Deputy Director’s Report

for June 9, 2020 District Board Meeting

* Began providing curbside service on Saturday, 5.2.20. Initially provided curbside three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 2:30 to 3:30.
* Expanded curbside service beginning the week of 5.19.20 to include two extra days, Wednesday and Friday, from 4:30 to 5:30.
* Identified and requested the purchase of two different-sized paper bags with handles to facilitate curbside. They have worked very well.
* Completed work on the Texas Book Festival Grant on 5.15.20. Submitted grant proposal via email to Texas Library Association contact listed on the Texas Book Festival website. Received submission acknowledgement from TLA contact. Announcement of awards will likely be in August.
* Summer Reading Program set to begin the week of 6.16.20. Date somewhat TBD pending reopening plans. We will use EngagedPatrons.org for online tracking logs and remote participation. Will submit a brief announcement for Summer Reading Program to the Blanco County News in time for this week’s paper; another to follow the week after. We will also post the announcement to the library website and to Facebook. We will distribute paper logs as well as weekly craft materials for pickup, curbside or inside the library. SRP to last through the first week of August. Most likely no onsite programming. Prizes for registrants to be given at the end of the SRP (they will choose a book from a list that the library will then purchase for them; Adult summer reading option, library to buy a children’s book on behalf of adult participants that will be added to the library collection with a name plate in their honor).
* Have continued working mostly at the library and looking after the building.
* Have continued providing daily reports to Crystal and the Board.
* Have assisted with package deliveries and the processing of new library acquisitions.
* Have coordinated with Jackie and Board members to have checks signed and mailed.
* Have been quarantining book drop returns in the Large Conference room for 72 hours prior to checking in and reshelving. Kee has been helping, especially with check-ins and the reshelving of quarantines.
* Have processed two ILL returns. Have another to return this week to UT Austin.
* Helped to get new patron Brad Kaufman a hotspot. He and his partner, Connie Evans, now appear to be working from home since they haven’t been working from the library porch.
* Began process of putting away toys and furniture, storing things in study rooms, large conference, and quiet reading room.
* Shifted the books in Spanish to a new location to allow room for the influx of new arrivals. Shifted and reflowed the new arrivals to better occupy both sides of the shelving and help with social distancing.
* Attended TLA webinar: “TLA Talks—Covid-19 Response” on May 19th, focused on small and rural libraries reopening. Webinar featured four panelists whose cameras were shared. Attendees were able to ask them questions via the moderator and could comment via audio. Another helpful cross-state discussion with particular relevance to the Blanco Library.
* Attended CTLS June Discussion webinar: Library Services During the Pandemic on June 3rd. Lots of folks attended from across the state who shared their thoughts and concerns about reopening, their experiences of already being open, and we heard from some who have never closed during the pandemic. Every library’s experience is unique, but there are a lot of shared commonalties about providing service at this time.
* Kee Hudson and I began discussing plans for grab-and-go style reopening of the library. Kee initially sent me a draft of some key ideas based on this practice, as described on the website of the Buda Public Library. I provided feedback and we met to discuss on Thursday, June 4th. Crystal joined the conversation and we collectively discussed this practice as way to slowly reopen the Blanco Library. I revised the document and emailed it to Crystal on Friday as a proposal for reopening.
* Looking to the Future: Given the likelihood that many of our volunteers and some staff will not be willing to return to work for a while, we should consider hiring someone on a temporary basis to help us keep the library open for more extended hours as we move forward. Holly Blasi, prior to the pandemic, had expressed an interest in paid work at the circulation desk. If Dorothy is reluctant to resume working until the pandemic is over, perhaps she can continue book covering duties remotely, and we can fill her desk hours with the temporary help. The temporary hire would also be a look ahead to the future as a path forward once Dorothy and Kee retire, which is something that we should begin planning for. We can really use some competent, independent desk help, with solid technological skills who can commit to being at the library on a regular basis. Paying someone to do this on a temporary basis and perhaps on a more extended basis is something we should consider adding as a discussion item for the next agenda.