

March 2020 Report from the Executive Director

ADMINISTRATION

By David Slivken

COVID-19

We are at an unprecedented moment in our city, state, and country. First, I want to express my gratitude to the Poudre River Public Library District Board of Trustees for your continued support and patience as we continue to evaluate and adjust our operations because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Starting Saturday, March 14, The Poudre River Public Library District closed all locations until further notice. We continue to be in contact with Larimer County public health officials to evaluate this timeline.

It is clear now this strong and decisive action was in order to protect the public we serve every day, as well as our staff and volunteers. Decisions like these do not come easy, as it means a temporary loss of access to the in-person learning services and gathering spaces the Library District is known for providing to so many in our community. However, this does not mean a complete shutdown of Library services. We continue to provide the many digital services our users have come to love. You can find [e-books and e-audiobooks](#); [streaming movies, TV](#) and [music services](#); [free access to magazines and newspapers](#); and more. Our Ask A Librarian reference question platform, which can be accessed online, is fielding questions every day. Our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/PoudreLibraries>) has had a burst of new subscribers to view our added content for both adults and children.

We will continue to communicate with the community as our response to this outbreak evolves. We look forward to welcoming back our loyal customers into our buildings when this virus runs its course and our communities begin to reconvene and rebuild a sense of normalcy.

COLLECTIONS

By Tova Aragon

Collections staff continue to work from home to manage the collection.

- Selecting and ordering physical materials. Vendors are processing and holding the materials to be shipped when we reopen.
- Ordering and expanding our digital resources to increase variety and quantity of titles.
 - hoopla limit increased to 20
 - Overdrive:
 - holds ratio dropped to 4:1
 - filled in popular series
 - leveraged sales to increase variety of titles
 - Implemented Overdrive's digital library card.

- Coordinating with database vendors to open up more databases to remote access and to be accessible with our temporary cards.
 - RBDigital, Brainfuse, Bookflix, Scienceflix, and Trueflix can now be used with temporary cards.
 - Ancestry.com, Valueline, Foundation Center and Statista are temporarily available from home.
- Adding new digital resources as vendors open them up for temporary free access.
 - Tumblebook products – Math, Teen ebooks, Romance books and audiobooks for all ages.

I want to acknowledge that all of the above would not be possible without the support of Systems Administration staff supporting our technology needs that allow us to work from home. They have also quickly updated the website so our members can see and take advantage of the changes.

Statistics Report – March 2020

Due to the closure, I will not be able to do the regular board statistical report. I have included a few statistics pertaining to the closure dates of March 15th through March 30th.

Circulation comparison of last day open and the Saturday before:

# of Physical Item Checkouts	3/7/2020	3/14/2020
Harmony	1009	3684
Council Tree	1162	4036
Old Town	1309	4265

Digital/emedial usage:

- OrangeBoy reports: “Overall digital activity has increased 21 percent the last two weeks in March. However, this represents just a 10 percent increase in actual customers.”
- New Overdrive Digital Cards for our Members in the last 2 weeks of March = 554
- Usage of digital (emedial) resources increased 46% from March 15th to March 31st over the same time period last year.
- Three services provide the number of new card holders. Here is the percentage increase from March 15th to March 31st over the same time period last year:

	New Users	% Increase
Hoopla	349	110%
Overdrive	1131	431%
RBDigital	45	25%

- Database usage drops off when school is out of session. The database usage dropped 25% in March compared with March of last year.

COMMUNICATIONS

By Katie Auman

With the closure of the Library District on March 14, most communications activities were refocused toward new priorities including:

- Closure announcements and information shared via all major communication channels including email, social media, and website
- New graphic design elements on website and social media that highlight the Library's vast digital downloads and eResources available from home
- New temporary card, OverDrive Instant Digital Card, and other access services
- Working with SA and content managers to revise and update their webpages with current information and promotions in light of COVID-19
- Supporting PSD with useful information and resources for teachers, students, and families, including K-12 remote learning resources
- Using Library social media channels in new ways and with great success
 - Virtual Storytimes video playlist on the Library YouTube Channel to share literacy activities
 - Spanish-language video playlist on the Library YouTube Channel to share critical information and resources with Spanish speakers in the community

During March, the Communications Team also continued to work on ongoing communications activities and project including:

- Social media promotions and platforms including "The River's Mouth" blog
- Planning new video series
- Planning of 2020 Summer Reading Challenge – "Summer to Imagine"
- Gathering year end-statistical data for Communications and District Annual Reports

Finally, March 27, marked Paula Watson-Lakamp's retirement after 13 years as the Communications Manager of the Library District. Katie Auman is the department's interim manager.

HUMAN RESOURCES

HR Manager:

By Sabrina Strømnes

- Coordinated procedures, teleworking documents, manager's meetings/training, and other tasks all related to COVID-19 response, planning and public building closure.
- Ongoing:
 - Employee relations issues
 - Performance management
 - Employee questions and support
 - On/off boarding
 - Manager/Supervisor questions and support
- Manage Workers' Compensation
- Assist employees with FML, STD, LTD, Non-FML medical leave
- Manage/support Volunteer Program Manager
- Liaison between City of Fort Collins HR, Payroll, Benefits and Learning

Recruitment

By Cynthia Langren

- **New Postings**
 - None
- **Postings in "On Hold" Status**
 - *Customer Experience Representative*
 - *Communications & Development Manager* Administration at Webster House
- **New Hires**
 - Africa Garcia and Jose Ramos started Mar 9 as *Library Assistants* in Community Services at Webster House
 - *Customer Experience Representatives*
 - Elizabeth Roth started Mar 9 at CTL
 - Sierra Arellano started Mar 20 at CTL
 - Sarah Bailey was to start Mar 24 at OTL
- **Terms**
 - Paula Watson-Lakamp, Communications Manager, retired as of Mar 27

Volunteer Program Manager:

By Audrey Glasebrook

- Interviewed six volunteer candidates, and placed them in volunteer roles.
- Recruited and fielded applications from four volunteer "books" for Living Library event on April 25, 2020.
- Met with Learning Org team to plan for Staff Day 2020. Communicated with speakers from Colorado State Library, and local community organizations to schedule presentations.

- Organized and attended a DOVIA class on Measurement & Evaluation of volunteer programs on March 4th.
- Sent out communications to library volunteers to keep them informed of the library's response to COVID-19, and how their roles are impacted.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

By Johanna Ulloa Girón

Accountable, diverse, inclusive, curious, innovative. We have been called to adapt and to think in innovative ways to continue serving marginalized and vulnerable populations in unprecedented times. A week before the closure of the library, we developed a plan to modify our programs and services to minimize the spread of COVID-19, from stopping public libraries to changing the cleaning and delivery model of our homebound program drastically.

After the library's closure, we mobilize and strategized online. Based on the District's mission, our resources, and community needs, we narrowed down the scope of our work. We decided to: identify gaps in the provision and access of information relevant to the community in this critical time, strengthened our partnerships with nonprofit and grassroots organizations, and produce and disseminate content to the identified gaps of knowledge.

The areas identified are food resources, rent assistance, government, census 2020, small business and self-employ, immigrant and citizenship information from USCIS, older adults and end of living matters, children's programs, and tutorials. We have participated in over 50 meetings online with nonprofits, staff from the City of Fort Collins, the Fort Collins Police Department, Poudre School District, and County officials. We have created multiple videos in Spanish with relevant information to the community and disseminated to the all the nonprofits and grassroots organizations. We will continue to create content based on the feedback from our community partners. The importance of this method to provide access to information is clear, as for example, we have reached over 2000 views from our Census video, where Jose Luis Ramos, shows step by step how to filled the census in Spanish.



We are working closely with the city of Fort Collins and United Way of Larimer county to ensure information is accessible, accurate and timely.

Johanna Ulloa Girón is currently working with the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, the Fort Collins Police Department, and Poudre School District to host a town hall online in Spanish.

Johanna Ulloa Giron attended a webinar offered by Cornell University “Leading Remote teams: Navigating the COVID-19 crisis”. Leaders who had lead global teams in times of crisis provided their insights, knowledge, and experience.

The Community Services team meets weekly to strategize, deploy resources as needed, and to connect. Tova Aragon created an anonymous survey given to the community team staff members to better understand staff’s needs, cohesion, sense of relevance of their work during the current crisis, and receptibility of digital methods to convene and communicate. One team member noted “I am impressed with all Johanna is involved with right now. That she is able to communicate a caring and supportive attitude is perfect now.”

Jose Luis Ramos is now working closely with United Way as the manager of the page for small business in Spanish. He has developed a video on Scams, how to apply for CARES, and paperwork needed for CARES application. Jose Luis has been contacted by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in Denver. He will be a panelist for an upcoming webinar for small business in April.

The office if friendly aging has reported an steep increase of inquiries related to end of living paperwork and decisions. Sylvia Garcia will be working on creating the content for a video dedicated exclusively to such matters.

In conclusion, your library has rose to meet the need of our community for accurate, timely and local information in such unprecedented times. We will continue to provide access to information.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

By Mark Huber

Remote work is being supported in a variety of ways. Over two dozen GoToMyPC connections have been established to support staff access to Sierra, document shares and access to Citynet. Access to timesheets and other accounting software is supported through a remote portal offered by City IT. Laptops have been issued to staff that need a device at home for remote work.

Microsoft Teams has been used throughout the district to support video conferencing and group collaboration. There’s a learning curve but we’re adapting and several groups have found some of the features like discussions (instead of email) and file sharing to be effective and plan to continue using when buildings reopen.

Adjustments to Sierra have been made to accommodate building and book drop closures. Due dates have been extended to mid-May. Prospector and Inn-Reach items require some fine adjustments since those materials are handled differently in the system. Notices have been added to the My Account page to communicate no fines will be accruing during the closure.

We have adjusted our temporary cards to encourage community members to access online content during the closure. Expiration dates have been extended to the end of August. Collections has been working with content providers to extend access to temporary cards. We typically see an average of 300 temporary cards created in a month. Two-hundred fifty-eight (258) were created during the two-week period between March 15th and 30th.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

By Currie Meyer

Rekindle the Classics, March 4: Colorado State University co-coordinator Lynn Shutters and I hosted a discussion of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* at Wolverine Farm Publick House. The facilitator, professor Dan Robinson, provided thoughtful author background as well as literacy and cultural context to the discussion. Eleven people attended. Dr. Shutters plans to reschedule the April discussion, *White Teeth*, to take place in the fall.



Roof work at

Council Tree Library intensified in early March: Front Range Village’s roof contractors are replacing the roof due to last July’s hail storm. They will also replace all roof top HVAC units. The work has been disruptive, with banging, drilling, and hammering as well as fumes from construction materials, which caused some staff to feel dizzy and unwell. To curb this effect, Rob and I asked City Operations, who control our HVAC and venting systems, to shut down the intake systems during operating hours. FRV apologized for the disruption, and repeated that the fumes are not toxic.

Closure due to COVID19 pandemic on March 14: Ken let me know at about noon on Saturday, March 14, that all

District operations would shut down at 5:00 that evening, I contacted my lead staff, Circulation Supervisor Angela James and Children’s Services Librarian, Amy Holzworth (Teen Services Librarian Jenny Thurman was sick) to come in to the Library and help with the long-term closure. The three of us relieved evening staff, informed and advised staff, informed the public and Front Range Village, posted signs and gathered work to do at home. Library visitors were frantic to gather plenty of materials, and checked out over 4,000 items that day. This is quadruple the number of check-outs of the previous Saturday.

Work during closure: I have continued to meet virtually and by phone with the Leadership and Public Services Managers Teams since March 15 as we adjust our goals and practices. I have been in continual virtual / phone / text contact with my staff, and they have maintained contact with me and each other. The CTL Lead team (Amy, Angela, Jenny and I) spent time setting up and learning new platforms for working from home. Planning for near-term programs and

operations has ceased, but thinking around re-opening operations and summer programs is now a focus. The CT storytime staff have created and uploaded nearly a dozen storytime videos since the closure. We continue to be mindful of the health and needs of staff during this difficult time, and check-in with each other too.

HARMONY LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

By Ken Draves

Front Range Community College (FRCC) Updates

All FRCC campuses are closed to students, staff and public and all (or almost all) classes have moved online for the remainder of the semester. Campuses are likely to remain fully closed through at least the month of April and into early May, and of course the situation is highly dynamic and difficult to forecast and the period of closure may be extended. The College will soon announce a decision regarding summer classes. Construction on the new, two story, 61,000 square foot Heath Care Careers Center near Harmony continues and as of last report is still on schedule. As our partner in operating Harmony Library the District will plan and coordinate Harmony's eventual reopening with the College.

Answering Questions Online

Our District Librarians continue to provide reference services to our community remotely via our digital assistance services. Librarians are staffing *Ask a Librarian*, and our Answer Center and Circulation Supervisors, along with our Digital Literacy Librarian, are helping to answer a variety of questions, many clustered around how to access our digital collections of materials from home, as well as many individuals concerned about overdue materials, fines, Prospector items currently checked out, and related circulation matters.

OLD TOWN LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

By Eileen McCluskey

The Old Town Library team supported each other and the community in the weeks leading up to the library closure on March 14. They adapted to a fast-changing work environment with increased cleaning protocols and provided valuable input in regard to how to provide a clean and safe environment for staff and the public.

Once the decision was made to close, the team working on the day we closed worked together under incredibly busy and stressful circumstances. They were amazing. In the weeks since closing, the team has transitioned to providing virtual support for the community in whatever capacity necessary. They continue to support each other and meet online to check-in in order to ensure appropriate continuity of services.