



HIGHLAND COUNTY
DISTRICT LIBRARY

Annual Report

2020

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Letter from the Director

2020 was certainly a year like no other! A global pandemic forced libraries across the country to make adjustments to many of their operations and procedures, and the Highland County District Library was no exception. This sometimes involved a small tweak to existing procedures, like disinfecting items received from other libraries. At other times it meant re-envisioning an entire service model, like offering curbside service to patrons. Like everyone else, we learned about and adapted to new health and safety regulations and situations as we went along. Despite having to enact some serious measures for public safety, including canceling group gatherings and closing various branches at different times this past year for quarantine purposes, the library successfully weathered the storm and found new and innovative ways to continue providing library services to the Highland County community.

Among the many changes of the past year was the addition of several new staff members. Megan Priore joined the Lynchburg Library, Geri McCloskey joined the Leesburg Library, and Sam Planck joined the Rocky Fork Library. Emily Foster left her position at Hillsboro Library to become the Branch Manager at Rocky Fork Lake Library. We also said goodbye to Assistant Director Joanne Sullivan and Rocky Fork Branch manager Kathe Chaney and wished them both the very best with their new endeavors. On a very sad note, we lost long-time Leesburg Library clerk Becky Howard in October. She was a lovely person and a valuable member of the Leesburg Library and community. We will miss her dearly.

Before the Library limited group gatherings in March, we were able to offer a murder mystery event at the Hillsboro Library, present American Sign Language classes at the Greenfield Library, host the announcement of Highland County joining the Ohio Imagination Library, and house sign-up sessions and trainings for the 2020 Census project. The Library also held its annual Black History Month program, honoring educator Arthur Brooks and featuring guest speaker Ronald C. Todd, state Minority Affairs Liaison.

We were in full-planning mode for the 2020 Summer Reading Program, “Imagine Your Story,” when the Library had to close its doors and cancel group summer reading events. We shifted our focus to providing virtual story times, take-home craft activities, and offering limited small-group events. We were disappointed to miss out on the Summer Reading experience this year and eagerly look forward to providing a full, exciting Summer Reading Program next summer!

The annual circulation for 2020 was **344,382**. This number includes the circulation of e-formats (e-books, digital or downloadable audio, and videos) which was **46,627**. While these numbers represent a significant decrease from last year, they aren’t surprising given the chaotic, uncertain nature of library hours and services during 2020, and we fully expect circulation to rebound and improve in 2021.

It was a challenging but successful year overall. I’m very proud of the staff at Highland County District Library and the phenomenal job they did of working together to navigate uncharted waters and find imaginative ways to serve the citizens of Highland County. We learned a lot from this experience and will use this knowledge to help us become an even better library in the future!

Suzanne Roberts, Director

Statistics

County Population (2020 estimate): **43,161**

Circulation: **344,382**

Per capita circulation is **7.97** items

Library Snapshot in a Typical Week

Average library attendance	2,188
Average reference transactions	156
Average non-reference* transactions	420

**directional, policy, mechanical*

Registered Borrowers

	2020	2019
Adults	18,941	17,557
Juveniles	1,954	2,536
TOTAL	20,895	20,093

Circulation 2020

	Hillsboro	2019	Greenfield	2019	Lynchburg	2019	Leesburg	2019	Rocky Fork	2019	Totals	2019
Books	67,443	77,962	18,318	26,033	17,061	21,971	14,967	18,736	3,596	417	121,385	145,119
Periodicals	2,914	6,100	897	1,253	870	1,144	407	598	68	---	5,156	9,095
DVD/ VHS	32,161	58,478	8,946	15,776	5,707	8,570	3,440	6,201	3,243	814	53,497	89,839
Music and CD-ROMS	992	1,003	446	265	483	760	177	125	50	---	2,148	2,153
Audio- books	3,255	4,271	381	750	528	420	315	286	137	27	4,616	5,754
Loaned to other libraries	20,809	28,685	6,296	6,468	7,259	7,686	5,817	6,197	4,040	253	44,221	49,289
TOTALS	127,574	176,499	35,284	50,545	31,908	40,551	25,123	32,143	11,134	1,511	231,023	301,249
E-formats (Overdrive)	22,568	20,040	5,817	5,427	3,612	3,047	8,122	7,251	145	2	40,264	35,767
E-formats (hoopla)											6,363	7,366
TOTAL	150,142	196,539	41,101	55,972	35,520	43,598	33,245	39,394	11,279	1,513	277,650	344,382

E-Formats

Hoopla: Total Circulation

	2020	2019
January	603	794
February	519	675
March	683	664
April	841	610
May	701	632
June	544	580
July	401	632
August	412	600
September	416	499
October	412	552
November	425	596
December	406	535
TOTAL	6,363	7,369

Hoopla: Number of Users

	Total Users 2020	2019	New Users 2020	2019
January	769	639	13	27
February	782	652	13	14
March	814	667	32	15
April	841	676	27	9
May	852	682	11	6
June	862	691	10	10
July	869	701	7	10
August	876	709	7	8
September	890	720	14	11
October	894	733	4	13
November	903	743	9	11
December	908	756	5	18
TOTAL	10,260	8,369	152	152

*Hoopla changed their 2019 calculations in 2020

Hoopla: Items Borrowed

	2020	2019
Audiobooks	2,014	2,367
Comics	271	434
e-Books	1,910	1,980
Movies	874	1,133
Music	568	810
TV episodes	726	642
TOTAL	6,363	7,366

Ohio Digital Library: Use by Location

	2020	2019
Hillsboro	22,568	20,040
Greenfield	5,817	5,427
Lynchburg	3,612	3,047
Leesburg	8,122	7,251
Rocky Fork	145	2
TOTAL	40,264	35,767

The **Ohio Digital Library** is a program of the State Library of Ohio and is supported in whole or in part by federal Institute of Museum and Library Services funds, awarded to the State Library of Ohio. The Highland County District Library is a member of the Ohio Digital Library.

The **Hoopla** movies can be downloaded onto a device and watched without an Internet connection. The movies available through the **Ohio Digital Library** can only be streamed and require an Internet connection.

Lynda: Total Use for 2020

	Total Users	New Users	Logins	Unique Logins	Videos	Video Hours	Certs Earned	Cert Earners
January	59	0	9	4	34	3.01	0	0
February	59	0	13	4	243	12.66	2	5
March	59	0	38	5	488	23.69	3	18
April	59	0	11	4	217	10.94	2	2
May	59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
June	59	0	7	3	65	3.77	0	0
July	60	1	3	3	22	1	1	1
August	60	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
September	60	0	3	2	8	0.29	0	0
October	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
November	60	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
December	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	60	1	86	27	1,077	55.36	8	26

Computer Use 2020

	HHI	2019	HGR	2019	HLY	2019	HLE	2019	HRF	2019	Totals	2019
Wireless Use	4,874	9,401	4,304	5,903	828	2,730	1,743	4,314	1,338	243	13,087	22,591
PC Reservation Use	4,587	12,058	2,184	4,611	754	3,019	694	2,895	502	96	8,721	22,679

In-House Use 2020

	HHI	2019	HGR	2019	HLY	2019	HLE	2019	HRF	2019	Totals	2019
In-house Use*	1,678	12,181	1,897	5,717	4,630	7,153	1,385	9,171	7	7	9,597	34,229

*"In-house use" includes use of newspapers, periodicals, microfilm reels, and honor paperbacks within the library. Guidelines for In-House Use were redefined for 2020.

Outreach

Hillsboro: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach for 2020 consisted of 13 story time videos provided on Facebook and YouTube, reaching a total of 4,517 people. The Hillsboro Library also created 9 online polls with 187 votes, reaching 4,511 people.

Greenfield: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach for 2020 consisted of 3 story time videos provided on Facebook and YouTube, reaching a total of 2,143 people.

Leesburg: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach for 2020 consisted of 2 story time videos provided on Facebook and YouTube, reaching a total of 958 people.

Lynchburg: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach for 2020 consisted of visiting the four kindergarten classes six times at Lynchburg-Clay Elementary and providing five preschool story times at Lynchburg-Clay Preschool. The Lynchburg Library also participated in the Lynchburg-Clay F.R.E.D. Night. They presented 5 virtual story times and one virtual Tornado Talk.

Rocky Fork Lake: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach for 2020 consisted of 1 story time video provided on Facebook and YouTube, reaching a total of 440 people.

Programming

Hillsboro			Greenfield		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance	Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	36	4980	Adult	17	391
Teen	13	74	Teen	4	787
Children	24	1,091	Children	40	788

Leesburg			Lynchburg		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance	Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	31	604	Adult	19	427
Teen	10	21	Teen	12	106
Children	74	2,012	Children	10	248

Rocky Fork Lake		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	8	32
Teen	-	-
Children	6	24

System Totals		
Program Type	# of Programs	Attendance
Adult	111	6,434
Teen	39	988
Children	154	4,163

HILLSBORO ADULT AND TEEN DEPARTMENTS

Written by Sarah Davidson, Circulation Manager

2020 was definitely a very different year at the Hillsboro library. While the first few months brought participation in a variety of activities, by March all libraries had to close as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the mandated shelter-in-place order, we continued to connect and interact with patrons through social media. Once the library was able to reopen, we instituted programming based on current safety guidelines. When able, select monthly clubs met in-person. When COVID-19 cases were on the rise, clubs met via Zoom.

Looking back on the year, we were still able to create many special moments with patrons. January included a Paint Night outreach program with the Red Hat Society. The activity was hosted by librarian Donna O'Dom. We also began the year with several monthly and bi-weekly clubs and activities: Writing Workshop, Crochet Club (patron-led and bi-weekly), Paint Nights (bi-weekly), Tween and Teen Make-and-Create Club, Bring-Your-Own-Book Club, Scrapbooking Club, Write-Away Club, and Game Night.

In February, the library hosted the annual Black History Month program as well as a camping-themed murder mystery party. Patrons could also enjoy a Valentine's Scavenger Hunt (passive activity).

When COVID-19 hit in March, our programming shifted to virtual. Our Facebook page featured a variety of activities, ranging from weekly polls to a Virtual Book Club to an Easter Egg Parade (coloring contest).

Summer Reading was also largely virtual and included special weekly videos that showcased different craft and activity how-tos. Take-home activities, such as coloring contests and bingos, were also utilized.

2020 ended with the conclusion of a year-long program: The Reading Resolution Challenge. Patrons set a yearly reading goal (which was then broken into monthly goals). Those who met their goals throughout the year received slips for a \$50 Amazon gift card drawing. A second gift card was awarded to the patron who read the most books. In total, 32 signed up for the challenge and a total of 821 books were read.

As we look toward 2021, our aim is to continue offering virtual programming and take-home activities until COVID-19 comes to an end. With the hope that the end is in sight, we have begun planning in-person activities for Summer Reading. While the pandemic has shown us a variety of new ways to connect with the community--especially with social media--we sincerely miss our patrons and look forward to the time when we can return to our usual programming schedule.

Despite 2020's unique challenges, but library staff always maintained a focus on the community. We offered curbside service from May through December. (We were open full service from the end of May through the end of November; however, we continued to offer curbside service as an option.) In total, 1,044 people utilized curbside service. During curbside service, patrons could request and check out books; return books in the book drop; email the library material to be printed; provide staff with material to be copied, scanned, and faxed; and even use the computer, through a laptop which they could borrow and use in their car. In addition, patrons could also check out hot spots to take home, thanks to a grant from the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio (FAO), Facebook, and T-Mobile.

And while patrons could not always be inside the building, staff utilized the time to enhance the library. Facility changes included the addition of glass doors and the reupholstering of furniture, both of which will provide a safer and more contemporary experience for patrons. The spring saw a massive weeding project, which led to more room for growth in the fiction area. The additional space will allow collection development efforts to better meet the needs of the community. In addition, staff rearranged the library, providing a more streamlined experience for patrons in the teen, genealogy, DVD, and magazine areas.

ADULT AND TEEN DEPARTMENTS: Sarah Davidson, Dana Hylton, Sandra Jenkins, Donna O'Dom, Hannah Thirey, Betty Yates, Jessica Burrier, Kelli Cole, Zana Smith, and Kiley Davis.

HILLSBORO CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

Written by Gabrielle Pitzer, Children's Library Manager

The Hillsboro Children's Library started the year 2020 off like any other year. We had lots of ideas and plans for projects and programming. We were looking forward story time, Lego Club, and the Summer Reading Program. And then the world shut down around us amid the coronavirus pandemic; the library closed on March 18, 2020 and reopened on May 4, 2020 for curbside service. The library would reopen to patrons later in the summer but would periodically resume curbside service. Curbside services include bringing holds out to patrons' cars; printing, copying, and faxing documents; use of a laptop and Wi-Fi; and just about every other library service imaginable. Throughout the year, the staff of the library has learned to adjust to ever changing conditions, adopt new ways of serving patrons of all ages, and think outside the box for almost every situation imaginable. It was a trying year to say the least, but the library has come out stronger and is ready to take on the next challenge thrown our way. The 2020 children's staff consisted of Gabrielle Pitzer (manager), Emily Foster (left at the end of August to become the Rocky Fork Lake branch manager), Madeline Crabtree, Laura Bradley, and Christina Rittenberry.

In the beginning of the year, story time was held on Wednesdays at 11 am for 0-2 year olds and 11:30 am for 3-5 year olds. Unfortunately, story time was only able to be held nine times in person for a handful of children and their parents. We were also only able to hold one evening Story Time session for a couple of children and their parents in February. Beginning in September, we began recording and posting story time craft videos with suggested readings to our Facebook page. From September to November, we posted 11 videos that received 984 views.

Due to the closing of schools per the governor at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, we were not able to finish visiting Hillsboro Elementary Pre-K, Little Lamb, or Highland County Head Start. Then when the 2020-2021 school year began, we were not able to start going into the schools again due to visitor restrictions for health concerns. But we hope that classrooms and homeschool families are able to use our online resources and videos to supplement our not being able to visit.

Before the library closed in March, Lego Club was able to meet five times. These five meetings were attended by 37 kids and 25 parents. Emily Foster was once again in charge of the club before her departure to Rocky Fork. Whenever we are able to have Lego Club again, a new staff member will be running the meetings.

The original summer reading theme was "Imagine Your Story" with a focus on fairy tales. We made the decision, because we couldn't have in person programming, to "save" this theme for another year and came up with our own theme. The theme we chose with "Camp Read-A-Lot" which was an outdoor camping theme. We also shortened the program to run during the months of June and July. Over the course of those eight weeks, 132 children ages 2-14 signed up to participate. This year, the children were entered into a level drawing for every 10 books that they read, with the chance to earn five drawing tickets. We also offered a reading BINGO challenge for participants. Of the 132 children signed-up, 51 (39%) completed level one, 44 (33%) completed level two, 40 (30%) completed level three, 38 (29%) completed level four, 36 (27%) completed level five, and 31 (23%) completed the BINGO challenge. In addition to the reading component, we held a coloring contest with two age categories: ages 2-6 and ages 7-14. There were 10 participants for the younger group

and 7 for the older group. And because we could not have in person programming, we recorded and posted eight activity videos to our Facebook page that were viewed over 1,200 times.

On March 6, the library hosted the launch of the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library, part of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The event was very well attended by local families, community leaders, school representatives, and local representatives, such as Hillsboro Mayor Justin Harsha, City Auditor Alex Butler, and State Representative Shane Wilkin. The main event was presented by Ohio First Lady Fran Dewine, who held a Story Time for the children in attendance. By the end of the year, the program had reached its statewide goal of being available in all of Ohio's 88 counties.

Many of the library's normal events, programs, and contests were hampered by the ongoing pandemic. With the library operating by curbside service for a majority of the year, contests such as the Guess How Many and Birthday were only able to be done January through March with 131 and 27 participants respectfully. During the times that we were open for patrons to come inside, we were able to start a few passive programs, such as monthly questions (258 participants), name tags on the wall (331 participants), scavenger hunts (92 participants), character guessing (27 participants), and voting (124 participants). Our Easter egg coloring contest had to be held online and the seven returned eggs gathered 154 votes on Facebook. The annual Halloween pumpkin coloring contest was held as usual with 26 pumpkins turned in that received 519 votes on Facebook. And while we were open when we began our Polar Express Christmas reading program, we went back to curbside before it finished, which may have resulted in a smaller turn out (31 kids) and fewer finishers (10 kids).

As the library moves into the New Year, we look forward to finding our "normal" routine again. For now, "normal" includes continuing curbside services (books, computers, printing, faxing, etc), doing more programming online, and hoping we can reopen to the public for a longer period of time. Until then, we will continue wearing our facial coverings, maintaining social distance, and serving the people of Highland County to the best of our abilities.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT: Gabrielle Pitzer, Madeline Crabtree, Laura Bradley, and Christina Rittenberry.

GREENFIELD BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Spencer McNeil, Greenfield Branch Manager

The Greenfield Branch Library, like most organizations and people around the world, experienced a year of volatile change and constant adaptation. Despite the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic in March, the library staff and its patrons enjoyed an enriching, entertaining, and engaging year. The new decade brought new ideas for programming and community enthusiasm for the future of the library.

Our regular programs, such as story time, Teen Book Club, Knitting & Crocheting, and Senior Exercise Class continued to draw patrons, new and old, to the library throughout the week. In addition, we saw an increase in the use of the library as a community meeting place for tutoring, business meetings, and various appointments. The most popular new program was our American Sign Language Class which we started in January after a patron requested information on ASL. After some investigating, we were extremely lucky to have an ASL Instructor, Molly Clevenger, volunteer to teach an Adult Class on Monday evenings. The demand for the class exceeded our availability, so with Molly's generosity, we were able to add a second class. The attendance was consistent and people from all over Southern Ohio continued to express interest in joining the class. There were several requests for a children's class. We look forward to resuming the ASL program and expanding to other ages and skill levels when the world returns to normal. We also saw successes with the Snowflake Bentley Program in January, as well as and the Valentine Decorating Contest in February that drew over 50 participants of all ages.

When the world came to a halt in March, the library closed to the public and uncertainty loomed in the air. The staff and our patrons were thrilled when the library reopened relatively early and with thought-out, comprehensive safety measures in place. The staff at the Greenfield Branch Library spent a lot of time rearranging furniture, cleaning surfaces, and

preparing for a socially distanced future. Throughout the rest of the year, new information and new policies constantly changed how the library functioned. Many of our favorite yearly programs were cancelled or adjusted. A few days prior to initial lockdown in March, the Teen Book Club had planted tomato, marigold, and pepper seeds, and by the time the library reopened in May, the enormous seedlings in our sunny foyer made the library seem more like a conservatory. We used the opportunity to give away the seedlings to patrons who looked forward to our cancelled Plant Exchange.

The Summer Reading Program was stripped of group programs and participation was abysmally low compared to other years. Throughout the summer we had take-home crafts and puzzles which were very popular. We also had chalk available for young patrons to decorate the Reading Garden Walls.

With curbside service and without weekly cargo, the staff at the Greenfield Branch Library did their best to keep our community informed on how to order books using the SEO app, the HCDL website, and over the phone. Caleb Mootispaw made several videos that explained how to use the various technologies to order items, how to pick up and return items, and what the library staff was doing during lockdown. Cynthia Allen also created story time videos that we shared on Facebook. Deb Wise made crafts that could be picked up and taken home for younger patrons. Kyle Barr helped create Excel Sheets to organize patron checkouts and requests. Ashley Roberts reorganized several sections of the library and went above and beyond to contact patrons and clarify new policies.

The Greenfield Library Staff are extremely appreciative to our patrons for their understanding and willingness to adapt to changes, follow new procedures, and forgive us as we waded through unfamiliar territories. We are also grateful for our Director, Suzanne Roberts, and, Financial Officer, Danica Bailey, for working tirelessly to keep us informed and at the forefront of the community. The library is also very grateful for our patrons' generosity. Along with financial donations, books, and media, our community donates its time and skills to the Greenfield Branch Library.

The Library and its staff look forward to the opportunities of the new year. With the knowledge and flexibility learned during 2020 and a growing restlessness to engage with our community and see the library full of people, we see great things in the future.

GREENFIELD BRANCH STAFF: Spencer McNeil, Deb Wise, Ashley Roberts, Cynthia Allen, Caleb Mootispaw, and Kyle Barr.

LEESBURG BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Melinda McGee, Leesburg Branch Manager

The Leesburg Branch Library, like most in 2020, faced hard times and made difficult decisions. However, the hardest and most deeply felt trouble we faced had nothing to do with the coronavirus, a worldwide pandemic, or politics. Rebecca "Becky" Howard passed away on October 15, 2020 from pancreatic cancer. Becky served this library for over twenty years, not including the years she volunteered before joining the staff. She has left a hole that cannot be filled and is sorely missed. Please stop by and see the plaque in her honor which we proudly display.

While it would be easy to concentrate on what we weren't able to do or provide in 2020, I want to focus on what we did do and did provide. During the times we have been closed to patrons a lot was accomplished: our carpets were cleaned; every book, every shelf, and every window in our branch was cleaned; hand-free automatic doors were installed; our AC/heating filtering system was up graded; our public computers are now six feet apart; and much more. We have also been able to provide additional services, such as home delivery of books (in a socially responsible manner), hot spots (all 5 are always checked out or in quarantine) and use of a laptop computer, to name just a few.

Participation in our children's programming expanded under Brenda Putnam's guidance. Story time was held two days a week in January, February, and March with interest expressed in an afternoon story time. Individual or family story time

continued (with social distancing) when our branch was open to our patrons. Miss Brenda and our youngest patrons are eager to get back to the full story time experience (crafts and snacks, as well as stories).

Our active and vital “tween” reading group, the Page Turners, conceived and led by Jaime Copley, continued to get new members, topping out at 10 in February. As soon as it is safe to do so, Miss Jaime and the “tweens” are ready for the group to get together again. Pizza will be served!

Our Summer Reading Program was limited to our patrons 12 years old and younger, and while the number participating was down, we did have a 91% completion rate! The best completion rate ever! Our winter reading program had 28 participants. They filled out a slip for each book they read. Prizes were given away in three age groups. The random drawing for the prizes was streamed on Facebook.

In February we were pleased to welcome Patrick Hailey, author of *The Danes Murders*. The event was well attended and the Q & A session at the end of his presentation was loud and lively!

We have always enjoyed working with local organizations to provide services to our community. Even with the limitations of 2020, we were able to work with and/or support the Leesburg Fire Dept. and Life Squad, Leesburg Food Bank, Community Action, the Heritage Club, and the Leesburg Historical Society. We also promised the Leesburg Lions Club that we would support Luminaria 2021.

Our relationship with Fairfield Elementary School continues to strengthen and grow despite social distancing restrictions. Our last visit to the Fairfield was March 4, 2020 when we participated in **Lions on Literacy**. In October, we donated to Fairfield’s Safe Trick or Treat Give-A-Way, though our actual attendance was not allowed. In the coming years, we plan to establish stronger ties to both Fairfield Middle and High School.

Once again the library has benefited from the generosity and support provided by the many businesses and individuals of the Leesburg community. Their unsolicited donations in 2020 helped us in provide incentives for our summer and winter reading programs. We would also like to thank patrons who have displayed items in our show case, as well as those who have donated books, puzzles, and media.

LEESBURG BRANCH STAFF: Melinda J. McGee, Becky Howard, Brenda Putnam, Angela Chaney, Jaime Copley, Andrea Toews, Geri McCloskey, and Macinzey Harvey.

LYNCHBURG BRANCH LIBRARY

Written by Elaine Williams, Lynchburg Branch Manager

2020 was a challenging year for everyone, and it certainly called for changes at the Lynchburg Library. Our activity and meeting room became a quarantine room for returned materials, some of our story times went virtual for the first time, and the age-old art of Reader’s Advisory came to the forefront for our many patrons who do not use social media or technology and could no longer browse our shelves.

The first quarter of the year was spent in our usual onsite and offsite programming. We held our monthly Pageturners Book Club meetings, our weekly Improv for Teens group, and visited Lynchburg-Clay Elementary in costume to do our Monday story times in five kindergarten and preschool classrooms. F.R.E.D. Night at the elementary school brought us into contact with 339 individuals who stopped by the library table to hear what we had to offer and receive children’s books and other freebies we collected over the previous year. Then in mid-March, the library closed down due to the growing coronavirus pandemic.

During the shutdown, the full-time Lynchburg staff members cataloged books, sorted donations, placed book orders, planned a revised summer reading program, and worked on research requests from people who contacted the library from Wilmington, Manchester, and Cincinnati. We delivered puzzles to families in the community, created library posts on social media, and learned how to do Zoom meetings and virtual story times for the kindergarten classes. We took part in Lynchburg community events such as the modified Class of 2020 graduation parade, the modified Easter Egg hunt, and a community scavenger hunt – all socially distanced events. We used camera video, Snapchat, and Stop-Motion Studio to make videos for Highland County Faces Behind the Places and to adapt our yearly in-person kindergarten Tornado Talk. Our virtual programs had a total of 327 views.

At the end of April, we set up the library for curbside service, including areas for checkouts, waiting for pickup, four rotating workstations for social distancing, and of course, the quarantine room. Gayle Ecabert, the Executive Director of the SWON Libraries Consortium in Cincinnati, came to our branch to interview us, as our district was the first library system in our area to open back up to the public and allow patrons back inside the building after Memorial Day. Our summer reading club, Catch the Reading Bug, was an adaptation of the full-scale theme we used in 2008, and we had 88 children, 22 adults, and 6 teens involved.

Instead of our usual Merry Money program, we joined Hillsboro in offering a Polar Express Reading Challenge. We had 14 sign-ups until the libraries began curbside service only again in late November. All 14 registrants completed the program and picked up bags of Polar Express-related items.

We at the Lynchburg Branch are proud to welcome our newest staff member, Megan Priore, who was hired right before the state-mandated closure. We would also like to thank our Board members, Director, and Fiscal Officer for all their support, flexibility, and hard work toward making our libraries both safe and compliant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for answering all of our many questions. Finally, we would like to offer our thanks and appreciation to our patrons, who adapted right along with us. We look forward to serving you in 2021!

LYNCHBURG BRANCH STAFF: Elaine Williams, Jean Bush, Debi Dillon, Carol Frost, and Megan Priore.

ROCKY FORK BRANCH LIBRARY

January - August Written by Kathe Chaney

The Rocky Fork Lake Library officially opened in November 2019, and the first program we offered was during the month of December for patrons to create ornaments from paper to make and take home for the holidays of Christmas, Hanukah, and Kwanza.

In January 2020, we began offering Coffee and Coloring for our adult patrons, in addition to beginning story times: Book Babies for children aged 0-2 years and The Bookshelf for preschool children in the 3-5 year age range. Our drawing that month was to guess the amount of cocoa-flavored Hershey kisses.

In February, we started our Lego Club which was very well received! Participants were able to display their creations in our case for others to see and our drawing that month for Valentine's Day was to guess the amount of M&M's.

In March, we continued with the existing programs and plans were in the works for a reading program for elementary school children to be called Chapter Club, which unfortunately was derailed by COVID-19. To celebrate St. Patrick's Day patrons, needed to find among the stacks green painted "Blarney Stones", and they would receive a gold chocolate coin.

The library was in the process making plans to coordinate with the staff at Rainsboro Elementary in the Greenfield school district when COVID-19 unfortunately forced a shutdown of all area schools. Library staff were able to participate in the

Rocky Fork 4th of July parade and were very pleased with all of the enthusiastic reactions from people along the route.

During the remaining days of March and the month of April, we were closed for the virus—thank you again for the continuing financial support for all staff! In May, we reopened for curbside service and time was spent cleaning and preparing for Summer Reading.

Summer Reading began on June 1. Our theme was camping and all who signed up received a reading log plus a small baggie of gummy fish and worms for a lake vibe! We had 35 children and adults sign up and were pleasantly surprised! While observing social distancing we were able to provide some activities in June and July which included tie-dying tee shirts, a stop-motion video club, thumbprint rock painting, origami crafting, a teddy bear picnic, a Morse code bracelet craft, and succulent planting. Our take home crafts consisted of making a campfire, a patriotic windmill spinner, a beaded American flag, moon phase cups, and underwater binoculars to name a few. We hosted a fundraiser for the Highland County Humane Society to collect donations for Hot Dog Day and also hosted a Kona Ice Truck on July 31st to close out the summer and handed out prizes to those who turned in their completed reading log.

In August, we continued with take home crafts of button flower gardens while preparing for the upcoming fall season. We enhanced our children's section with complete lists of Caldecott and Newbery award winners for parents, courtesy of the American Library Association plus with generous donations from HHI, HLE and HLY. We were closed from 8/6-8/20 for COVID quarantine reasons. The rest of August was spent getting caught up and ready for September.

In September, we hung a permanent-gallery type display of works from famous American painters and sculptors, along with a month-long coloring contest for patrons.

September – December Written by Emily Foster

An institution such as a public library has a vital role to play, pandemic or no pandemic! No one said it would be easy, but the Rocky Fork Branch Library staff kept their heads high, creativity flowing, and did whatever we could to make it work.

September and October were months of change. Emily Foster took over as manager on September 8th. September was a relatively quiet month with a passive coloring contest - the American Artwork Contest. The winner received a sketch book and colored pencils. On September 26th, the Highland County Humane Society brought many cats and dogs to visit. As a result, two dogs and one cat were adopted.

In October, we saw the reemergence of story time in a new form – appointment storytime. With this, we could still host story time and maintain social distancing guidelines. We also hosted the Pumpkin Coloring Contest, in which two prizes were awarded. Mid-month, Gayle Patrick started creating Take Home Craft Kits, which have become very popular.

November marked the Rocky Fork Branch Library's 1-Year Anniversary! During this month, we saw a steady demand for the Take Home Craft Kits. Unfortunately, it also saw the suspension of appointment story times on November 10th due to the county becoming a Level 3 on the Ohio Public Health Advisory's scale. The whole library system dropped to curbside services only on November 24th. As of January 2021, neither regular services or story time has been able to resume.

In December, Christmas music rung throughout the library! While we were operating differently, the staff were still jolly. The Holiday Reading Contest began for kids and adult alike on the 1st – the adult prize being a \$10 gift card for the local sub shop, Bobabarica. December also saw an exciting arrival – the first 5 mobile hotspots for patron use! These hotspots had immediate circulation upon availability.

While this year has been anything but ordinary, I'm proud to say that the Rocky Fork Branch Library has been providing wonderful services and opportunities for its patrons!

In the coming year, we would like to expand our programming opportunities – weekly/biweekly clubs, passive programs like puzzle building, and the ever popular Coffee and Coloring for adults (if allowed due to COVID-19 restrictions). We are looking forward to the relaunch of Lego Club and our story time.

Outside of programming, we will update and expand our collection. We wish to keep our collection up to date and to include the suggestions and demands of our patrons. As I am typing this report, we are currently open for curbside service only. When we reopen to the public, we will be hosting our first book sale!

The Rocky Fork Branch Library staff would like to thank Kathe Chaney for her year of service and guidance as manager. We wish you the happiest retirement – you deserve it!

We would also like to thank our patrons for sticking with us during our first year and through the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been challenging, and we thank you for your patience and flexibility with our ever changing services.

ROCKY FORK BRANCH STAFF: Emily Foster, Jennifer Lowe, Gayle Patrick, Sandy “Sam” Planck

PROGRAMMING DETAILS

HILLSBORO: Black History Month program honoring Art Brooks and Ronald C. Todd, Camping-themed Murder Mystery event, Paint Night with the Red Hat Society, Reading Resolution Challenge, Valentine’s Scavenger Hunt, What Book Character Inspires You, If You Could Be Quarantined with Any Fictional Character, Who Would it Be?, September Book Bingo, Winter Reading Bingo, Adult Fandom Club, Teen and Tween Make and Create Club, Adult Write-Away Club, Comic Book Club, “Bring Your Own Book” Club, Writing Workshop, Scrapbooking Club, Bi-weekly Paint Night, Crochet Club, Summer Reading Coloring Contests, Ask a Career Expert, Ask a Genealogist, Ask A Decorator, Library Staff Halloween Costume Contest, Book Sale

GREENFIELD: Book sale, senior exercise classes, Puzzlers, Knitting and Crocheting meetings, Sign Language Class, CET meetings, SRP Adult Signup, National Library Card Month sign-up, Trick-or-Treat Bag contest, and German Christmas Star Program

LEESBURG: Book sale, Monthly Trivia contests, Monthly Craft Judging contests, Knit Together group, RRR Reading group, Hidden in Plain Sight, Favorite Book Declaration, The Danes Murder event, The Gratitude Tree event, Scavenger Hunts, IABB crafts, Birthday drawings, Coloring/Decorating contests, Story Time events, Page Turner events, Candy Guess contest, Backpack Give-a-Way, Candy Give-a-Way, Election 2020 contest, Holiday Crafts, Winter Reading

LYNCHBURG: Chain Gang Crocheting, Pageturners Book Club, Passive Puzzles, Adult Summer Reading Club, Learn to Use Your Sewing Machine, kindergarten story times, pre-school story times, F.R.E.D. Night, virtual story times, virtual Tornado Talk, Improv for Teens, Holiday Guessing Contest, Polar Express Reading Challenge

GREENFIELD: American Artwork contest, Pumpkin Coloring contest, Holiday Reading contest, Lego club, Story Time, Take Home Craft kits, Book Sale

ROCKY FORK LAKE: American Artwork Contest, Pumpkin Coloring Contest, Holiday Reading, Highland County Human Society Adoption Day, Lego Club, Story Time, Take Home Craft Kits

DISPLAY DETAILS

Hillsboro: Black History Month Display – Art Brooks, World War II Veteran Display – Franklin Grosvenor ,
Paint Night Examples, Christmas Village Display

Greenfield: Skates and Knits-Wendy Royse, Greenfield Elementary Art-Cathy Rivas, Wade Stratton Artwork,
Coloring Contest, Trick-or-Treat bags

Leesburg: Tea and Tea Cups collection, Cabin Fever Art Festival, St. Patrick's Day items, "We're All in This
Together", Summer Reading, Lego Display, County Fair, Pumpkins and Pumpkin Carving, Winter Reading
Prizes, Christmas Ornaments

Lynchburg: Collector Barbies, Shot Glasses, Bad Art, Llamas, Insect Collection

Rocky Fork Lake: Art Series

DONATIONS AND GIFTS

Long's Retreat, Turner and Son Funeral Home, Kings Island, COSI, Subway (N. High St.), Young's Dairy,
Holtfield Station, Dairy Queen, Wilkin and Wilkin Insurance, Merchant's National Bank, Batter Up Bakery,
Jani-Chem, Saucy Sisters, Leesburg Hardware & Lumber

Dr. Barabara Mihalik D.O., Darlene Michael, G. Ape, Allie Ballard, Fred Beetz, Marsha, Carlin, Laura
Carphey, Jaime Copley, Sadie Dehass, B. Drury, Maria Grimm, Jana Hobson, Becky Howard, Barb Jenkins,
F.H. Leghorn, Geri McCloskey, Melinda McGee, Amy Palmer, Y. Sams, Tom Schockette, Sharon Shields,
Teddy Shields, Kathy Spurlock, Elizabeth Strittenbreger, Ruth Wheaton