

Library Director's Report - May 2020

Summary of Digital Statistics

Event/Service	Usage/Attendees
Digital library cards	27
Website views	2,000
Total phone support (English and Spanish)	63
Email support	39
Facebook reaches	7,960
Instagram views	6,010
Zoom programs	28 programs/237 attendees
Digital programs (non-Zoom)	52
BookFix (Reader's advisory)	1
Electronic circulation: Hoopla	676
Electronic circulation: eBCCLS	Not available as of 6/5

Newsletter link: <https://conta.cc/2W9m8fw>

ADULT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Reports by Cathy Folk-Pushee unless otherwise mentioned

Zumba on Zoom, May 5, 12, 19, 26

I have had consistently good turnout for this program which continues into the first two weeks of June. The instructors are fantastic. Their instructions are fairly clear considering they can't call them out in person and the enthusiasm is contagious, even for participants like me who have never done Zumba before and find themselves a step (or three) behind. Even though many participants turn off their video to avoid lag I have received many positive comments in the chat box during sessions. We dance, we exercise, we laugh.

Virtual Midday Meditation, May 8, 15, 22, 29

This program also continues into the first two weeks of June. I have had a smaller but very dedicated group of new and seasoned meditators alike. The speaker, Jasmine Bilali, has presented at the library previously and has such a great presence. She gives a brief background on the practice before guiding participants through a 20-minute meditation. Many positive comments and thanks for holding these sessions have come in through the chat box after each one.

"Jasmine is really wonderful. It is really helping me in this isolating time. Thanks so much, Cathy." Sharon C.

Virtual Drawing Workshop-Zentangle, May 12

The Zentangle project worked very well as a Zoom drawing workshop. Zentangle is often just black and white so there was no lengthy supplies list to put off anyone who might not have the materials to participate. Barbara Freiberg was very good about talking everyone through the project and creating engagement as she stops periodically to ask participants to share their progress by holding their projects up to their webcams. These workshops always foster quite a bit of engagement as participants talk about the style of art we are working on and art in general.

"The classes are fun and a nice diversion for an hour or so." Kathy S.

"Thank you again for organizing these workshops. I know that they help me in these times." Alda D.

Veterans Benefits Q&A Webinar, May 22

Participation was small but interesting at this virtual version of a regular JPL program. I say it was interesting because the participants were from all over New Jersey. One was in Ocean County and the other was in Secaucus. Both were so happy that they had met Guy Vanterpool, the VA liaison, and now had him on their team as they navigated through the labyrinth of federal, state, and local VA benefits and services.

Virtual Open Mic Night Featuring Mark Sganga, May 28

I was so happy to have a featured performer back this month and enthusiasm was apparent in sign-ups as well. We had 80 people registered this month and approximately 50 show up for the event. Mark is an amazing performer. His love of playing the guitar

and performing is very apparent; the screen practically lit up as he played. We also had a very talented line-up of other performers which rounded out the night very nicely. Some were repeat participants and others were new which is always nice to see.

“It was great! Some awesome talent! Thank you for including me.” Nancy S.

“Thanks for having me as always man! Enjoyed the feature too.” Andrew N.

“So many talented people! I enjoyed listening, and my boys heard some too.” Adeena B.

English Conversation, Computer Assistance in Spanish and English, and Bilingual Outreach

*Michelle Ferreira, Bilingual Library Associate
Virtual ESL Conversation*

Virtual ESL Conversation Class - 20

Using News for You Newspaper from New Readers Press, I am able to pull stories to converse to. We listen to a story either read by a student or put on an automatic loudspeaker. Automatic loudspeaker is featured by New Readers Press. Then, we do an activity composed of learning vocabulary, multiple choice and put the sentence together. In addition to building sentences with words the student comes up with.

Spanish Conversation Class - 2

Created a small talk conversation sheet to promote conversation starters and ice breakers.

Citizenship Mock Phone Interview - 3

Practice for the citizenship interview over the phone. People learn the reading and writing vocabulary needed to pass the citizenship interview. A guide is shared with each person to help study for the interview test.

Help Computer Support on the phone-6

- Spanish - 5 people
- English - 1 people

Email support in Spanish- 9 people

BookFix Personalized Books for Spanish Speakers- 1 person

Spanish Outreach

Spanish customer support phone number is on the website and on the library door.

Virtual “Fit to Be Lit” Book Club Meeting May 29-Report by Melina Halpin

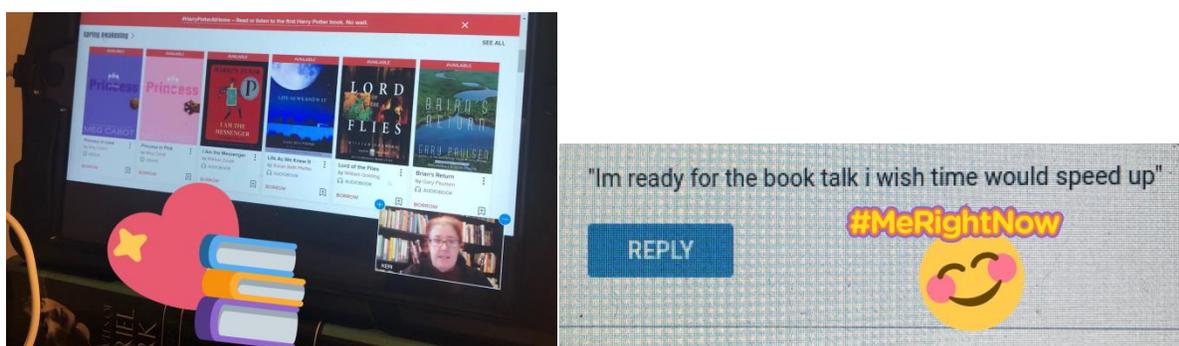
This month’s book title was *News of The World* by Paulette Jiles. We only had two participants in our Zoom meeting but that didn’t stop us from having a fun and thoughtful discussion. Everyone was in agreement that the book was beautifully written and a

pleasure to read. We reviewed our favorite scenes from the story, spoke about the author's writing style, and discussed the larger context of the novel, which takes place during the Reconstruction in post-civil war Texas. I received positive feedback on the new blog that now serves as an extension of the book group discussions, and two members emailed to say that they were sorry that they weren't able to make the meeting, so hopefully they will join us next month.

Young Adult Highlights

Keri Adams, YA Librarian, Head of Periodicals

Young Adult Attendance: 24



I was able to host one last booktalk of the school year in conjunction at Hackensack Middle School (via Zoom). I was able to walk them through using Libby and Hoopla to access ebooks and eaudiobooks. I picked ten books off my personal bookshelves to talk about, including a few classics and favorites, in addition to two brand new books that I had received as advanced reader copies at ALA Midwinter. One student was so eager to attend the booktalk that he tried to log in two hours early. Another student had already borrowed one of the books on Libby by the time the presentation had ended. Ms. Mecka, one of the 7th grade English teachers, attended the booktalk and announced that one of the students was a national winner in a PTA sponsored art contest for her poem. Although our attendance was much lower than our typical in person events, we had a huge number (24) for a virtual event with many familiar faces signing on. It was bittersweet, partly because it was online, but partly because the current 8th graders have been our biggest and most dedicated audience for booktalks since we started the program. I hope that those kids will help us get the program started at Hackensack High School. Ms. Carroll, the Hackensack Middle School Media Specialist, also sent out my summer reading survey to the 6th, 7th and 8th graders, and I received 150 responses! The feedback was helpful in finalizing our online events and I think more kids will be looking out for information about the events because of this.

I also held a virtual meeting of our YA Books for Adults Book Club. We only had four attendees, but I knew a few of our regulars have been able to get access to our next book, so I think it will continue to grow over the next few months.

Children's Program Highlights

Mari Zigas, Children's Librarian

In May the Children's full-time staff planned all seven weeks of summer reading while recording, editing and uploading almost 50 videos from home: English story times, Bilingual story times, English chapters a night, Spanish chapters a night and weekly crafts. We also continued to submit content for social media posts and the COVID-19 portal. We attended multiple webinars and Zoom meetings to prepare for our return to JPL: *Helping Children Cope During COVID-19* (FEMA), *READSquared Training Session* (NJ State Library), *MeeScan demo* (BCCLS) and *Summer Reading Planning Meeting* (BCCLS Youth Services Committee). Staff also continued their weekly department meetings on Zoom every Monday morning.

While our Zoom programs have not had the greatest attendance record (Show & Share and Graphic Novel Book Club), I have high hopes that the variety of summer programs will increase those numbers in July and August.

I moderated our first outreach Zoom event with the students of the Hackensack School of Medicine at Seton Hall University: a Wellness Bingo night! The students held three rounds of bingo, with the questions centered on general health and JPL resources. All three participants were enthusiastic and sent me emails afterwards about how they learned so much and had a great time. It was such a success that we will be hosting another one in June.

Phone calls through the OneTalk app almost doubled from April, most of them centered around how to get free eBooks and eAudiobooks.

While still uploading videos to social media, June will be a heavy preparation month for us. We are planning on providing activity kits for most of our programs this summer that require materials and also putting together book bundles for the books on the schools' summer reading lists. Gladys and I will be making English and Spanish videos for the elementary schools since we won't be able to do our usual school visits this year, and I will be meeting with the 5th graders at HMS on Zoom for a summer reading presentation as well.

May 2020 Social Media Statistics

Twitter:

Impressions: 1,900

Profile visits: 46

Mentions: 15

Followers: 837

Facebook:

Post Reach: 7,960

Post engagement: 1,380

Video Views: 4,615

Page views: 531

Page likes: 1,852

Page followers: 1,983

Instagram:
Impressions: 6,010
Reach: 2,243
Followers: 490

Outreach and Public Relations

Outreach and Public Relations Librarian, Laurie Meeske

PR, Marketing, & Sponsorship

PR

- JPL was mentioned in an article which was posted on Tapinto about our virtual events and services:
<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/hackensack/sections/arts-and-entertainment/articles/hackensack-s-johnson-public-library-announces-slate-of-may-virtual-programs>
- The Main Street Alliance also sent out information on our May events and services via their mailing list.

Marketing

- Gen and I have continued to work together to promote the library's status, virtual events, and services.
- I continue to post content to the COVID-19 portal.
- I also helped collect content for two future marketing initiatives, including:
 - Livestream events
 - Quarantine House
 - This will highlight a few characteristics about the households of various library staffers, and invite patrons to "choose" which one they would want to spend quarantine at.
 - Pride Month materials

Outreach

Hackensack Collaborative Outreach Meeting - 5/7

- During this virtual meeting, the HABC discussed the measures they have taken to keep their staff and guests safe during the crisis.
- All shelter guests have been placed in motels, and HABC staff remain in contact with them.
- The HABC is preparing for an influx of additional homeless individuals as the crisis goes on.
- I shared information regarding the library's current status, as well as the virtual services and events we are offering. I shared our newsletter with the HABC staff, and it was distributed to the individuals who attended the meeting.

Students from Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University

- The students from Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University offered a live virtual Wellness Bingo event for families on May 29th. Many thanks to Mari for moderating this event!

Department of Veteran Affairs

- Our contact at the VA provided a virtual information and Q&A session on May 22nd. Many thanks to Cathy for moderating the event!

Collaboration with the YMCA - Healthy Kids Day

- The Y shared a video featuring Mari on their social media channels as part of their virtual Healthy Kids Day on May 24th. In the video, Mari highlighted several books that encourage healthy habits for kids of various ages. Many thanks to Mari for putting the video together, and to Gen for editing the video and sharing the finished product once it was posted by the Y.

Community Garden Box - Hackensack Recreation Department

- I reached out to the Hackensack Recreation Department, and we were able to obtain one of the 4x8 garden boxes in Johnson Park. The Rec. Dept. has waived the annual fee for the library. We are excited to be able to use this garden box for future virtual events.

Friends Update

- The Friends held a virtual meeting on Thursday, May 28th.
- The Friends will notify the three winners of their virtual National Library Week challenge. Winners will be invited to pick up their prize tote bags after the library reopens to the public. 9 people participated in the challenge.
- The Friends will reduce their membership fees through the rest of the year, to encourage more people to join.
- The Friends are exploring the possibility to partner with a local brewery for a virtual beer tasting event as a fundraiser.
- The next Friends meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 25th at 4:30pm.

Miscellaneous

BCCLS Technology Committee

- The Tech Committee completed their investigation into possible apps for patron self-check-out. The Committee has made a recommendation for interested BCCLS libraries to purchase a product called MeeScan.
- The price is highly affordable (max price per library is \$399/year), although the final costs will depend on how many BCCLS libraries choose to participate in the group purchase.
- Each participating library would also receive a free self-checkout kiosk (iPad not included) to any library that adopts MeeScan before December 31, 2020.

- I also attended a Q&A webinar hosted by the Committee that was held on May 28th.

ReadSquared

- I attended a webinar on ReadSquared, the summer reading software solution that is being offered free of charge to NJ libraries, to help evaluate whether it would be a solution that could work for us. Ultimately, the programmers have decided to use the ReadSquared software.

Work from Home Summaries by Department

Technical Services

- Researched AV materials for future purchase.
- Researched Music Books for future purchase.
- Researched Office Supplies for future purchase.
- Watched several webinars dealing with Library procedures & the future of libraries dealing with the COVID 19 Pandemic.
- Keeping up to date with library journals online. (Publisher's Weekly, Booklist, Baker & Taylor newsletters).

Children's Department

- Planned entire summer reading program.
- Planned summer reading presentations for elementary schools and 5th graders.
- Attended webinars and training sessions related to COVID-19, MeeScan and READSquared.
- Continued weekly department meetings via Zoom.
- Recorded and uploaded weekly videos for story times and crafts on social media.
- Continued email and phone support via OneTalk.

Young Adult/Periodicals Department

- Worked on Booktalk Presentation for HMS
- Worked on virtual summer reading program
- Participated in online meetings and webinars
- Read review journals

Reference Department

- Presented Zoom and video programs (Cathy, Melina, Michelle)
- Read book reviews and worked on collection development
- Worked on Staff Performance Reports
- Provided patron phone (37) and email (23) support
- Attended webinars and professional development

Circulation Department

- One Talk (call forwarding) - 27 calls (plus 7 after hours which were returned)
- Digital Library Cards - 12
- Department Head Meetings

- Staff meetings
- Self-serve, self scan app meeting

General Updates

The Library Construction Bond Act Grant application has been submitted.

Staff are continuing to work diligently from home. During the month of May, the library hosted 83 digital programs – 28 on Zoom and 55 pre-recorded. Staff are also continuing to create library cards, answer reference questions, and provide other critical services remotely. I am so pleased that our new phone system allows call forwarding, we would be lost without it!

Preparing to Re-open

Governor Murphy recently announced that the state would be moving into Stage 2 on June 15th, which includes child care centers, in-person retail at 50% capacity, and outdoor dining. Libraries are also included in this stage, but he has not released specific dates relating to library operations just yet. My current plan is to begin bringing staff back on a limited/staggered basis on June 15th, open up book drops for returns on June 22nd, and start in-person hold pick-ups on July 6th. I will then follow the steps in our six-phase reopening plan as it is safe to do so. The circulation and reference desks have been fitted with plexiglass shields and we have purchased hand sanitizer, gloves, and masks for staff.

Building and Grounds

The work on the new office, which will be home to our marketing team, is complete. Plexiglass has been installed around the circulation and reference desks. Maintenance staff continue to keep the building clean, sanitary and in good working order. I suggest re-starting our contract with Cleaning World this month, as staff will soon return to the building.

Respectfully Yours,
Tara Cooper

