

West Branch District Library Annual Report FY 2017-2018

Statistics from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

Circulation Statistics Snapshot

- Collection Numbers: 30,501 (print)
 - 9470 (electronic)
 - 2367 (audio-visual)
- Total Circ: 47,682
 - *Inter-Library Loan Out: 5129 (VLC and Melcat)
 - *Inter-Library Loan In: 5281 (VLC and Melcat)
- Overdrive Ebook/Downloadable audio circ: 4296 (July 2017 - June 2018)
- Active Users: 2476 (19% Non-resident)
 - *Note: There are 6693 (24% Non-resident) registered borrowers in the system, however, active users are patrons that have borrowed library materials or utilized the library's catalog, public access computers, or digital resources within the last three years.
- Non-resident fees collected for the year continued their trend of coming in over-budget. This stat reiterates that many outside our five townships and the city supporting us through millage value our collection and services as well. The board and the next director may want to reassess the amount charged for non-resident fees in the near future as recent average figures of millage collection per household are calculating at just over \$35 per year.
- Internet usage: 6711 public workstation users, 8500 wireless users (this is estimated due to the inability to retrieve statistical reports on our previous wireless network). The estimated wireless stat shows a slight increase as many more people seem to bring their own devices (phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) to the library than did so in the past. However, with a new wireless network in place more suitable for commercial use, it will be interesting to monitor and compare this (actual) usage statistic in the next few years. Public workstation use shows a major decrease from previous years, but previous years' statistics in this area were found to be inaccurate. As with the wireless statistics, moving forward, we will have a more accurate picture of our (still substantial) public internet usage at the library.
- A project that has been gradually happening over the course of the last couple years was completed in its entirety this fiscal year. Amy Winter spearheaded the effort to interfile the library's reference section, allowing for all books in the collection to be checked out, if desired. Library patrons are still responsible for the cost of the book should they not return the item or damage the item, whether it's cataloged as a reference book or not. In addition, Amy ceased updating the library's old card catalog. As we haven't used it as a backup reference (as we thought we might) in years, we decided to save the time and energy it took to keep this up to date and cease this practice (which many libraries have already done). Our catalog (and patron) data in Horizon is backed up by Valley Library Consortium in Saginaw.

Tech Bright Spots

- As the library continues to see the need for one-on-one technology help for patrons and community members, library staff thought to take the "show on the road" and began traveling to the Commission on Aging for Tech Wednesdays. Twice per month, staff goes to their site to be available for drop in help with devices, etc. The COA staff as well as participants seem very grateful for the opportunity, and some folks even hit both the senior center as well as the library

on Tuesdays, should they have the need. We will hope to continue this outreach in the years to come.

-This fiscal year, the library began the process of installing wireless access points to stabilize our wireless connectivity and service to patrons. We had occasionally gotten complaints about the wireless internet not functioning properly or working very slowly, but over the past year, those complaints seemed to intensify. After Andrew's resignation, and upon consulting with Anthony Gnesotto of Classic Computer Repair, we decided to install two wireless access points to service the main floor of the library and the basement of the library. (The cement floor of the library's main floor prevents a wireless signal from traveling from upstairs to downstairs reliably).

Anthony maintains this type of system works significantly better for a commercial-type set-up as opposed to the system we had in place, which was more along the lines of a wireless setup for a small residential home. With these new installs, wireless signals seem to be much stronger and more reliable, and complaints have ceased since the installment.

-We also took the plunge and updated the library's Deep Freeze software licenses this year. Though this was a significant cost, the update will last several years, and it will help us maintain virus-free, secure public work stations for our patrons to use, a vital service we provide all library patrons.

Program Milestones

-The summer reading program's theme revolved around building a better world and many programs and activities incorporated that theme environmentally and in general. A duct tape workshop proved popular amongst youth of all ages and many left with very unique creations. A live animal presentation was a big draw as well and allowed for kids to experience petting many different unique animals. Also, a challenging obstacle course inside the library after hours was a great hit! Participation in this month-long program continues to be a draw for families throughout our community.

-Staffer Arianna took the reins in getting a youth book discussion group going and in November, Let's Discuss Junior launched. Made up of middle school readers, this group has continued meeting throughout the summer to read, eat dinner (a light dinner is served), and discuss their thoughts on some great books. Additionally, the group has done some books that have been made into movies and held their discussion before watching the movie with a broader audience of families and youth at a movie night. This steady program will continue into the fall and winter, and it's wonderful to see this demographic responding so positively to regular library programming – they are a challenge to get into the library sometimes!

-The library again did some outreach to the Ogemaw County Kids Club at the elementary and middle school and traveled there about twice a month to bring reading and craft activities to interested youth. Program participation was good, so we will likely try to continue this outreach, though the club will have a new director in the fall.

-In addition to physical outreach, the library continues to make a concerted effort to reach out through social media. The library's Twitter account has 67 followers with a reach of about 13,200 (this was calculated from a monthly average as only the last three months' data was available), while our Facebook page has 2970 likes/comments/shares with a reach of 82,656 people! Twitter has mostly been used to promote new titles added to the library's collection, while Facebook has focused more on program and event promotion. Compared to last year, Twitter followers and reach decreased by about half and Facebook likes and reach both increased very significantly, which could be attributed in part to recent changes in policies on business Facebook pages, but future years' comparisons will help us have a better picture of our social media impact.

-With continual effort and planning, library programming brings in great numbers of community folks, both registered patrons and otherwise. During this fiscal year, the library offered 252 programs with 7336 total attendance! That adds up to about 30 more programs during the year netting an extra almost 1400 people!

Facilities Report

-During my maternity leave, Andrew and staff were lucky enough to get to tackle a significant water tank leak in the library's basement. The city was able to promptly turn off the water to the library, and Jim Shirey and Eddie Kaniewski assisted in remedying the situation quickly.

-During the fiscal year, the library was able to make some headway on designing a new PVC sign with the library's new logo to be installed on the south side and east side of the library building. We are hopeful the attractive signage will draw even more folks into our building.

-The library's rain garden has served up some challenges during this past year. With Friends' volunteers no longer willing to take on the considerable work of its upkeep, we tried to find alternate means of keeping it presentable. Initially, we had lined up a master gardener to coordinate the upkeep, but red tape and other road blocks kept that from coming to fruition. So, the library held a work session with some willing volunteers, and Lorie (our library staffer) planted and maintained the marigolds along the walkway to the back parking lot. Additionally, West Branch Greenhouse brought in more mulch, planted a few more perennials, and did some major tree trimming. This will likely continue to be an issue in future years if there isn't one brave volunteer to spearhead spring and fall cleanups, especially.

Personnel

-The library withstood a major staffing change with the resignation of Andrew Sutherland, our long-time Assistant Director in May. Though it was hard to see him go from the library, we all hope the change was the best for him. Staff, again, pulled together to cover and pitch in however they could.

-Arianna Franciosi shifted to full time in August of this fiscal year. She had essentially been working full-time hours for several months at that point, she just wasn't receiving the benefits that would come along with officially being a full-time staffer. She was very pleased with this shift, and her steady, knowledgeable presence at the desk is great to have.

-I am grateful to Mary Jo Curtis for filling in at times during my maternity leave and continuing to be willing to help when we are short-staffed and she is able. This allows for us to continue functioning at our current staffing level, and keep current staff happy with the hours they want and need, though they may need flexibility for occasional time off.

- I again had the opportunity to attend the Michigan Library Association (MLA) conference in Lansing in October. Arianna, Amy, and new board member Sue Jennings attended the Rural Libraries Conference in Traverse City in April. Though these conferences always offer some great ideas and speakers, it was very helpful to get some additional insight regarding millages from both conferences that aided us in preparing for the library's millage renewal vote in August.

-Andrew and Arianna were chosen to participate in the Library of Michigan's Harwood Cohort. The program focuses on having conversations with community members outside of the library to better assess how the library can serve the community. This training will continue into the next fiscal year as well.

-We were proud to again be recognized by the West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce and community voters and be granted the Community Involvement award at the Chamber Ball in

February. It's wonderful to be recognized for something we strive so hard to do on an ongoing basis!

Financial

-Unaudited Revenues and Expenditures:

Revenues: \$ 292,725.36

Expenditures: \$ 295,994.32

-The library received heightened contributions due mainly to memorial contributions for library trustee Bill Jennings. Bill served on the library's Board of Trustees for 32 years and was an active supporter of the library in all aspects. His dedication will always be remembered, and we are grateful that his wife, Sue, is able to continue his legacy by serving as a board member herself.

-This fiscal year was the first year we were over budget (during my tenure), but with an even tighter budget year looming, it was thought to be best to try to get as much into this year's budget as possible. The total amount we were over budget for the year essentially amounted to a dues payment to the consortium that was actually for the first quarter of the next fiscal year. Hopefully, that will translate into better balancing of the budget for this next fiscal year.

-This year, the library was a grateful recipient of multiple grants, especially for conferences and travel. With my ARSL conference in Utah covered, one registration and night's stay for the Rural Libraries Conference through White Pine, and Arianna's and Andrew's participation in the Harwood cohort covered, the revenues helped offset higher expenditures in that line item. Additionally, grants were received for Workshops and Presentations which helped as well.

-As we were focusing on the millage renewal, the library held off on moving to seek exemption from local DDAs. However, with the passage of the millage renewal, my suggestion is to draft a board resolution (perhaps in consultation with Anne Seurnyck of Foster, Swift) to withdraw from the current DDA exemptions. This will help put thousands per year back in the library's revenues, funds that were originally approved by voters to come to the library.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Boersen, Library Director