

Library Director Report June 2023

Anita Marple

Completion of FY23/24 Budget We have reached the finish line with another budget season, and the results of our planning, advocacy, and creative thinking have paid off. I appreciate the Commissioners' unanimous support of the long-term collection development fund plan using unanticipated tax revenues. Beginning the first week of new fiscal year, the library system will enjoy a stable source of funding for collection purchases. The practical effect is that we have sufficient funds for robust purchasing during the first four months of the fiscal year (July-October). Staying up-to-date on new releases will now be easier and meet patron reading and resource needs more efficiently.

A second excellent outcome for our new budget is the approved addition of part time staff for each branch library so that we might offer year-round access on Saturdays. This has been a priority need since the county budget crisis required a reduction in staff three years ago. Not only will Saturdays return to the schedule, but also the opportunity to consider new directions in outreach and community partnerships.

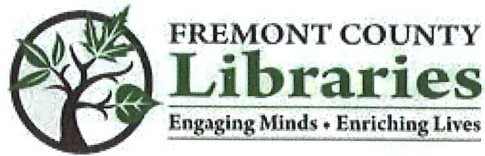
Personnel Update A focused part of my time each week is working closely with Rachel Arnold in her new position as Lander Manager. Rachel is great fit for the position, and we are pursuing a plan for training in new responsibilities and the transition of leadership.

With Rachel Arnold's promotion to Lander Manager beginning June 1 and the retirement of long-time staff member Julie Baehr, I have addressed a library system need in filling the open full-time position. As we head in a new direction to create a more dynamic online presence, I have promoted Kennedy Erhart to the full-time Lander position with an adjustment to her job duties. Beginning July 1, Kennedy will become our website and online content coordinator. She will continue to cover circulation desk duties as all Library Assistants do, and during the remainder of the summer she will continue to lead teen summer reading activities. Her prior position of part-time Youth Services Library Assistant is currently being advertised.

Another position adjustment is to Aubry Ellis's job duties. At the Riverton Branch, Aubry currently is a Youth Services Library Assistant for the teen area, and her additional responsibilities have included graphic design and marketing activities. She will be shifting to a greater focus on marketing and promotion. This change is possible with the addition of new part-time staff positions.

Beginning July 1, we are advertising for the seven 12-hour/week positions, which provide one additional staff member for the Dubois Branch and three additional staff each for the Lander and Riverton libraries.

Website Progress Building our new website has been a slow and steady process. One primary reason for slow progress on the new website has been limited staff time. Because we have a different purpose with the new website, developing it in a focused, systematic way is preferable to rushing a site we are not fully prepared to maintain. With Kennedy's new position,



we have supplied a key element that is necessary to sustaining a quality website. Next steps are prioritizing content projects and creating timelines for production. While Kennedy coordinates production of website content (storytimes, interviews, how-to videos, etc.), many staff will be involved in creating content. I do not have a projected date for going live with the new site. This will be determined after Kennedy, web developer Jason Grubb, and I can meet. In light of all the other changes occurring in the library system right now, I believe a realistic timeframe for this meeting will be the third or fourth week of July.

Marketing & Promotion We have two upcoming promotions to raise awareness for our libraries. The first week of July we will begin distributing book bags with the FCLS logo and the message "FREEDOM" on the front. We have 750 bags to give away (one per family) to library patrons. We are also awaiting delivery of 250 yard signs for library champions to display throughout the county. These promotion efforts are funded by our fabulous FC Library Foundation.

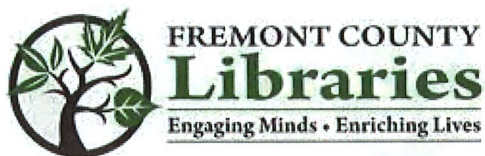
Community Engagement In June I also met with two board members from the Fremont County League of Women Voters to discuss partnership ideas for promoting voter registration in early fall. Last year we partnered with LWV to host candidate forums ahead of the election. Those events were well attended and represent what I believe to be a logical role for the library system—a non-partisan place where ideas are discussed and information shared with the public.

On June 27, Shari and I attended an open house meeting hosted by Riverton leadership at City Hall. The discussion centered on the growing number of incidents related to homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health issues. There was great support for the understaffed Riverton Police Department. There was also a great deal of frustration from business owners and community members who are looking for answers to these complex problems.

Library Family Sad News This past week has been full of sadness since the loss of our maintenance staff star Don Dailey in Dubois. Don was a military veteran, a man who served his community, and a friend to so many. We appreciate the seven years he worked to keep the Dubois Branch Library safe, secure, clean, and beautiful. In recent months he also worked with patrons at the front desk, and he was great with everyone! We will miss him dearly.

We also are supporting staff member Kirbie Despain as her family mourns the loss of her father Richard Kenneth Venzor II. There is a beautiful tribute to him posted on County 10.

Libraries are fundamentally about people. Caring for people, valuing people, helping people. I believe one of the greatest strengths of the Fremont County Library System is the commitment we have to serve each other and every person in our sphere of influence.



Riverton Branch Library & Dubois Branch Library **June 2023**
Shari Haskins, Assistant Library Director

RIVERTON BRANCH LIBRARY

If Mother Nature is our barometer, we wouldn't know it's summer. But summer is warming up; so far our foot traffic in both buildings is up compared to last summer as well as number of participants for our Summer Reading Programs.

Megan, Riverton's summer Intern is brilliant, a top-notch student. One of her hobbies is doing math problems and it's her favorite high school subject, second, you guessed it, science. Andee, from Dubois, is very creative, loves to read. She is going to major in English at UW. Andee educated me about the app, "Webtoon: Chapter by Chapter" this allows small artists and authors to publish on-line without needing Marvel, DC and or Blackhorse, etc. Similarly, A03 (Archive of our Own) is a fan fiction website.

Both Interns are facilitating/teaching the "Walking through Paper Trick" for small kids. They will be creating and implementing other educational programs.

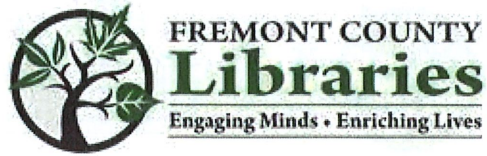
We hired a Summer Page for the Dubois Library. Broderick Martin will be traveling from California to spend July and August in Dubois. We zoomed the interview. Broderick is a voracious reader of historically accurate novels and non-fiction. He is an outside linebacker for his high school football team. He will be a senior. Dubois will have the pleasure of having this young man working at the library July 19th through August. The Dubois Friends of the Library will be paying for this position.

Anita and I were invited to attend the Riverton City Hall Town Meeting on the evening of Tuesday, June 27. Mayor Hancock and Police Chief Eric Hurtado were the facilitators. The community is experiencing an increase in incidents related to unhoused people. Business owners, private residents, and public institutions were asked to share concerns and possible solutions.

Riverton's police department under the best of circumstances has a twenty-officer force. RPD is down seven employees, which leaves thirteen officers to protect a population of 11,000 people. I only have kudos and respect for the officers. They are a reliable ally. The Library has an excellent relationship with the RPD.

Riverton Branch Youth Services Department

June has been a whirlwind in the Youth Services department! Our Wednesday group has already earned two badges, one for Bees and one for kindness week along with decorating their own "scout sash". Our theme is "All Together Now" and they'll continue to earn badges, pins, and create projects all summer long. We also decorated placemats and laminated them for kindness week and these will be taken to our local retirement home.



Teens have been averaging 80-100 book slips entered in the weekly drawing and creating all sorts of fun art projects: String art, Collage Painting, Watercolor, and pixel art using fuse beads. (All following the same theme of "All Together Now" using parts and pieces to make amazing creations)

We would not be able to have such successful events without the help of our newest intern, Megan and our volunteer and well-loved former Y.S. Librarian, Sandi.

Submitted by Aubry Ellis, Youth Services Library Assistant

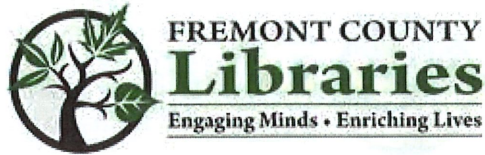
DUBOIS BRANCH LIBRARY

Summer Reading Programs are being well attended and we are continuing to encourage everyone of all ages to sign-up for the Summer Reading Challenges.

Our summer intern Andee Witonski is a welcome addition to our DBL team. She has an amazing skill set for customer service and computers/software. She is a great asset to our children's summer reading programs. The kids just love her! We wish we could keep her. Andee will be starting at UW this fall with a major in computer science.

Submitted by Kathy Gettelman, Dubois Lead Librarian





Lander Library Report June 2023

Rachel Arnold, Lander Manager

Adult Services Department

June is in full swing and the library has been bursting at the seams. The computer lab has been full of patrons almost every day, and many others bring their own devices for internet access.

Displays: Our book displays have been catching the patron's attention. The Route 66 display is still up. Our "BookTok" display is very popular. We are constantly looking online to see what is popular and to replenish what has been checked out. Our summer intern, Theresa Bautz, has come up with our newest display highlighting Independence Day. She has chosen to celebrate it with art and history. We are enjoying her enthusiasm and creativity.

Book Clubs: We met at Sinks Canyon Visitor's Center for the Sinks Canyon Book Club on June 7. Nine people attended, and we had a very lively discussion of *The Feather Thief* by Kirk Wallace Johnson. There were lots of speculation and different perspectives discussed. It was a wonderful time and everyone is looking forward to the next choice.

The Bookies Book Club met June 8 at the Lander Senior Center. We talked about Patti Callahan Henry's *Becoming Mrs. Lewis*. Everyone enjoyed the book and I have had many interactions since then at the library as some members are still thinking about it. It's nice when a book makes an impression! The We Love Jane Austen Books Discussion and Tea Society is taking a break for the summer months.

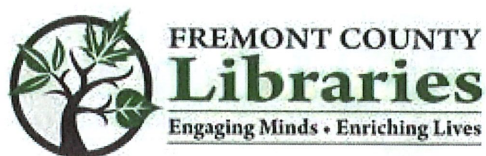
Programs: Summer Reading Program adult punch cards have been flying off the desk. Our first event was June 16 with Audie Cunningham sharing her expertise as an artist. Eleven patrons come out to share a little about themselves through multimedia art, and each creation was as unique as the individual.

Our second event on June 26 was a night of "book tasting" entitled "Vellichor: the scent captured by an old book." There were six different genres to sample throughout the evening: Poetry, Historical Fiction, Literary Fiction, Mystery/Thriller, Fantasy, and Science Fiction. Eight patrons attended. It was a blast! Everyone walked away with new ideas and new thoughts of checking out different kinds of books, which is what we had in mind. New friends were made and minds were open.

I have been learning a lot this first month as the new Lander Manager. I look forward to helping Anita with the things she has had to carry these last few years. We so appreciate your support.

Youth Services Department

Summer Reading Program A total of 239 children and 28 teens have signed up so far for the Summer Reading Program. Two children and four teens have already completed their reading logs and earned prizes.



Teen Book Boxes Eighteen teens registered for the trial three-month book subscription service. Kennedy put together boxes that contained two library books personally recommended based on answers teens supplied on the questionnaire and some small trinkets. The teens were so excited to open their first boxes and see what was inside. Kennedy has received multiple rave reviews of the selections. After a month, the teens return their box to receive their next personalized reading material.

Baby Sitter Training Retired County Health Nurse, Jan Hubanka, conducted a babysitter training workshop for teens on June 20th. Training included information on child development, basic first aid, etc. Sixteen teens participated and earned their certificate of completion.

CanTeen Weekly Events Activities for Teens this month included painting bookends and decorating cupcakes. Kennedy teamed up with the Animal Shelter to find out about animals currently up for adoption and the teens drew/painted/colored portraits which will be displayed to help publicize these animals' needs. Kennedy also teamed up with Sinks Canyon State Park employee, Jessica Moore, who ran a program where teens made ecosystem crafts. Forty-two teens attended programs this month.

Children's Weekly Events Weekly children's programs this month included making sun prints, food science, and playing board games. The sun prints are now on display in the Children's area. Scout River Drum Circle visited on June 21st and gave a great program of music combined with answering lots of questions about drum circles. A total of 137 patrons attended these four events.

Chess Program Drop-in chess matches for youth are available every Thursday at 4 pm. Kirk Norman is volunteering his time to be available at that time to help kids learn the game.

Summer Pre-K Visit The Summer School readiness program for kids entering kindergarten visited on June 15th. The kids enjoyed stories and touring the library. A total of thirty-two attended in two different sessions.

Story Time Dance Party Our Story Time Dance Party on June 16th had a dress-up theme. Seventeen attended and danced enthusiastically in costumes ranging from princesses to pirates.

Lander Children's Museum Donation

The Lander Children's Museum is closing and distributing their materials. They donated several large totes full of STEAM activities. We are working to process these items so they can be checked out by the public.

StoryWalk The first temporary StoryWalk was installed along the periphery of library property. StoryWalks are designed to be family-friendly outdoor literacy experiences. Pages from a children's book are displayed on signs. Families enjoying a walk or bike ride can read the story as they move from sign to sign. This month's story is *Duck on a Bike* by David Shannon. The plan is to install a new story next month. If these stories are well-received, we will pursue partnerships with other local organizations to install more permanent StoryWalks in other locations.

Submitted by Tamara Anderson, Youth Services Lead Librarian