
Director's Report

January 2020

Facilities

Bob Roach, the Library's grounds contractor installed drainage improvements along the north and west walls of the Carnegie Building in early January. The Local History Room remained dry until the intense rain storm of Saturday, January 25th. Custodial staff reported water seeped into the room along the north wall. A tour of the exterior on Sunday, January 26th revealed significant run-off on the north side as well as the discovery that the downspout in the NW corner appeared to be filled with debris 2-3' up from where the pipe enters a cast iron pipe buried in the ground. The roofing company that last repaired the Carnegie roof was called, but no one from that company has responded. I contacted Bob Roach, and he examined the site on Wednesday, January 29th, when he discovered that there was evidence of significant water back-up in the new control box that he installed along the west wall in early January. The water line in the box and the mud on the new valves indicated that water was backing up and overflowing- potentially through a cast iron pipe that exits in the control box area. We determined that the first course of action was to remove the blocked downspout section and replace it with temporary piping that directs the water to the northern edge of the property and away from the north wall of the Local History Room. Further work will be done to expose the cast iron pipe to determine the direction it flows. We will then call in a drain clearing service to see if they can identify blockage or breaks in the pipe. Once these steps have been taken, we will work with Bob to restore the landscape on the north side, and we will find a roofing/gutter company to replace the section of the copper downspout that was removed on Friday, January 31st.

During the Monday Morning Training meeting on January 27th, I discovered that the podium in the Community Meeting Room was damaged. Staff could not help me isolate when the damage may have occurred, which may have provided a clue to who was responsible. Jeff Flournoy was able to make temporary repairs to the podium, but the plan is to replace it.

The artist who exhibited in her artwork in January damaged the three walls on the ground floor by using an adhesive to mount her work. Our instructions are clear that artwork should be installed using the hanging system and hooks that we make available. The artist patched the walls, but the repair and paint work will need to be undertaken.

Minerva Parker has been tasked with the responsibility to order replacement office seating for several staff whose desk chairs are no longer functional. One of the broken chairs was still under warranty, and we will receive a partial credit to replace it. A seating inventory for both the public and staff should be undertaken in order to build a plan to replace or re-upholster chairs that are showing significant wear and tear.

Grants

Tracy Dunstan, Head of Reference and Readers' Advisory and I attended the awards event at ArtsWestchester on January 24th to be recognized as a grant award winner for the Black American Culture and Art Series: The Legacy of Toni Morrison.

Aldona Pilmanis, Head of Youth Services, received notice that the grant application she submitted for an Early Learning Spaces Mini Grant was successful. The grant funding through the Ramapo Catskill Library System is made possible by New York State Library's Family Literacy Library Services Grant. Aldona will use the funds to refresh toys for our popular imaginary play area in the Children's Room.

Operations

Due to inclement weather the Library closed early as follows:

- Saturday, January 18 closed at 4:00 pm

Personnel

A candidate for the Children's Librarian position was interviewed on January 29th. Three part-time positions have been posted to replace staff who have resigned or been promoted. The positions include a PT Teen Room Specialist, a CRC clerk and a Circulation Clerk.

The Library offered two staff the opportunity to attend the national Public Library Association meeting this year, but neither staff member accepted. Several Technical Services, Circulation Department and Reference Department staff attended local library association meetings sponsored by either the Library Association of Rockland County or the Ramapo Catskill Library Association.

In keeping with the agreement between the Library and the Staff Association, the joint labor-management Health Advisory Committee continued to meet to analyze and discuss requirements and options and to compare sample health insurance plans.

Programs

I transitioned Program planning and coordination to Sr. Librarian for Programs and Community Engagement, Rosemary Farrell, and Room Reservation services to Information Specialist for Programs, Georgia Grandstaff this month. We met several times to review progress with plans for Spring programs and to review concerns regarding program delivery and promotion. In addition, several staff met to discuss plans for the 2020-21 Carnegie Concert Series and to strategize about the type of artists and music we should include in the series.

The second program in the Black American Culture and Art Series: The Legacy of Toni Morrison took place on Thursday, January 30th. Moderated by Bill Batson, the program focused on African American memorabilia as Cultural Symbols and highlighted the collection of artifacts from the collection of Dr. Cora Wilder. These racist images can be viewed from various lenses, and two professors, Dr. Tracyann Williams and Dr. Lori Martin shared information and fielded questions on their role in American social history as they also discussed more contemporary and related issues and experiences of Black citizens.

Safety

Numerous incidents involving different teens took place in the library during the latter part of January. Staff assisted on numerous occasions with reminding the teens of library rules, and then asking the teens to leave when they would not comply. The volume of incidents propelled me to contact the Nyack School District, the YMCA and the Nyack Center to propose a meeting to share information and strategies with regard to helping the teen successfully navigate public spaces. The meeting took place on January 29th. We look forward to collaborating with these institutions to determine a unified approach to our efforts to serve the youth of Nyack.

Minerva Parker worked with various vendors, IT and Facilities staff to determine the cause and solution for the false building alarms that occurred in late January. We are still waiting for the alarm company to re-program the phone number attached to the alarm communications line to eliminate the problem.

Technology

After consultation with the Circulation Department, in late January I asked the Ramapo Catskill Library System to implement 'enhanced notices' for the Nyack Library. Enhanced notices include the library's logo and other attractive images along with contact information for the library, and they will replace the plain text emails previously sent notifying patrons that books were ready for pickup, or other type of patron account communications.