

## **Coldwater Branch Painting Project**

We issued the 50% down payment to STP Painting. They have been here to color match the paint colors and are planning on a mid-May start date. You'll see activity on both sides of US-12, because the City of Coldwater has also contracted with STP to paint the old Putnam Funeral Home across the street from the library at the same time.

## **Millage News**

I delivered the certified resolution starting the millage process to the Branch County Clerk. All was in order, and we are a go for the August 2 ballot. There will be no charge to the library to be on this ballot.

During our staff in-service day, the branch managers joined Kimberly and me for the last session of our millage workshop, which provided a recap of the whole process and focused heavily on the dos and don'ts of promoting a millage.

One of the "don'ts" regards how much involvement library staff or trustees may have on any vote-yes committees. The answer is basically none. Jeanne Berg has graciously agreed to help us form a yes committee. She will be contact library supporters involved in 2014, in addition to current library Friends and other supporters to form this vital committee which will be independent of the library.

## **Going Fine-Free**

Today's *Daily Reporter* shared a story of Michigan libraries going fine-free. While the article did not mention BDL as one of the first in the state to make this change, our experiences mirror what was reported in the article: "removing late fines had made no impact on metrics like wait times for popular books, how long materials were being kept, or the number of materials reported lost." 44% of Michigan libraries are now fine-free.

## **Staff In-Service**

As noted elsewhere in this packet, our spring in-service day was March 28. In the morning we had a presentation from the Branch County Literacy Council, and from the staff in the Heritage Room. We then had refreshers on IT topics, our digital services, and customer service. For the afternoon we split up, with each branch taking care of spring cleaning to-dos on their own. Across the county, there was a lot of dusting, straightening, changing of lightbulbs, collection management, and more. It was a very successful day!

## **Library Staff News**

There has been lots going on with library staff this past month.

Christina Holibaugh started with us as Branch Manager of the Coldwater Branch. You will get to meet her at the meeting Monday. She has wasted no time getting acquainted with the library and all we do. I'm very excited for the future!

Lisa Wood's retirement send off was very nice, see the Quincy report for photos and more.

Sarah Strong accepted our offer to become the new Quincy Branch Manager. She will start in May. One of her first duties will be to help select a replacement for Renee Hardy, our Quincy Clerk, who announced her retirement after 35 years at the library. Renee's last day will be the end of May.

Judy Gottschalk, current clerk and previous Branch Manager of the Union Twp. Branch also announced her retirement effective the end of April. Julie and I are currently working to hire a new clerk for this position.

We welcome Brandon Apmann to the library as our newest clerk. Brandon will be floating around the district as needed for now, helping with coverage on all the vacancies we currently have.

Speaking of that, the Alganssee Branch Manager position remains unfilled at this time. We will continue to advertise for this opening. Lynnell is continuing to do double duty in the meantime, for which I am incredibly grateful!

I am also so grateful for all the time and effort Kimberly and Jessica have put in to keep things running smoothly and ensure a comprehensive training regimen for our new hires. This operation would simply not be the same without their diligent efforts.

## **FOIA Request**

We received another Freedom of Information Act request from the same Florida data broker that has submitted several times previously. The request was fulfilled at no charge in accordance with our policy..

## **TAC**

The BDL Teen Advisory Committee had decided some months ago that they saw themselves as a service club in addition to just advising on library events. 5 of them joined Sandi to volunteer at the Humane Society of Branch County all day Wednesday. A great way to help the community while learning about animal welfare!

## **Covid Update**

We had a couple uses of our temporary leave policy this past month as we had one confirmed positive case in a staff member and one person who thankfully tested negative.

## **Materials Challenges**

Related to what Kimberly reported on, books continue to be challenged and banned across the country. At our April meeting, 17% of Michigan libraries represented said that they had experienced an increase in challenges at their library. So far, this has not been the case at BDL.

## **Former Trustee Passing**

With sadness, I report that Louie Uhrig, former BDL Trustee representing Bronson (2014-2016), passed away on April 6. [Obituary and details are online.](#)

## **Trustee Vacancies**

We have another candidate for our vacant Board position representing Coldwater. I expect City Council to take this up before the May meeting. We continue to ask individuals in Union Twp. to fill that position, but have still not met with success.

## **Meetings Attended**

2 webinars on a possible federal grant, Coldwater DDA, the Cultivating Community Project, Quincy Library Advisory Board, Coldwater Library Advisory Board, Coldwater Friends of the Library, Library of Michigan Directors.

Submitted by John Rucker

This past month kicked off with our Spring In-Service Day. All staff came together at the Coldwater branch for morning sessions. We heard from the Branch County Literacy Council and the Holbrook Heritage Room. Other topics included IT review, digital services, and customer service. In the afternoon the spring cleaning began. Look for more information about the day in our branch managers' reports!

The work on our next Event Guide (May/June/July) continued. It has been a process since as it was getting put together, we had presenters cancel or reschedule. In some cases, several times! It finally went to the printers earlier this week. Copies will be available at all branches soon.

I welcomed two new staff members to the library. At the end of March, Christina Holibaugh started as our new Coldwater Branch Manager. In April, Brandon Apmann started as a new Public Services Clerk. We are still seeking a new branch manager at the Alganssee location. A new flyer was created and I did another round of postings on social media.

National Library Week came and went. A special social media post was shared on Tuesday thanking our staff for all that they do at BDL! During National Library Week, the list of the Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2021 is released. The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 729 challenges in 2021. This was an increase of 167% from the previous year. It is important to note that many challenges and possible banning of books go unreported.

The Top Ten Most Challenged Books were:

1. Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe
2. Lawn Boy by Jonathan Evison
3. All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson
4. Out of Darkness by Ashley Hope Perez
5. The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas
6. The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie
7. Me and Earl and the Dying Girl by Jesse Andrews
8. The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison
9. This Book is Gay by Juno Dawson
10. Beyond Magenta by Susan Kuklin

A special week is dedicated to this topic in September. Banned Books Week is an annual event celebrating the freedom to read. Stay tuned!

Submitted,

Kimberly Feltner

- The One Book One County BDL book discussions were a hit! The library had a total of 25 attendees for this program at the branches. Lively discussions were had!
- Attended the Alganssee Friends of the Library meeting on April 5. Attended the Coldwater Friends of the Library meeting on April 14.
- Will be attending the Branch County Community Network meeting on April 20, 2022.
- The Summer Reading Program 2022 is right around the corner, and will be here before we know it! The Kickoff Party will be held at Heritage Park on June 2, from 4PM to 6PM. There will be booths representing all branches of the Branch District Library, Carey's Bakery food truck, and Jonny Hawkins' drawing classes. The TAC will be making ice cream with kiddos. We are so looking forward to it!
- Summer Reading will be here before we know it! Mark your calendars for the first day to start turning in reading logs on June 6!

Submitted,

Jessica Tefft