

Interim Executive Director Report for February 2024 Board Packet

NICK DEMSKE, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Personnel/Operations

January was Rebecca Leannah's first month in her new role as Adult Services supervisor and, since she's inheriting the department when it's down two full time librarians (because of the two retirements in December), she and her staff have had to work twice as hard just to keep operations going, during what is an unusually difficult time to do so. Taking over a new supervisor role is hard enough, but to do so when there's two out of four FT staff members missing is a serious challenge....but again, Rebecca and our frontline staff have really lived up to it. Rebecca and I were also able to get the two open librarian positions posted in the second half of January. That posting has closed and we're now preparing to review the applications and schedule interviews soon.

January was also my first experience dealing with the challenges of inclement weather decisions in the interim director role. We had both a week of extremely low temperatures and a week where multiple severe snow storms were predicted last month. We took the bookmobile off the road for multiple days because of bad weather conditions/predictions, and we also closed the building on Friday Jan 12th for the entire day, out of an abundance of caution for staff safety. During the negative temperatures week, the bookmobile started having engine troubles and we had to take it off the road again and have DPW work on it. In the main building, we also had challenges (which I mentioned last month) of the doors malfunctioning from the wind and freezing out our front desk circulation staff. We found creative solutions and carried on. Despite all the challenges, staff worked every day to do everything possible to make sure our services ran as smoothly as possible.

We also welcomed a new staff member to the team in January--Connor Jackson, who is one of our two Public Safety Specialists now. Connor has proven quickly to be a really excellent addition. I want to credit Evelin and Ashley in large part for getting Connor. We posted the job, interviewed the candidates and, afterwards, they felt like we hadn't found the right one yet. I discouraged them from opening the posting back up, but they felt strongly about it, so we posted it again for one week. In that week, we got one application, it was Connor's and, as soon as we had his interview, it was very clear we had found the right candidate. So welcome to Connor, and thank you to Evelin and Ashley for their discernment in the hiring process.

Facilities

We are still scheduling with contractors to get our new staircase edge caps fixed. We will likely have to close the staircase for an entire day when that work commences. We also did a number of other small things in the building over January, including having the fire panels tested.

One of the bigger pieces of news, regarding the facility---DPW was able to “score some funds at the end of 2023” which made it possible for the library to get new condensing boilers for the heating system (very efficient) and a new air compressor. I’m unsure whether this came from a grant or from funds that went unused for a different project which they reallocated, but we were thrilled to be the recipients. The work to install both systems happened in the first half of January.

Meetings and Activities

In January, the Digital Services and Innovation team conducted a soft opening of the recording studio and have made it available for patrons to reserve and use now. We are aiming to do a hard opening (with more publicity) tentatively on April 1st. We also got connected with the city’s health department this month for a partnership opportunity. They were given a huge amount of COVID tests by the federal government that expire in April, and they needed to diversify their distribution sites. We’ve given out nearly 7 cases of tests to our patrons for free.....but, as of this writing, we still have more, so grab some for yourself the next time you’re in.

January was our first month of hosting United Way’s VITA 2024 tax help program, also. We’ve had this partnership going for many years now and kept it going even through the heights of the pandemic. In January, I also went before the Public Works committee of the City of Racine to request that our parking be made free during the hours when this service is available (something we’ve also done for years) and the city generously continued that partnership. According to their estimation, this is a loss of \$6000 in parking revenue for them, so it’s a meaningful commitment they make and a great 3-way partnership for the community.

Lastly--after four years of working towards this goal, the Racine Public Library last month became the first library in the country (the world?) to be the host site for a Participatory Defense Hub. I’ve mentioned this project a number of times over the past year and a half of reports, so I won’t go into the details again here, but I’ll just say that the PD hub went live for its first public meeting on Monday January 8th and has met every Monday since then (aside from MLK day). There has been at least one family or community member (and usually multiple) present for every single meeting, looking for resources and support as they navigate the legal cases they’re dealing with. It has been inspiring to witness them go from feeling hopeless, in many instances, to feeling like they have found support they dearly needed.

The leaders of the coalition that organizes the hub have decided to take a “narrow-casting” rather than a “broad-casting” approach to publicizing the hub. Normally, this would be something we would promote through our usually publicity vehicles and send out a press release about, but given the sensitive nature of the work the hub does (and given that they don’t want to have more community members reaching out than they have capacity for), they’ve decided to promote it more organically through word of mouth, and the library has respected that approach (though they have at least created fliers and a facebook page, also). Despite that, word about the hub is getting out in the *library* world, and I’ve already been contacted by a few different people throughout the country either wanting to write an article about the new resource or

wanting to host some of the leaders of the hub for a panel presentation at conferences and the like. The hub leaders have said that once they have some tangible outcomes of the work they're doing, they intend to more proactively spread the word about the hub.

In the meantime, congratulations to the RPL on being the first in the nation to offer this type of resource to its patrons. We were a very early adopter of pre-school story times and we also were one of the first libraries in the state to get a social worker on staff, but this is the only instance I am aware of where the RPL is *the* first library in the country to offer a new service innovation in the field. It's something to be very proud of.

January Programming Statistics

The Library presented 37 programs in January, which reached a total participation of 483 people.

37 programs were groups attending and 0 were self-directed.

8 were for children ages 0-5.

6 Were for children ages 6-11.

11 were for young adults.

9 were for adults.

3 were for all ages.

All 37 programs were in person. They had an average attendance of 13.

Programs	Target Age Group	Type	Format	Participants	# of Programs
STEAM Workshops: Getting Started with Linux	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	1	1
Virus Prevention & Correction	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	2	1
STEAM Workshops: Python Programming	Young Adult (12-18)	Group attending	In-person	9	2
Maker Monday	General Interest (all Ages)	Group attending	In-person	20	1
Lapsit Storytime	Children 0-5	Group attending	In-person	29	3
Tuesday Tales	Children 0-5	Group attending	In-person	43	5
Minecraft Junior	Children 6-11	Group	In-person	15	2

		attending			
Family Storytime	Children 6-11	Group attending	In-person	60	3
Tech Outreach to Gifford Middle School	Young Adult (12-18)	Group attending	In-person	73	1
Variety Lab	General Interest (all Ages)	Group attending	In-person	3	1
Outreach to Racine Montessori	Young Adult (12-18)	Group attending	In-person	99	5
Stitch N Bitch	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	7	1
Senior Paint with Ken	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	8	1
Chess Club	General Interest (all Ages)	Group attending	In-person	14	1
Transitioning to Senior Living 101	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	4	1
Coffee and Conversation	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	6	1
Anime Night for Adults	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	5	1
STEAM Workshops: Engineering, Electronics and Coding in Arduino for Students	Young Adult (12-18)	Group attending	In-person	13	2
Craft Time with Miss Keiko	Children 6-11	Group attending	In-person	45	1
Tech Help Open Workshop	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	3	1
Marian Housing Outreach	Adult (19+)	Group attending	In-person	4	1
Racine Montisrorri Class Visit	Young Adult (12-18)	Group attending	In-person	20	1
TOTAL				483	37

Patron Services

In January, staff answered 1916 questions via phone and 9898 in person. A total of 11814 questions were answered across all methods of communication. 84% of the reference questions were asked in person, while 16% were received over the phone.

Main Entrance People Counter	27587
Lake Ave Entrance People Counter	2032
Libby Checkouts	11686
Hoopla Checkouts	462
Total # of phone calls (reference)	938
Total # of phone calls (curbside)	490
Total # of phone calls	1428
Total # of questions via phone	1916
Avg. # of calls per day	59.5
Avg. # of calls per hour	6.24
Total talk time (reference)	3349.6 mins
Total talk time (curbside)	1384 mins
Total talk time	4733.6 mins
Avg. call length (reference)	3.57 mins
Avg. call length (curbside)	2.82 mins
Total chats	---
Total chat messages	---
Avg. # of messages per chat	---
Total phone and chat questions	1916
In-person reference questions	9898
Total # of reference questions answered	11814
Computer usage - total logins	1132
Computer usage - total time	1111:22:00
Computer usage - avg. time per login	58.906 mins
Faxes	396
Scans	949

Social Worker report

submitted by Ashley Cedeño

Month: January 2024

Bus Passes

- Total bus passes given out: **0 (no bus passes)**

Year/Month	2022	2023	2024
January		27	0*
February		45	
March		54	
April		72	
May		99	
June		126	
July		101	
August		111	
September	62	107	
October	72	118	
November	44	18	
December	31	0 *	

*No bus passes available

Patron Interactions (drop-in, by appointment or phone call):

**patron interactions do not include bus passes*

Year/Month	2021	2022	2023	2024
January		24	56	137
February		20	71	
March		28	129	
April		61	119	
May		34	80	
June		36	137	
July		39	111	

August		42	211	
September	6	33	159	
October	15	40	189	
November	15	52	180	
December	19	40	118	

Social Work Service Interactions: 64

General Non-Social Work Interactions (Library Assistance): 73

Need/Concerns:

Aging and Disability Resources	3
Applying for Benefits/Financial Assistance	9
Clothing/Laundry	
COVID-19	
Domestic Abuse	
Education	1
Emotional Support	4
Employment	13
Food Insecurity	
General Library Assistance provided by social worker	73
Healthcare	1
Housing	6
Relating to Incident Report or Crisis	3
Internet/Hotspot	1
Legal	7
Mental Health	
Re-entry Services	
Refugee Support	
Sensory Room	
Sexual Assault Services	
Substance Use	

Transportation (not including bus passes)	6
Veteran Services	2
***Library Social Work Expertise requested	8

**General: Anything that falls under this category are interactions I have with patrons that do not relate to social services, such as assisting patrons with printing, certain reference questions, etc during desk coverage or rounds. These interactions also get reported under the general library data gathering of interactions.*

***Relating to Incident Report or Crisis: Anything that falls under this category are interactions I have with patrons that either directly result in an Incident Report, or in which I speak to a patron regarding their suspension, meet with a patron prior to the end of their suspension, or any other incident that occurs that may not result in an Incident report.*

****Starting in 2024, I will begin to track the times in which library professionals, social workers, social work students, etc., reach out to me requesting my expertise on library social work related issues/questions.*

Library Social Work Expertise Requested:

- Yanna McGraw, Social Worker at The Indianapolis Public Library- after I shared my experience hosting a staff Coffee and Conversation session during one of my Direct Service Call meetings, Yanna reached out to me personally to set up a time to meet for her to get an understanding of how I went about this, as she is struggling with finding ways for the staff at IPL to connect with each other.
- Haven, Social work student intern at LGBT Center of SE WI- emailed me to request advice on how to set up a documentation system at the LGBT Center, as they are going to start offering individualized sessions to clients.
- Beth Sousa, Community Engagement Coordinator at Palatine Library District- Reached out to me via email after we met at the Restorative Practice Conference at Oak Park Public Library
- Debbie Kelly, Carthage College- I was requested to participate as an Interviewer for social work students in their Mock Interviews to prepare them for their field placement interviews. Completed two mock interviews on 1/29
- Kate McNamer, Community Resource Specialist at La Crosse Public Library-emailed me to request information and resources on hosting a social work student intern. I sent Kate the Intern Job Description I made, along with an infographic with information on hosting a student intern.
- Nadir Carlson, Membership and Communications Coordinator at NASW WI Chapter- emailed me to inform me that NASW-WI is working to put together a virtual event targeting students about career opportunities in social work and basic resources. The student group planning this event would like three speakers focused on different areas of social work. Since library social work is a relatively new area, Nadir expressed that I

would be a good fit for this event. This event will be held on 4/6/24, and I will confirm once I verify that my schedule will allow it.

Continued Education (CE):

- NeoGov Training Completed
 - Active Shooter and Workplace Violence

Other:

- Attended Restorative Practices conference on 1/19/24 in Oak Park, IL

Circulation Report of January Activities 2024

RPL circulated a total of 37,417 in January of 2024. 34,417 items from Main and 3,281 items from the Bookmobile. December 2023 circulation was 31,763. Approximately 10,610 holds were placed and filled. 10,768 items loaned from our collection to other libraries, and 9,036 received for RPL patrons. 348 new library cards were issued during the month of January. Circulation for Home Delivery Service was 2,216 transactions in the month of January..

Consortium sorting:

- In January staff inducted 86,526 items through the automated material handler (AMH).
- Lyngoes performed annual preventative maintenance on the AMH on the 18th.

Technical Services Report of December Activities 2023

In January TSD staff placed orders for 869 items and received 475 previously ordered items. A total of 1,005 items were added to the library catalog.

After December's year end material ordering freeze, ordering resumed after a successful fiscal cycle rollover in Workflows on January 9th.

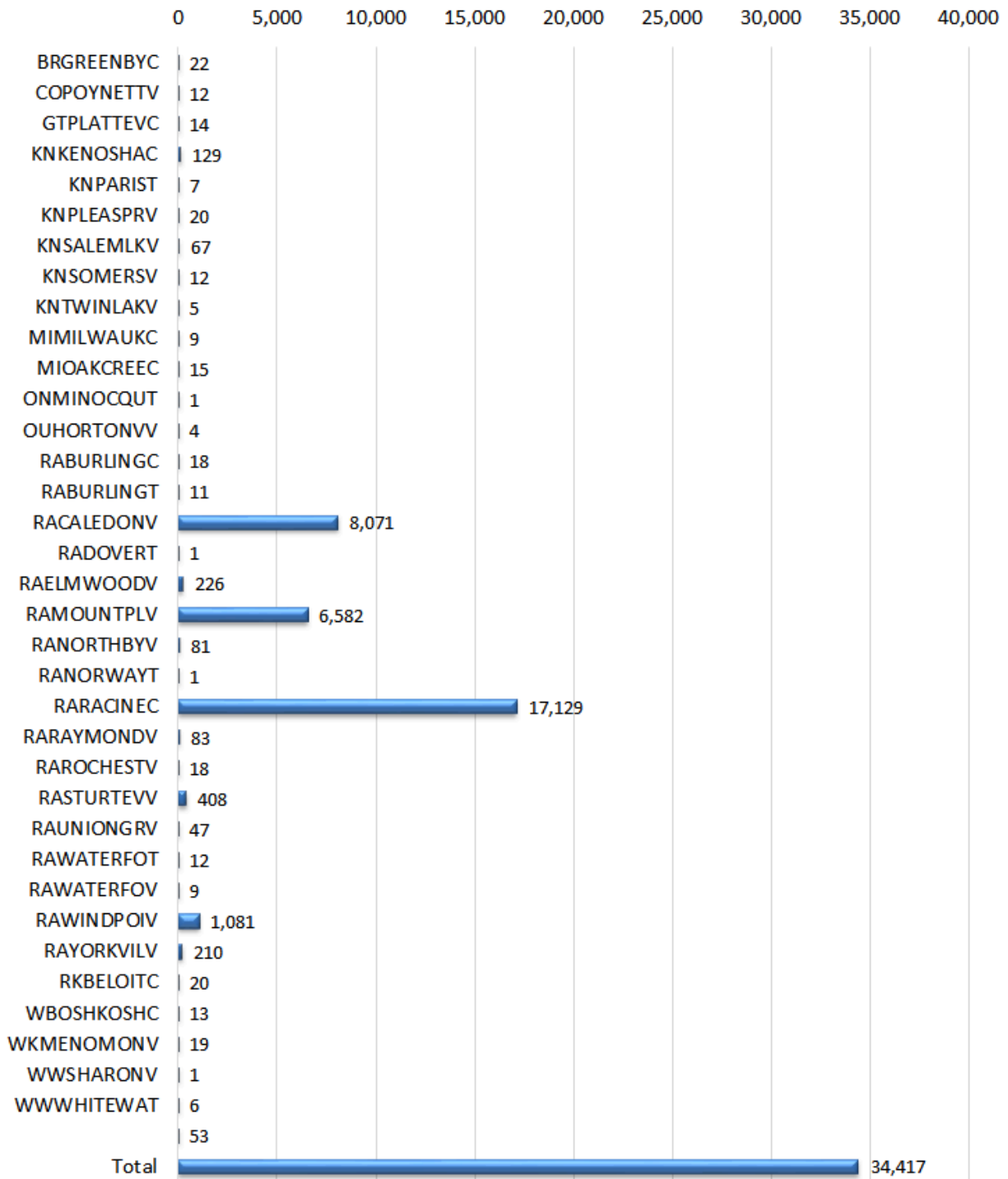
Circulation Statistics Year to Date

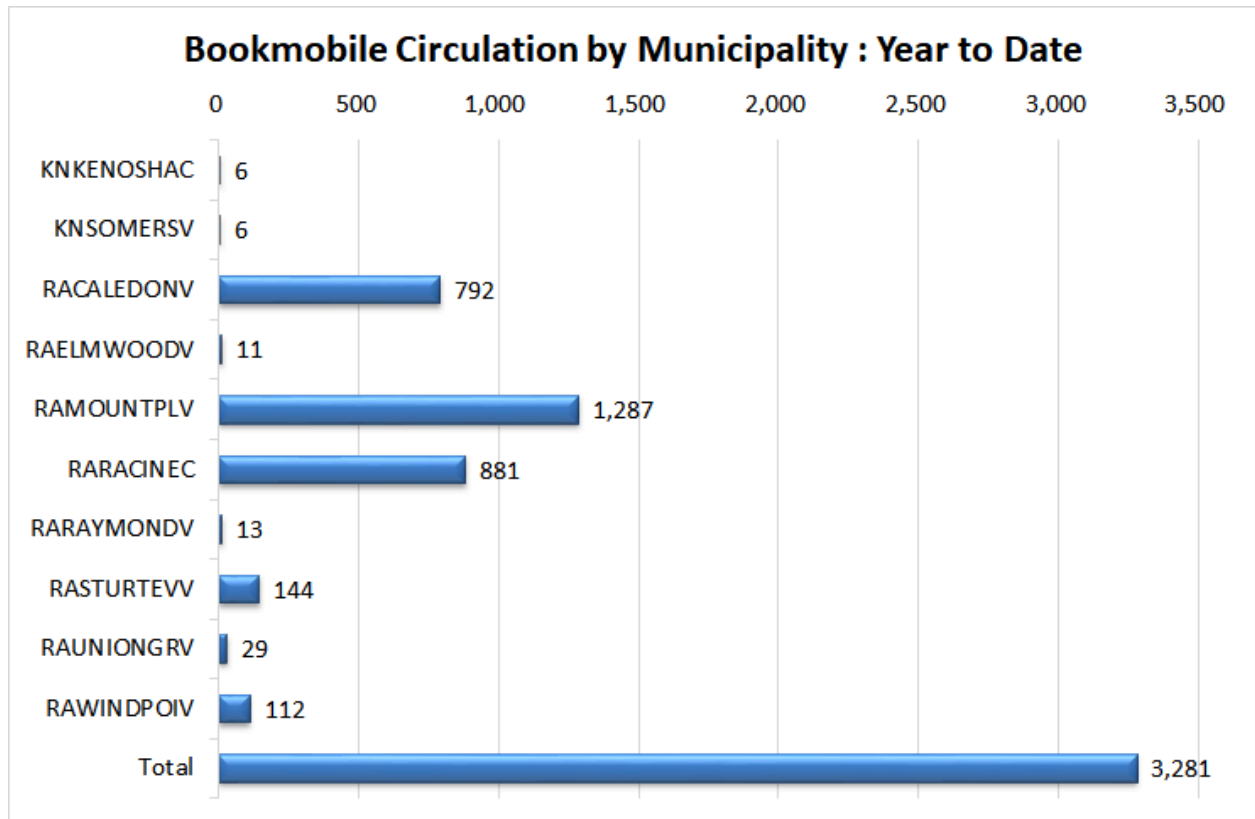
2024 Monthly Statistics	Jan-24	Total
Circulation		
Main	34,417	34,417
Bookmobile	3,281	3,281
Total	37,698	37,698
Home Delivery Service	2,216	2,216

Bulk Loans (Outreach)	350	350
Holds Placed	10,673	10,673
Interlibrary Loans		
SHARE Loaned	10,610	10,610
ILL Loaned (Lender filled)	158	158
Total Loaned	10,768	10,768
SHARE Received	8,870	8,870
ILL Received (Borrower filled)	166	166
Total Received	9,036	9,036
Overdrive Downloads		
Audiobooks	4,487	4,487
EBooks	5,100	5,100
Periodicals	2,098	2,098
Total downloads	11,685	11,685
Hours Open		
Main	240	240
Mobile	135.5	135.5
Total	375.5	375.5
Library Cards Issued		
Adult	176	176
Juvenile	49	49
Restricted	4	4
Net Only	1	1
Home Delivery	1	1

Lost Cards	117	117
Total	348	348
AMH Inductions	86,526	86,526

Main Circulation by Municipality : Year to Date





Staff Continuing Education Activities and Positive Staff and Patron Stories

We had a total of 47.5 hours from 9 staff members reported for the month of January. This included a restorative justice conference at Oak Park PL that our social worker attended, spanish lessons that our youth services supervisor has continued in and a lot of CIVMIC (Cities and Villages Mutual Insurance Company) HR trainings that many of our supervisors have been pursuing.

A few positive patron stories from staff members--

From Matt Jerke:

“A couple of weeks ago, my dad was helping a friend of my Grandmother's. She is in her late 80s and has macular degeneration. Because of the macular degeneration, she is often home with little in the way of entertainment options. She mentioned to my dad that the library's home delivery service has been a wonderful help to her. She loves that she can get audiobooks delivered to her from the library for entertainment. She also mentioned that Katie provides great service and is very helpful.”

From Rebecca Leannah:

Received a donation of \$18 from a patron for my continued help in researching Jewish histories here in Racine.

Received a donation of \$20 and a lovely letter from a patron for my help in finding a missing family obituary.

Was able to assist another individual, who lives in Washington D.C. (but was born and raised here in Racine) find an article about the Mound Cemetery Chapel being moved to Lexington Ave and was able to find a picture of a pickup truck moving it in the Journal Times. She is working on collecting and maintaining the Black History of Racine and will be sending me her materials when she stops by the next time she flies in.

EVELIN GARCIA, BUSINESS MANAGER

- Incident Reports 27 (January)
 - reports
 - 12 - disturbance
 - 1 - harassment
 - 7 - alcohol
 - 3 - trespassing
 - 2- other
 - Stair fall
 - Left personal belongings behind
 - 2- theft
 - Being reviewed weekly at leadership meetings
 - To determine sanction for the offense
 - 1 - patron will have privileges suspended for a year
- Purchasing
 - Tracking expenses
 - Review of opportunities for savings
 - Getting quote for lease/toner
 - Will be scheduling a visit to review models
 - Purchasing request form / processes
- DPI Report
- Foundation
 - Deposits
 - Payables
 - Square Store
 - Winter Fund-raiser
 - Donations Received \$35,851
 - Restricted \$20,000
 - Unrestricted \$15,851
- Notary Services
 - 12

- Assist with Ruff Readers Program
 - Schedule Ruff Pals
 - Sessions are held M-TH
 - Assist Marketing
 - Listing daily programs on boards
 - This will end the month of February
- Assist with Personnel issues
 - HR Functions
 - Onboarding
 - TMS
 - Interviews
- Legistar
 - Agenda
 - Minutes
- Financials

Building

- 2nd floor exit door repaired
 - Part is still in transit
- 1st floor entrance doors adjusted

Training

- CVMIC
 - Bias in Interviewing (60 min)
 - Managing the Supervisor Transition (60 min)

Online Store

- No- activity
- 125th Shirts have been reduced to \$10 for quicker sale

SHAY KING, HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Overview

Communications

January communications focused on the Educational Opportunity Center's FAFSA help session, our Martin Luther King Day, Jr. closure as well as weather-related closures, our Battle of the Books grant from SC Johnson, new 2024 programs, tax forms and VITA's free tax services, our ongoing reading challenges, our listing for two public service librarians, and the availability of COVID-19 tests and free one-year subscriptions to MasterClass.

Program Marketing

Of the 64 programs remaining through March, graphics and copy are prepared for all, 53 are live on the website calendar at RacineLibrary.info/calendar, and 41 are live on Facebook. Those not yet posted tend to be recent submissions, pilot programs with nuanced or pending information, or programs more than a month away.

January consisted of the planning and submission phase for April and May programs, and February is the publication phase. 56 April and May programs have been submitted so far.

January Print Marketing Distribution

- Bookmobile school-year schedule: 150
- Libby cards: 50
- QR code flyers: 12
- Total: 212

Training

- Building Authentic Relationships with Underserved Communities - Freedom Lifted (1 hour) (Head of Business Development)
- Leadership (People View) - Emerging Leaders Course - CVMIC (3 hours) (Head of Business Development)
- Leadership Soft Skills - Emerging Leaders Course - CVMIC (3 hours) (Head of Business Development)
- Moving from Allyship to Leadership: Agency, Accountability, and Emotional Intelligence - Wisconsin Libraries Talk about Race (1 hour) (Marketing and Outreach Assistant)
- Safety for Leaders - Emerging Leaders Course - CVMIC (3 hours) (Head of Business Development)

Viewership and Engagement

Press and Advertising

In January, the library was referenced **in the media** [at least 26 times](#).

Don Rosen Show Appearances

Sessions were on pause in January and resumed in February. Listen live in Racine at 99.9FM & 1400AM, or in Kenosha at 98.1FM. Listen to previous appearances at CivicMedia.us/shows/don-rosen-show.

Upcoming appearances:

- Thursday, Feb. 29: Melissa Donaldson from the Innovation Lab, 7-8 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 12: Evelin Garcia from the Business Office, 7-8 a.m.

- Thursday, March 28: Brianna Fuentes from Adult Services, 7-8 a.m.

Wind Point Stroll

Our February ad requested donations to the Foundation. We will resume our monthly articles starting with the March issue.

Racine Theater Guild

The Dial M for Murder playbill, which ran Jan. 12-28, advertised the Foundation.

Website

January visitors: 8,921 (42.3% up)

January views: 28,427 (41.2% up)

Most-viewed pages:

- [Home](#) - 15,839 (37.8% up)
- [Calendar](#) - 1,368 (68.9% up)
- [Libby vs. hoopla](#) - 768 (63.4% up)
- [Library GO!](#) - 613 (113.6% up)
- [Hours & Locations](#) - 547 (29.6% up)

Calendar views had two major peaks on Friday, Jan. 19 (266 views) and Monday, Jan. 29 (121 views), averaging 34 views throughout the rest of the month.

Google Business Listing

January Google profile views: 1,929 (10.9% down)

January website clicks: 2,858 (42.2% up)

January appearances in search results: 1,049 (13.4% down)

January calls from Google profile: 360 (45.2% up)

January direction requests: 1,130 (144.1% up)

Our Google profile's busiest day was Wednesday, Jan. 17 (337 interactions).

Note from an alert posted to our profile: "Starting in January 2024, you might see fewer direction requests and a lower number of people who have viewed your business. This is because Google is making updates to better protect people's privacy and give you more accurate results."

Reviews

Daniel Barajas, 5 stars — "The people here were very helpful and answered all of my questions. It was a bit surprising if I do say so myself."

Searches that led viewers to our profile

- “Library,” “library near me,” and other general searches for libraries (541+)
 - In Spanish
- The Racine Public Library and other variants (438+)
- Our hours (83+)
- “Jigsaw puzzle lending library near me”
- “Library art”
- “Public printer near me”
- Searches for community locations: the Caledonia library, “kenosha, wisconsin, états-unis,” the Racine County Jail, and Racine County libraries

Newsletter

January open rate: 28.1% (1.1% up)

January click rate: 1.3% (160% up)

Current newsletter recipients: 18,791 (.2% down)

Most-opened and -clicked newsletter: - “Pick Up a COVID Test” with the pre-header “Free COVID-19 tests are available at all of our service desks. Stop in to pick up a test while supplies last.” - Jan. 29, 30.2% open rate, 1.8% click rate. Most-clicked link to the [Librarian II job listing](#) (195).

Read past issues of newsletters at RacineLibrary.info/newsletter.

Social Media

Facebook

Current followers: 6,592 (1% increase)

January reach: 10,349 (35% up)

January posts: 50

Most-reached and -commented-on post: [MasterClass free annual memberships](#), Jan. 5 - 2,014 reach, 5 comments

Most-reacted-to post: [LEGO Club 2024 photo drop](#), Jan. 6 - 19 reactions

Instagram

Current followers: 1,256 (.4% up)

January reach: 262 (23.4% down)

January posts and stories: 5

Ads

In January, we launched three Meta ads, promoting the Educational Opportunity Center’s sessions on-site, the Ojibwe Storytelling series, and the Sweet Melody Strings concert.

MELISSA DONALDSON, HEAD OF DIGITAL SERVICES AND INNOVATION

Programming

DSI Team hosted 19 programs in January with a total attendance of 256.

DSI staff hosted the 7/8th Grade Class from Racine Montessori in the Innovation lab on 1/31. There were five stations: 3D Printing, Cubelets, Makey Makey, VR, and Ozobot Coding



Provided a tech outreach to Gifford on 1/11. Students were introduced to VR and Cubelets during this event.



Tech Support

- Digital Services and Innovation Lab staff had 68 appointments with patrons this month. This comes to about 34 hours of work for the staff.
- DSI had 13 support tickets come in from staff.

Partnerships

- Hosted the City of Racine Digital Divide Roundtable Luncheon on 1/22
- Melissa and Josiah continue our year-long partnership with Racine Montessori to teach Computer Science Discoveries.

Techmobile

- No activity this month.

Podcasting Studio

We have done a soft opening of the podcasting studio. Appointments can be made by calling 262.619.2560. In January, the podcasting studio had three appointments.

Continuing Education

Melissa

- Leadership (People View) ELM2D3 (3 hours)
- Leadership (Soft Skills) ELM2D2 (3 hours)
- Leadership (Technical View) ELM2D1 (3 hours)

Terrence

- Android operating systems - 2 hours
- OxygenOS vs PixelOS Android - 30 mins
- MacBook Sonoma 14.2.1 update features (changes or patches) - 25 mins
- Bluecloud mobile webinar - 25 min
- Google sheets tutorial - 30 mins
- Google Slides in-dept tutorial 1 hour
- CPU tutorials 40 mins
- Weekly BlueCloud Mobile Zoom meeting 20 mins
- Intro to Libby Zoom Webinar 1 hr. by Overdrive / Libby
- Linked In Learning Explore a Career in IT
- Bluecloud Mobile Updates 20 mins

Matt

- BlueCloud Mobile 2 Webinar - 20 minutes