

Stats

Summer Reading is in full swing (and nearly over!). We have another interesting statistical report this month, with attendance again up significantly from this time last year, along with many other categories as well. Even more interesting is comparing stats to pre-pandemic numbers. About half our branches are averaging pre-pandemic numbers, and system-wide we are at 83% of our June 2019 numbers for attendance. It's 87% of item usage and 88% of wifi usage. It's certainly felt busier than that at times, though, and one number really makes that clear: program attendance. This past month we were 61% **busier** with program attendance than in June 2019! See this month's statistical report for all the details.

Personnel

After finishing interviews for the Teen Services Coordinator, we are pleased to announce that one of our own, Emma Barsed, will be taking over this position. Emma will overlap with Nicky Ball during her last two weeks with us.

In other personnel news, please note that after getting married recently, our Union Twp. Branch Manager is now known as Maria Rathbun. Congratulations, Maria!

Taxes

The County gave us an incorrect L-4029 Tax Rate Request form for our packet last month. The corrected form is in the discussion section of this month's packet.

State Aid to Libraries

I am happy to report that the state legislature approved an increase to state aid to libraries of \$1,000,000. Split among all the eligible libraries in the state, this won't end up being a large increase to our bottom line, but it's certainly better than a reduction!

Facilities

It's been another busy month in our physical spaces. We had minor electrical repairs at Bronson, Coldwater, and Union Twp. branches. We had full visits and treatments from Orkin, which we'll talk more about in the discussion section of the agenda. The request for proposals for the Coldwater Restrooms Project [has been posted](#) and sent directly to a number of contractors for their consideration. The Coldwater Branch also had a walkthrough with the fire department, to make them more familiar with the building.

The Algansee Twp. Board has made more progress on the new building project, which we'll discuss later in the agenda. At the Bronson Branch, work was done by the township in the basement, which we'll discuss later as well, and they also did some repair work on a sinking step at the rear entrance. Finally, at Union Twp., the bottle filler addition to the water fountain that was approved last month was installed.

Partner Contracts

Though I have been in communication with our attorney, the Allen Twp. Board, and the Sherwood Village President about our respective contract revisions, there is nothing substantive to report yet.

Insurance Transition

We are nearly completed with the transition to the Michigan Township Participating Plan ("Par Plan"), offered by the Decker Agency. We have a visit scheduled from a Par Plan representative in a couple weeks for a walkthrough and recommendations for improvements. Additionally, the Par Plan has sent us a free monitoring kit for the utility rooms at the Coldwater Branch to alert us in the event of a water leak.

IT Department

The transition to Windows 11 is past the halfway point, so far so good. We prepped and released to our users 9 new cellular hotspots that Verizon kindly gave us free of charge to replace some older pandemic-era devices.

Obituary

I just want to make sure that everyone knew of the passing of a great friend of the library, Marvin Rosenberg. Marv's wife, Phyllis, was the long-serving director of the Coldwater Public Library, the Branch County Library, and the first Director of the Branch District Library, which she was instrumental in creating in 1991. Marv supported her, and the library, throughout all of that, and right up to the present day. The meeting room furnishings, the beautiful flowers in front the Coldwater Library, and more, are all due to Marv's continuing generosity. Like Phyllis, Marv will be missed, and we send our heartfelt condolences to his family. [His obituary may be read online.](#)

Meetings Attended

I attended the Algansee Twp., BDL staff meeting, Library of Michigan Directors. Kimberly and Erica Donihue also presented to Altrusa on the prospect of receiving a donation for a 2nd StoryWalk® in Coldwater.

Quincy StoryWalk®

Sarah will tell you all about the launch of the Quincy StoryWalk® in her oral report, so I'll just provide a few photos here to make you smile. Many thanks to the Friends of the Library, the Historical Society, the Chamber Of Commerce, NIKA Club, numerous individual donors, and especially to the Village of Quincy for their generosity and support!



Submitted by John Rucker

-and just like that, Summer Reading is almost over. In less than 2 weeks, we'll be wrapping up the 2024 SRP season. To date, 630 readers have registered for SRP and 149 have completed the challenge. There have been numerous programs and so much fun had!
- The Branch County Fair is coming up soon! Each branch will be represented at the booth in Schlubatis Hall.
- Our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten Graduation party will be held on August 17th! Each graduate will receive a gift basket with books, a Squishmallow and a graduation certificate.

