



LINCOLN
City Libraries

Director's Report for June 2024

- The Strategic Planning workgroup recently decided on the library's **new** vision and mission statements:

Vision: **LCL: Literacy, Community, and Lifelong learning**

Mission: **Lincoln City Libraries provides access to information, ideas, books and lifelong learning opportunities that inform, enrich and empower every individual in our diverse community.**

Priorities:

- 1. Maximizing Access**
- 2. Communicating our Offerings**
- 3. Strengthening our Potential**
- 4. Growing our Support**

We will present the new plan to staff across the system in August at various gatherings and elicit feedback and ideas for how the new priorities can be made real every day in our work at different levels and locations. We expect to produce the final version by late month and have it published on the website and shared broadly beginning in September.

- Planning for the South Branch Mural Project has begun again. Our partners at the Lux Center will administer the public application process, with it being publicized by the library/city during August. Selection of the successful artist ideally will occur at the end of the month with the requirement of an install by early October at the latest. The mural is targeted for the west façade, cannot cover more than 50% of the space, and must be non-permanent. We expect the life of the mural to be between 5-10 years.

- A reminder that the new local history section at Bennett Martin will open with a reception on Saturday, August 17 at 11am. The area will contain Nebraska and Lincoln-focused resources including books, displays, and dedicated online access to Ancestry and other digital collection resources.
- On Saturday, September 21, Gere Branch will host the Willa Cather 150th celebration with remarks from the Cather Foundation, a talk by Cather expert Steve Shively on Willa's connection to Lincoln and the Gere family, and a Q & A with sculptor Littleton Alston. The grand finale will be the unveiling of the new Cather statuette, recently donated to the library.
- Our dedicated storytime staff are taking turns visiting city pools this summer on Fridays for Splish Splash Storytime. This fun collaboration between Parks and Libraries adds double the fun for kids under five and reinforces the joy of reading for little ones. The last session is August 2 at Irvingdale.
- Five LCL staff members: Brenda Ealey, Vicki Clarke, Cally O'Brien, Wyatt Packard, and Jodene Glaesemann took part in the ALA Annual Conference in San Diego in late June, and I've heard great feedback from several on their experiences and how the ideas and inspirations they brought back could turn into new solutions or services here. Office Specialist Heath Gewecke recently had his NLA conference session proposal on improving DEI hiring practices accepted for this fall's annual conference in Kearney.
- A recent Urban Libraries Council (ULC) posting asked directors across the country what the breakdown of physical vs digital collection spending occurred at our libraries. The range was broad with some libraries clearly devoting more funding toward digital content and some hesitant or slow to move there, while a good number—including Lincoln—now spending a nearly equal amount for each (LCL = 51% digital and 49% physical). Patrons continue to demand more electronic content, and it's our challenge to budget wisely for the growth, yet also continue to meet the steady demand for access to items available in print.
- Our Strategic Plan group will present the new plan to staff across the system in August at various gatherings and elicit feedback and ideas for how the four priorities can be made real every day in our work at

different levels and locations. We expect to produce the final version by late month and have it published on the website and shared beginning in September.

- The library recently signed a contract with LocalHop for a new website event calendar and room reservation system that will improve the patron experience in several ways including an enhanced and better designed interface for users, more attractive shareability and marketing of events, and the ability for patrons to initiate their own meeting or study room reservation from the convenience of their own computer or device. Office Specialist Tina Queen has handled both of these processes for several years and will be integral for this work—and we're grateful for her guiding this important charge.

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Examples of the Library's Vision and Mission in our daily work:

- Lisa O. at Eiseley-Williams shared: "Kara G. and I were staffing the circulation desk one evening. An elderly woman had just finished using one of the self-checks. She approached the desk and said to me "I just want you to know that this library has a wonderful variety of LGBTQ books available to children that are age appropriate, thank you."
- Liz C. at Walt reported that Circle of Friends this month included simple, but fun, clock/time worksheets; new donated puzzles; watercolor Father's Day cards; using cardboard looms to make fairly intricate Juneteenth bracelets; and playdough.
- Eiseley-Williams program notes: Edgerton: Sparks was held at Williams on June 5 with 75 patrons in attendance, including students from Air Park Community Center's day camp program; and on June 6 illustrator Chloe Burgett visited Williams and provided a fun and engaging program for 35

patrons. Toward the end of her program, she had all the children join her on the patio and they all drew on the chalk wall. Some of the older kids outlined each other on the patio floor – so for a time, it looked like perhaps we'd had a major crime spree on the patio!

- Eiseley's Susan S. and summer intern, Rowan B., attended Juneteenth at Woods Park, where they engaged with 275 residents (!) at this event by sharing with them information about the library.
- Bookmobile outreach: Our Regional Center deposit stop has morphed through the years from three buildings to one, but that one building has also grown from one browsing bin of miscellaneous to our most recent deposit of five bins of books – three bins were all holds! The residents are diligent about submitting requests to the staff, and many are working their way through their favorite author's works or a specific series.
- Diane V. at Gere shared a comment overheard by two caregivers at Storytime – “It's so hot we can't go to the park, it's even too hot to go to the pool.” “I know, I'm really glad we can come here.” She also overheard a grandma and young child after a rain shower – “We were going to go to the park but since everything is wet we came here. I like coming here better anyway.”
- Amanda T. and Araya W. hosted a viewing of *Trolls Band Together* for Movie Day at Gere on the 26th with 78 attending. Amanda said the kids knew the words to all the songs in the *Trolls* movie – so it was almost like a sing-a-long. She also said they went through all of the Hawaiian Punch and all of the popcorn.
- Leanne D. helped host the Saltdogs event at Gere on the 20th. She had even the ball players laughing with her skillful kazoo playing of *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* as part of a group sing-along. There were 82 attending.
- Ronda H., Gwen K., Diane V., and Gracie M. hosted two sessions of Camp Build It on the 6th and 20th with 245 attending at Gere. The Camps had lots of fun activities and crafts with the favorite being the Sphero Mini Balls.
- Gere Library tried out a new feature in generating adult internet guest passes from the PC Reservation program. It helps improve customer privacy, reduce staff time, and improves customer service by allowing them to input the guest card number at a computer of their choosing.

The trial started in June and seems to be working very well, with hopes of implementing system wide.

- Leanne D. assisted Jen J. (BMPL) with an OLLI class held at Gere on the 14th giving hands-on guidance for adults using their iPads, phones and laptops to install LCL apps (Library LNK, Hoopla and Libby). Their process for this bit of tech learning was to guide them through the process by having them physically do the tasks themselves which proved to be very effective.
- Librarian Karrie S. reports, "We scheduled more programs for Bethany Branch Library than we ever have before. In total, we will have five events there this summer, compared with only two events every year since we've been using the Cotner Center. My hope was that it would alleviate the numbers at Anderson Branch Library, and we wouldn't have to turn people away. This did not happen. All of our big events at Anderson Branch have hit the 100-person capacity. I have mixed feelings about the attendance at the Bethany events. We will have to see how the rest of the summer turns out."
- Greg W., Chad S., Ronda H. and Gwen K. hosted 2 sessions of Camp Read-a-lot on the 13th & 27th with 132 attending. Ronda and Chad did silly dances for their program, followed by a bead craft and scavenger hunt – as well as a couple of books read to the group. Chad said he was thrilled to see how excited the kids were at the idea of a free book they could keep forever and worked hard to pick just the right book to take home.
- Things got a bit messy at the end of the month, as nine teens competed to be the **Food Frenzy** champion. Contestants built structures with uncooked spaghetti noodles and mini marshmallows. They ate donuts hanging from strings above their heads. They attempted to identify the flavors of several Jelly Bellies. Perhaps the highlight of the **Food Frenzy** was the "stuff your mouth with full-size marshmallows" competition. [While the teens did a good job, I believe the true marshmallow-stuffing champ was LSA Stephanie E.] Karrie noted, "The Food Frenzy was very well organized and tones of fun, but only nine attended. The event was the brainchild of the Teen Advisory Board, but none of them were able to attend. If free donuts don't lure teens in, I just don't know what does."
- Library Service Associate Christina S. presented **Home on the Road** on June 13 to eight highly engaged attendees. Christina, her husband, and their 2 dogs spent 5 years traveling across the U.S., living out of a renovated RV. Her stories were a wonderful mix of serious, funny, and

touching. As one attendee said as she left, "I **so** wish more people had come to this. This was a **great** program."

- Mr. Matt had a special guest at Toddler Time on June 4 – Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird! She read the *book Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, and she joined Mr. Matt and Toddler Time attendees in numerous dances.
- Ronda H., Gwen K., Diane V., and Gracie M. hosted two sessions of Camp Build It on the 6th and 20th with 245 attending at Gere. The Camps had lots of fun activities and crafts with the favorite being the Sphero Mini Balls.
- There were 5 weekends for Polley radio programs in June, which featured shows covering the new Sasha Frere-Jones book, YouTube music influencer Andrew Huang's debut book "Make Your Own Rules," Simon Reynolds new book "Futuromania," a new book about the discography of proto-space rock band Hawkwind, and a thought-provoking new book about how technology has affected music-making and consumption over the last century called "Take This Hammer."
- At Walt Branch the 10/11 WeatherShield program was a big hit. Bill Rentschler gave a very interesting presentation and then everyone got to take a look at the WeatherShield vehicle. Bill posted about his presentation – with pictures – after the event, saying there is always a good day to go to the library.

Ryan Wieber
July 12, 2024