



The past month has seen a surprising amount of action and activity, even with me taking some time off at the holidays. In late December, a traffic accident in Bronson took out power to the library and fried 6 surge protectors in the process. Thankfully, they all did their job and no other library equipment was damaged. Thanks to the Bronson Fire Department and Ludwick Electric for quickly responding and giving us the all clear.

As expected, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act was not extended, so it expired on December 31. The Personnel Committee has recommended a draft policy to mirror the FFCRA benefits for BDL staff on a temporary basis, to help insure that our staff feel they can stay home in the event of a COVID-19 event in their lives, rather than risk infecting others at the library. Please see the draft in the discussion section of the agenda.

In accounting news, 2021 will be the last year that BDL uses the accounting codes that you've seen on our financial statements for decades. A year from now, we'll be on a new statewide account code standard called the Michigan Uniform Chart of Accounts, a requirement from the Michigan Treasury. We started basic preparations some time ago, and will be having our first training session on the new standards in February.

The State Aid Report, a requirement for BDL to get state aid disbursements, was turned in the first week of January.

In more Bronson news, the IT Department got all the technology out of the Bronson Branch so that the movers could take the books and furniture, and the repair work started this week. Lynnell will have more to say about this at the meeting Monday.

The first of our new services for 2021 is ready: Tutor.com, provided by the Woodlands Cooperative. Some library staff were trained this week on it, and others will be on Jan. 25. Patrons can access this wonderful resource for students from home right now by going to www.BranchDistrictLibrary.org/tutor.

I also want to give a shout out to Kate Andrade, our Woodlands Cooperative Director, for talking to me for about an hour about my collection development questions. Woodlands is always one of the best resources we have!

Along with Kimberly, I attended a 3-day refresher course on cataloging records. Other recent meetings attended were the Bronson Friends of the Library, Branch County Commissioners, Branch County COVID informational meeting, and the regular meeting of state Library Directors.

Finally, we will be reopening to the public on Monday, January 18. Notices have gone out on the usual library spots, as well as WTVB and next week's *Shopper's Guide*. The staffing situation is stable at the moment for us, having weathered the holiday season. Also, county numbers are close to what they were in October. With all of our protocols and precautions, along with the 30% occupancy required by the latest MDHHS order, we should be able to resume services safely for patrons and staff alike. Curbside service, which has been brisk the last two months, will continue for any who want it.

Submitted by John Rucker



- Happy New Year! I ended 2020 at BDL by taking some time off during the holidays. I enjoyed many days of reading and countless projects around the house.
- While I was on vacation, BDL received a very large shipment of hardware from Tech Logic for the RFID project. Many, many, many boxes were waiting for me when I came back in January. John coordinated the installation of the software with the vendor. I am working on finalizing our training schedule for all branches.
- The Technical Services department has been working on cleaning up the catalog of library items. About 6,000 records were deleted that did not contain any items available for circulation. These types of projects make the library catalog more user-friendly for patrons and library staff.
- Starting in February, we will not be posting recordings of library staff reading books. Publishers continue to place very specific rules on reading books virtually. These strict rules make picking the books very difficult. Lynnell Eash from the Bronson branch will be offering weekly live storytimes using Zoom. This will essentially replace the recorded storytimes. We are able to host the storytime like you would see it in the library with no publisher restrictions but in a virtual setting.
- The district-wide curbside numbers for December was a total of 1,075 visits. There were many times multiple cars would be in the parking lots waiting for their delivery of materials or prints.
- Now that 2020 has ended we can look at how our digital branch (Facebook and Instagram) performed in the last year. Our most popular Facebook post was from March 14 when we announced that BDL would be closing due to the coronavirus pandemic. Little did we know that post would start the change of everything for the library. Our most watched video in 2020 was a jazz concert for a total of 1,600 minutes viewed. Our most popular staff video was a t-shirt craft program with 938 minutes viewed. In total for 2020, our videos were watched 39,199 minutes (about 653 hours of watching). This represents an increase of 1,069% of minutes viewed compared to 2019. This makes sense since we had rarely posted video content in 2019 and never on the large scale like we did in 2020. Our page likes on Facebook increased to 3,467 and we have 167 followers on Instagram.

Submitted,

Kimberly Feltner