



- Since the last meeting we started using SwipeClock as our time keeping and scheduling solution. While not without hiccups, I am generally pleased with the results and the company's ability to customize their software to our needs, rather than ask us to conform to their defaults as many others do. The direct payroll integration with our accountants has caused a few problems, and staff on both ends are working to resolve the issue. The HR components to this system are to be enabled at a later date once all the scheduling/timekeeping/payroll is stable.
- The Coldwater Branch hosted an after-hours fundraising event for the Branch County Literacy Council on Friday, October 25. Turnout was nice, though a little under past years, but the fundraising aspect was successful. The Literacy Council Director, Sam Greenburg, gave a presentation on their exciting new literacy program partnering with Michigan Works.
- On October 30, I was sworn into the Coldwater Downtown Development Authority Board. This is a 4-year commitment with a meeting monthly on the 4th Wednesday. I'm looking forward to bringing the library's perspective to this effort to make the Coldwater downtown area as vital as it can be.
- On November 1, we had a nice meeting with the Branch Conservation District director, Jordan Beehler. She is relatively new to the program here and is looking to establish new avenues to get the word out about soil, water, and ecosystem issues in Branch County. We are very excited to have them join us in presenting programs, and in addition we'll be hosting their augmented reality sandbox to demonstrate how to read topographical maps and to show the effects of erosion. Pretty cool!
- Together with the branch managers, we have examined attendance and hourly circulation numbers to tweak our open hours of operation a little for next year to hopefully maximize our impact to the community. Later Saturday hours at most branches is one of the changes, as the numbers show increased demand at most locations for Saturday afternoon service. We will not be increasing any hours, just be shuffling them around.
- The admin team has spent a lot of time working on the employee handbook rewrite, getting the donation letter out, and I have been working on making sure that the new budget groupings will be reflected in our financials next year by going over all the many account billing codes.

Submitted by John Rucker



- Marketing efforts this month included the creation of our first ever district wide event guide. Branch managers and programmers spent several weeks working on future programs for the upcoming months of December, January, and February to be collected into one booklet listing for all programs! The event guide is split into the six locations and by target audience (kids, teens, adults, or family events). Also, in the event guide are ads for our digital services Hoopla, Libby, Mango Languages, and Consumer Reports. There are sections on how to get a library card and how to connect with BDL virtually. The event guide will replace the individual flyers that have historically been handed out with only branch specific events at each location. These will be produced in three month sections handed out at all locations.
- Participated in “Reading and Resources”, a project to connect families to literacy opportunities in Branch County. This is being coordinated by the Great Start Collaborative of Branch County. The library was asked to be a part of a video series that will be shown to families highlighting library services that occur in the county. After our sales pitch, I was asked to read a children’s book on camera and chose the classic tale of “Brown Bear, Brown Bear”.
- Attended the annual “Celebration of Literacy” event at the Coldwater Branch hosted by the Branch County Literacy Council and the Coldwater Friends of the Library. It was a great evening with music and conversation with literacy supporters. The director of the literacy council, Sam Greenburg, presented on their new program connecting employability and literacy. Several of the volunteer tutors and students attended to share their positive experiences and success.
- Administration work this last month included working with the bookkeeper to reconcile some internal documents and looking at the Employee Manual.



- October 19, 2019 was our first Family Fright Night and we had a staggering turn out! There were nearly 100 patrons in line when we opened the doors at 4PM and over the course of the night we had about 450 patrons enjoy the games, ghost hunting, zombie maze (check out the Facebook live video!), treats, and candy. We had so many patrons comment on how great the event was, and moving forward BDL will definitely do it again!
- There will be a 2020 Summer Reading Program training on November 19 at the Portage District Library entitled, "Imagine Your Story - Virtual Reality Workshop"! Nine staff members will be attending, including myself.
- Starting in the next month, I will be traveling around the district to different branches to observe story times. Our Early-Literacy Initiative will begin in the new year and I'm really looking forward to this information gathering!
- One Book One County (OBOC) will be here before we know it! The planning process is in motion and we couldn't be more excited! A title for the book has been chosen, and a plan is in the works for the author to travel here for a presentation, Q & A, and book signing. More on that next month!

Submitted by Jessica Tefft