



Algansee

Our patron curbside pick-up went very good out here until we opened for the public. Most of time patrons came to the door, they did not want me to go out in the parking lot. I was very grateful.

When we opened on 1/18, all were happy that we were open, even though masks and the restriction of only a few patrons at a time.

Our Grab & Go bags also go very well. The bag for January was a hand care bag, which all went out right away. The February bag was a Valentine wreath, which was also gone right away. Linda Pickford, the clerk here does such a nice job on monthly crafts for the bags. Our bags are now in process for March and April. We have been weeding and cleaning.

Because I am from the Old School, trying to get used to Zoom, I will keep trying to get used to all of the new. The Staff at all Branches are very helpful, good people!

Waiting for Spring!

Thank You,

Algansee Branch Manager, Janice Clark

Bronson

Bronson Branch continues to be a big echoey empty space for right now but things are moving along. The cracks in the walls and ceiling have been repaired and then everything taped up for the painters. The ceiling should be done today (Friday) and then next week they start on the walls. The ceiling color is Steamed Milk, the walls Trés Naturelle and the upper woodwork which was peach will be a brown to match the rest of the woodwork. Carpet squares will be a little darker than the Media Center carpet but a closer match than the blue carpet was. The biggest slow down of the project is the beam to brace up the floor. The basement is ready to begin that work but they are still waiting for the beam. Frustrating for us and the construction company and the movers but nothing to do but wait.

Our plans now are to get the Media Center back up and running as soon as the upstairs work is completed. We won't be moving anything heavy back in until the basement is done but this way we will be able to do copying, faxing, printing and have computers for the public to use. We will still be able to provide patrons with books from all the other branches and through Interlibrary Loan.

Steve and Jessica have been able to work on projects for Tech Services while working from home. Jessie has done a great job of keeping patron book requests filled so that no one goes without reading materials. Steve continues to record his stories for his virtual readings and work on Grab n Go kits. I've been holding down the fort and doing curbside deliveries. We are all looking forward to opening the library again and being able to have people in the building.

Lynnell Eash, Bronson Branch Manager

Coldwater

At the Coldwater Branch, reopening to the public has been going smoothly. We have two new outreach patrons, and we've seen our first Library1 card holders visit us here at the branch.

Kids' Place Coordinator Linda Dull, with help from fellow staff members Mary Robey and Cheryl Graham, put together a socially-distant outdoor event for children and families to enjoy during Winter Fest on Saturday, January 23rd. The star of the show was a snowy twist on the classic vinegar-and-baking-soda volcano experiment. Parents appreciated the take-home kits our staff put together, which included information about library services as well as hot chocolate packets and instructions and supplies for wintry science activities to do at home. About 80 volcanoes were made, and 150 children and caregivers stopped by.

Our grab-and-go kits have continued to be popular. For adults, we offered a seasonally-themed illuminated snow scene craft kit. Teen Coordinator Lindsay Villa put together two crayon-themed kits for teens: DIY candles and lipsticks. Meanwhile, Kids' Place staff offered a wide range of kits for kids of all ages, including the latest edition of Movin' and Groovin' for youngsters and borax sea shell and slime activities for tweens plus plate printing, a monkey craft, and a snowflake sun-catcher kit.

In the library building itself, we have new displays for February for upcoming holidays, Black History Month, and the newly announced One Book One County selection for 2021. We've been tapping volunteer staff members to diversify book selection, and we're currently working on replacing our copies of some of our most well-loved children's and young adult books using money from the Shamulus trust. On top of that, we recently received a large donation of movie and TV show DVDs that are sure to be popular with our patrons.

A few of our more creative staff also entered a contest from vendor Midwest Tape, submitting their ideas for new Binge Boxes.

Starting next week, the seed libraries at the Coldwater and Union Township Branches will officially be open. A new staff member in the cataloging department, Toni Nickerson, has been indispensable in prepping the Coldwater seed library. Thanks to her, we have new seeds and new resources ready to go for local gardeners!

Keeley Briggs

Coldwater Branch Manager

Quincy

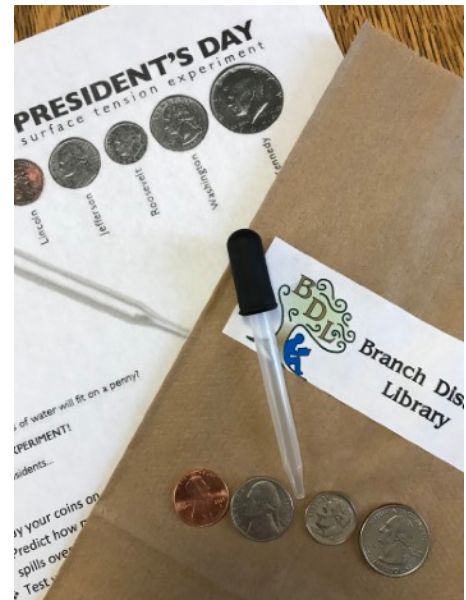
Patrons are very glad our doors are open again. We still do not see many children, but rather parents pop in to choose books to take home.

Saturday, February 6 was “Take Your Library to the Child Day”, which will be celebrated all month by libraries rather than just one day. We offered treat bags and fun papers for families to take home. Some went out the door that day, but the rest were all claimed the following Monday. In thinking back to one year ago, the “Take Your CHILD to the LIBRARY” event was celebrated with a storyteller and families traveling between branches getting a passport stamped and prizes were offered. What a difference a year makes.

Our Friends group is providing ten of the One Book, One County book selection as giveaways. These books have been put into goodie bags for adults to keep. We anticipate the virtual book discussions in late March.

Planning for the Summer Reading Program has begun and I have completed the Beanstack Demo training. The Branch Managers will meet again in early March to discuss what the program will look like this year.

We have a fun Teen President’s Day Surface Tension kit ready for this week. Coins and eye droppers are included (see photo). We are still providing three kits each month for each age group: children, teens and adults. We have not had any leftovers yet. All kits find a home pretty quickly. It’s good to know all the work of planning and compiling these kits is being enjoyed.



Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Wood

Union Twp.

As we continue to adjust to the COVID normal, the Union Township Branch began a new year with high hopes for the future.

We offered four Grab ‘n Go kits for the month of January including Children- Rocking Paper Plate Snowman (1/4), Creating STEAM- Pinecone Bird Feeders (1/11), Old Time Crafts- Crochet (1/18), and Teen-Gratitude Jar (1/25). We also prepared Lit Kits to be introduced in February. The intention of the Lit Kits is to provide activities incorporated with literacy and literature. I am working off the early literacy model of Talk, Sing, Read, Write, and Play for the goody bags. This also works with the training Judy and I received from the state.

There will be kits every month with the number varying by what we have to offer. For example, I have 3 created to start off with but will usually offer 2. A regular one will be the free book one where we will provide 1 book per family with multiple activities and goodies for each child in the family. Additional ones will contain other forms of literature along with activities and may be created for special occasions such as *The Mitten* is for Take the Library to Your Child Day 2021. The Friends group will be paying for the book selections.

Virtual meetings and trainings kept me busy for the last two weeks of the month with a few fun ones during ALA Midwinter meeting weekend (1/22- 1/25)...more about those later. Otherwise, I attended trainings on Libby/Overdrive with Judy and one on the new online offering from BDL called tutor.com. Meetings included WNIT about the St. Joseph River documentary (1/21), BDL Seed Library (1/22) and a Union City one concerning plans for a St Joseph River celebration in August (1/26).

The ALA weekend webinars were a lot of fun and informational. On January 22, I sat through a Mock Newberry discussion allowing the viewers a slight idea of how the award process is run. That evening, Scholastic shared "Truth Be Told: The Transformative Power of Story" with presentations from four authors about their upcoming books. On January 23, I watched another Scholastic webinar called "Empowering Young Voices Through Illustrated Stories" where another four authors/illustrators presented their upcoming releases. Lastly, I watched the Youth Media Awards which is the Oscars of children's and young adult literature. Overall, a very enjoyable weekend!

We are continuing to offer a book sale with the children's books being sold. The Picture Book collection was weeded and I am working on the Juvenile Non Fiction area. We also adjusted our adult fiction shelves so that there is a Large Print section and a new display shelving to replace the one behind the desk that has been used for quarantining books.

I was inspired to offer a topic for the MLA Spring Institute conference so I filled out the application and turned it in. Spring Institute is an annual conference through MLA completely focused on services and collection development for children and young adults. My presentation title is "A is for Ag in the STEAM equation" and I am pleased to inform you that it was accepted. I will be presenting on March 12 and look forward to the opportunity!

I have included a request for the purchasing of Folkmanis Puppets to be appreciated for story times, programs and decoration around the building. These are finely made units and will be purchased with funds from the unnamed Union Twp. Branch Trust Fund. I am especially looking to use them in connection with the 2021 Summer Reading program which is an animal theme.

Thank you for reading my report and considering my request!

Julia Baratta

Union Township Branch Manager