



June 2020 Director's Report to the Library Board
Submitted July 21, 2020

Libraries Continue Closed to the Public in June

Highlight for June:

Mary and her team were hopping! Curbside pickups began on Monday, June 8, and it was a wild ride for the first three days in particular. The option to place holds was turned on Saturday afternoon, June 6, and by the time we opened on Monday, there were almost 800 requests across the three locations. Not only were Circulation staff pulling and processing holds, the Operations Managers and Adult and Youth Services staff were all helping as well.

Phones were ringing almost non-stop as we scheduled pick-up times and managed holds. It was not unusual to have all slots booked for the day. Items were placed in bags labeled with the appropriate patron names, put on carts, and wheeled out to the curb at Bowman and Handley. Even during the "breaks" between 12:00 and 4:00 pm, staff were busy scheduling pickups and preparing bags of items. In those first three days more than **1,765** items were pulled, processed, and delivered to patrons at the curb.

We had 88 hours of curbside delivery between June 8 and July 7, with a total of 11,313 items checked out. More than 1,300 holds were on the shelves ready to be picked up on opening day, July 8.

Public Relations & Technology Coordinator, Matt Swain

Public Relations:

June focused on curbside pick-up announcements and continued promotion of virtual programs for adults, kids and teens. We also continued promotional support of Youth Summer Reading and Adult Summer Reading through email campaigns out to our patrons, print ads, and social media posts to increase sign-ups and engagements.

Cheryl focused on design and production of many library opening signs and banners – both indoor and outdoor – Hoopla content promotion, social media, and summer reading.

Media pick-ups included DVM coverage and NVD on curbside pickups, NVD covered our Grab-and-Go kits for kids, and Winchester Star with curbside pick-up. We ran three ads on WINC FM for summer reading programs and our Digital Library and continue to receive positive feedback from the community. Tech Team sponsored our full-page Winchester Star ad that focused on curbside pick-up, summer reading, and virtual programs.

Technology:

We had another call with EBSCO to talk about Discovery implementation (our power search website tool) and Kim and Mary joined. This is an extensive process often taking several months to complete, and COVID has impacted implementation. We are expecting to complete action items and move this project with data files due to them first week in July. We will also start on Open Athens (single sign on) in July and will need to talk to TLC, EBSCO, library departments, and Tech Team. For June, we had more than 1,600 WIFI users while the buildings were closed to the public. We also implemented our website Chat service where library staff can chat online with patrons who visit the website for help.

Bowman Library Operations and Technical Services Manager, Kim Bean

Phase 2, curbside delivery of items patrons have placed on hold, began on Monday June 8. The patron pickup hours of 10am to 12 pm and 4 to 6 pm were especially hectic the first few days, as patrons were very much in a hurry to finally have access to new books and other materials. It was all hands on deck for staff as there were hundreds of holds for staff to locate and process and constant phone calls coming in from patrons making pickup appointments. Staff members have done a great job working as a team to make this service work so well and patrons have been very appreciative.

We received the good news on June 25th from Jon Turkel of Frederick County Parks and Recreation Dept. that the Bowman Lake Trail is still a go. He wrote, "The lake trail project contract was signed last week, and I would anticipate construction activity to begin sometime in mid-July."

Circulation Services Department Head & Outreach Coordinator, Mary Anton

See above highlight

Youth Services Department Head, Donna Hughes

The summer story time season "Imagine Your Story" featured virtual programs that were posted on social media, including Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Programs for youth were offered throughout the week with a concentration of family programs on Saturday offered by Handley Library Youth Services staff. Activity kits that supplement each weekly theme were created, compiled, and offered for curbside pick-up at all library branches.

A partnership with Tampa Taiko Drums resulted in an informative video on the history and use of the Japanese taiko drums.

Clarke County Library Branch Manager, Laurine Kennedy

On June 8, we began curbside pickups here and all branches. Our small staff of four worked hard and got quickly into a groove. The patrons were very happy to have this service again, and overall it worked out very well. Clarke continues to have steady hold requests and pickups every day, and we are currently getting ready for the next phase of opening.

Handley Library Operations and Branch Manager, Ann White**Handley Library Updates**

HVAC renovation: The HVAC renovations continue. Currently, the 3rd floor, 2nd floor, and most of the 1st floor have had air conditioning restored. They continue to work on the older portions of the 1st floor

and the 2nd and 3rd floor rotunda offices as well as the basement. Contractors have begun to make drywall and plaster repairs to areas that are completed.

Space Use: On June 12th, John, Adrienne, and I met virtually with space use consultants to review draft recommended floor plan changes. The consultants will use the feedback from the meeting to develop their complete space use analysis report. They hope to present findings at the July HRL Board Meeting.

Reopening preparations: During the month of June, we continued with physical preparations needed in anticipation of reopening the library. Two major changes were the relocation of the first-floor information desk and the repositioning of the CD display cases. Both changes improved long standing traffic flow and congestion issues that needed to be addressed to improve social distancing.



Adult Services Department Head, Adrienne Davis

In June, the Adult Service Division launched a new web chat service to help patrons stay connected with the Library. Since the beginning of the COVID emergency, our monthly usage of the ‘Email the Librarian’ service has more than doubled. Provided through UniqueChat, the web chat feature allows for much more efficient back and forth “conversations” with patrons compared to emails. Patrons are also more likely to get an immediate response from a staff person without having to navigate a phone directory. In the first month, there have been over 50 web chats. Most frequently asked questions are about renewing library cards, hours of operation, and placing holds on library materials. To use, patrons simply click on the “Need Help?” icon located in the bottom right corner of the Library’s website. Within moments, an Adult Services staff member can respond and start interacting with the patron. The feature also works on mobile devices and patrons can still submit questions after hours.

Friends of Handley Regional Library Director, Barbara Dickinson

Friends sponsored a pre-recorded author talk: *1455 A Place for Authors* with Sean Murphy and author Chris Register. These are scheduled as if a live program on HRLS Facebook page.

I attended two webinars: ALA: *Libraries and the COVID-19* on June 1 and, on June 16, a presentation sponsored by United for Libraries titled *Friends of Library and Future of Book Sales*.

I kept in touch with Friends of Handley Regional Library Board of Directors with a Zoom meeting where John Huddy gave updates on libraries in the time of Covid to board members. I held a Book Sale Committee meeting for preliminary planning and brainstorming ways to sell some of the inventory stored at Bowman Library.

Archives Librarian, Becky Ebert

The HVAC work is completed in Archives. We have been and are continuing to do much cleaning as it was a very dusty project shelves and equipment was wrapped in plastic. We have rearranged the Archives Reading Room and the back storage room to accommodate social distancing and to help people and manuscripts stay safe. We are finalizing procedures to assist researchers during this time. We will not be using volunteers during phase III of reopening.