



monthly report

November 2016

Adult Services: Our laptops have been circulating more; patrons enjoy being able to browse the web in a quiet area. Overdrive continues to be a popular resource for our patrons, many of whom are excited to enhance commutes with audiobooks. Another online resource getting more use is DrivingTests.org – patrons appreciate the chance to read about roundabout safety in the drivers' handbook!

Children's Services: We held the first Pied Piper Concert in a series of music education programs put on by Orchestra Iowa. There will be three more in February, April, and May.

During Election Week we had a voting booth for kids to choose their favorite new addition to our Early Literacy Play Area. They selected a Play Kitchen. Stop by and check out all the skill-building imaginative play happening with this new addition!

Young Adult Services: In November we promoted the National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) where participants are challenged to write a novel with 50,000 words by the end of November. We offered a room where teens could come and write, bounce ideas off of each other, and feel inspired every Tuesday in the month of November. We offered five writing nights over the month and had a great response for this writing program. The program garnered so much interest we are going to try to extend it into an ongoing writing program. We also had a great response to both our monthly Anime Club and our Teen Fandemonium. This month's theme was Minecraft.

Outreach Services: We are very happy to share that HACAP has begun to have their Mobile Food Pantry here at our library. The kick off was on November 11th. We are hoping this will be an ongoing monthly event. The Friends of the Marion Public Library held their first Holiday Market here in the library. This was an opportunity for the Friends to raise a bit of money to support the library and for the vendors to share their homemade products. The Holiday Market was a great success.

Circulation Services: Long-time Circulation Services manager Jill Law retired on November 4 after 20 years of service to the library and the community. Throughout the month of November, we partnered with the other metro libraries and HACAP on a food for fines project called Read to Feed: for each non-perishable food item donated by a patron, that patron could have \$1.00 deducted from fines. Marion Library patrons donated 3,056 lbs of food, which works out to 2,546 meals going back to the



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community. We were thrilled to hear feedback from library patrons, some of whom had not been able to check out materials for months.

Library Programming: Classics Club is underway! Attendants enjoyed learning at Kathy Wilson's program and laughing at the 2011 film adaptation – apparently, Michael Fassbender is not the most believable Mr. Rochester. The book club will be held Tuesday, December 6th, and we are expecting a loyal crew.

We have ten registrants so far for the December 17 Crafternoon program and are expecting more. Attendants at this program, led by staffers Denise Lehrman and Madeline Jarvis, will go home with several homemade gifts ranging from book board paintings to Sharpie mugs.

Building/Facilities Update: We continue to work the Ryan Miller and the City's Public Services Department on repairs/upgrades to our aging HVAC system. The management team has expanded their HVAC knowledge to turning heat off and on and are coordinating heat and A/C throughout the mild fall weather so far. Our janitorial RFP has been sent out in an expanded version that includes other City buildings – we hope to have a decision made on a new cleaning company before year's end.

Technology Update: We continue to be grateful about having James Hamous from the City's IT Department assigned to assist with our IT needs throughout the week; James has also been working on the technology part of the library's budget with Elsworth.

Personnel: Jill Law retired on November 4 after 20 years of service. A search is underway for her replacement; we expect a decision will be made in December.

Metro Library Network Update: Plans are underway for Linn Area Reads 2017.

Out Loud! Update: Nothing new to report. Amber Mussman, the program coordinator, has been soliciting prospective author names for the 2017 season.

Librarian's Report: Staff training day was held on Friday, November 11th. We began the day at Cedar Rapids Public Library and enjoyed a presentation by Gina Milsap (Topeka and Shawnee County Library) about library advocacy. It was a true pleasure to have an opportunity to get together with CRPL and Hiawatha Public Library staff and learn together. Our afternoon session was held at MPL and featured a mental health training by Theresa Graham-Mineart from the Abbe Center for Community Mental



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Health. Ms. Graham-Mineart did a great job customizing her content to be relevant to library work, and staff were energized by the session.

Two MPL staff, Dawn Cline and Sandy Ransier, are representing Marion Public Library as part of a MLN-wide taskforce. The MLN Inter-Library Holds Auditing Team is made up of staff from Hiawatha, Cedar Rapids, and Marion libraries and is focused on improving the efficiency and accuracy of holds processing. John Huber is consulting with the group and facilitated some of the early sessions. I was proud to see MPL is a leader in holds processing accuracy (specifically, we had a 91.3% first time find rates for on-shelf materials, which was the highest rate in MLN).

I received multiple positive comments from community members about the Read to Feed initiative. Patrons were excited about the opportunity to reduce their fines and regain access to full library services in exchange for donated food items, and one patron told me “It’s easy to go through day to day life without thinking about donating food or money to those in need, so it’s really wonderful to see the library serve as a conduit between busy people—who are here anyway—and a reputable food bank. It made it so easy to contribute.”

I have been spending significant time preparing operational budget request for next year. The current budget is working well, and I am carrying forward several budget sections essentially “as is,” though I do plan to make a few significant changes, pending board support.

Memberships/Dues: I would like to add a request for an organizational membership to the American Library Association (\$500) and the Urban Libraries Council (\$6000). Both of these memberships would allow staff to connect with peers from around the country (and beyond) and provide some dynamic, valuable training opportunities. ULC, while a serious financial commitment, would be of particular value as Marion grows and becomes more of an urban community. It would also be a great resource for the upcoming stages of our building project.

Revenue/Fines and Fees: I would like to reduce the amount of revenue expected from fines and fees. Public libraries around the country are moving to a fine-free model, and I expect this to be a topic MLN will want to explore soon. In case the directors and boards become prepared to implement this—or a similar change—in the coming fiscal year, I think it’s an important step to reframe expected revenues from this particular budget line.



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Collections Lines: I reallocated some collections funding to better reflect current format needs. The most notable adjustment is shifting value from the audio CD and DVD collections into the downloadable media line to accommodate a subscription service called Hooplah, which allows patrons to download and stream music, movies, and ebooks. I also requested a moderate increase in digital subscriptions to allow us to expand our circulating mobile hotspot collection.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss these ideas with the board.

The Coordinators, Jo, and I have been discussing some ways to improve service through effective staffing design. One of the first changes we see as needed is the creation of a full time Teen Services Library Assistant II position. We have drafted a position description and posting language, and assessed the personnel budget to see what kind of impact creating this position would have. We're confident the position can be filled without necessitating additional funds for salary or benefits; an upcoming retirement will provide the full time benefits package as well as adequate coverage for a salary. This will be a new position for MPL, and I see it allowing for expanded service to teens and their adult caregivers/educators. This position will report to Madeline Jarvis, the Coordinator of Adult Services.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsworth Carman