

Rolling Meadows Library July-August 2023 – Executive Director’s Report

Executive Summary

August has brought us two retirement announcements. First, Sue M. in Reference will be retiring after 6 ½ years of dedicated service. Sue has been a friendly voice, a friendly face, and a caring reference librarian to our patrons. She plans to get in lots of extra bike rides now that she’ll have more time available. Sue is also planning to continue serving as a part-time librarian somewhere down the road, after she gets settled into retirement. We wish her all the best!

In other news, Steve Rossi retired on August 25th after 43 years of dedicated service. As I mentioned in my original announcement, Steve had been pondering retirement for a while, but when Dave R. announced his retirement, Steve decided to stay on and do all he could to assist in the transition. I am a lucky beneficiary of that decision, since Steve has been a treasure trove of valuable information and institutional memory, which has proven essential to me in my first year.

Countless times, I've found myself asking questions like: "Does anyone know what we did when...", "Are there any documents that might show...", and, "How long have we been doing it that way?" To these questions and more, Steve has had the answers.

Not to be outdone, I also have the answers to some burning questions:

- Who has come into work every day with a willingness to serve the library's mission in whatever way they are asked? Answer: Steve.
- Who communicates with civility, a sense of humor, and constant respect for others? Answer: Steve.
- Who has a natural ability to offer a markedly different point of view that challenges your thinking, but offers it in a gentle tone that it sounds as if you’re merely discussing the high temperature forecast for the day? Answer: Steve.

Steve, we really can’t thank you enough. We hope you know you made a real difference!

-Kevin

In the Library (and nearby)

- Due to popular demand, we added 1) two additional Rokus to the collection, for a total of nine, and 2) 10 additional Wi-Fi hotspots, for a total of 21.
- We have also seen some circulating of our Disc Golf sets, but not to the extent we had hoped. We will continue to find ways to promote those. Kevin tried one of the sets with his kids and they all had a great time, and also discovered just how difficult it is to throw a flying disc in a pre-chosen direction. Word to the wise: Try not to pre-choose where you’re going to throw; you’ll feel much more successful! ;-)

- At the time of this writing, final preparations are being completed to ensure a smooth transition into our new open hours schedule. There are so many angles to consider! Among them, our closing procedures are being streamlined to ensure that all staff working until closing time can leave the building together as soon as possible at either 9:00PM (Mon-Thu) or 5:00PM (Fri-Sun).

In the Community

- The Library had a table at the Back to School Supply Event at the PNR. We gave out 20 new library cards. Dan and Jessica promoted the library and estimate the crowd was approximately 500.(LK)
- The Library had a table at the city National Night. Carrie and Jolinda promoted the library and distributed foldable flyers quickly running out of 500 before the event was over. They estimate the crowd to have been over 1000. (LK)

Per Capita Goals Check-in

Our facilities evaluation has been completed, and the Planning Committee will meet August 30th to review the results and recommendations. This should help us in formulating our next Capital Plan.

Department Highlights

Youth Services

- Laura held two events weekly for families at the PNR bringing stories, activities and the Summer Reading Challenge. She had an attendance of 30 kids each week.
- We have new additions to the YS staff. Kate D. has joined us as Educational Services Librarian and Preeti S. is our new YS Associate.

Readers Services

- I am thrilled to announce that 2023 marked the library’s most successful year ever for the Adult and Teen Summer Reading program!
 - The final participation totals are as follows: 352 adults, 37 teens, and 31 staff.
 - For each book read, patrons could place a raffle ticket into a restaurant gift box of their choice. Once patrons read six books, they would receive a *Take a Bite Out of Reading* Apron. The aprons were designed to match the program theme and sponsored by the Friends of the Library. Many patrons expressed their pleasure and agreed that these were big incentives.
 - Our generous Rolling Meadows community restaurant sponsors were: Bulldog Ale House, Honey Baked Ham, Oberweis Ice Cream, Panera Bread, Papa Saverio’s, Portillo’s, Potbelly, Red Apple (Palatine), Rep’s Place, Starbucks, and Taylor Family McDonalds. We are in the process of following up by writing thank you letters and will be revisiting each of our vendors within the next couple of weeks to formally thank them.
- Once again, we offered an additional adaptive summer reading/activity program for our special needs patrons. The participants at Rolling Meadows Northwest Special

Recreation Association (NWSRA) enjoyed this element and NWSRA staff even planned monthly trips to the library to participate in this interactive program created especially for adults with disabilities.

- Readers Services has been working diligently this month to put the pieces in place to adapt to our new library hours, which begin on September 1. We have made adjustments to schedules while still maintaining each staff member’s NWH average. It is worth noting because this has absolutely been a team effort! New closing procedures have been implemented to ensure that all staff be out of the building as near to our new closing times as possible. The Maintenance Department has agreed to take much of the burden of closing procedures off of Readers Services. This has been **key** to making this even a **remote** possibility. Thank you, Pete!

Reference Services

- In July and August, we planned and added three new programs to the reference department’s slate of programming: A Year Of Truly Great Reads: A Yearlong Reading Challenge, Jump-Start Your Job Search, and Business Boosters (focused on library resources for small business owners).

Special Services

- Jessica V. has accepted the full time position of Graphic and Digital Content Specialist as of August 17. Since starting as a part-time staff member in Special Services in July of 2021, she has proven to be a great addition to the department. The Library will continue to benefit from her creativity, thoughtfulness, and insight.
- A raffle for Library Card Sign-Up Month is planned for September. This is a repeat of last year’s well-received promotion. Three lucky patrons will receive an Apple iPad! To enter, patrons just need to use their library cards. The winners will be selected on October 2.
- The Fall newsletter was completed in early August, and mailed to area homes and businesses on August 21.

Technology

- Mike has been busy preparing for the change in Library open hours. Making new schedules for equipment: i.e. PCs, phone system, voicemail system, PA system, and digital displays all needed changes to allow them to adjust and continue to function in an automated manner, hopefully a seamless transition. (MM)
- Mike has been busy finding a way to make the subscription and invoicing process for our Roku collection more efficient. (MM)

Circulation

- We began giving away foldable flyers to youth who get a library card for the first time. Previously, we were giving away crayons, and we decided it was time for a change.

- We said goodbye to Gail G. at the end of August. We are thankful for her 4 years of service. We will miss her!

Technical Services

- The number of days material waits on the hold shelf has been changed from 7 days to 5 days. This will allow material that is in high demand to move along quicker within the hold process.
- The Sierra software was upgraded to the newest release version 6.0
- This will be my last monthly report. I announced my retirement after 43 years of service. My last day of work will be Friday, August 25 It was a difficult decision but one that needed to be made. I am confident that the department will succeed with the team already in place and that my replacement will be in good hands.

Facilities

- Machine scrubbed main floor tile. RegROUTED and sealed hallway leading to reference.
- Cleaned all high/hard to reach window glass.