months. .

The Library continues to be very busy, with many people attending programs, borrowing materials, using computers, asking for information, or just hanging out! We provide a popular, safe, spot to visit.