

Beyond a Physical Building

By Paulina Poplawska, Library Director

When I embarked on the road to public librarianship a lot of moons ago, I didn't think that the future held closing a public library to its people, the public. Our patrons. Our community gathering space. For the safety and well-being of library workers and the community we serve we closed to protect individuals from exposure.

Libraries have always prided themselves on being there during the most difficult times. We are often the only institutions to remain open. Yet, these are unprecedented times for us.

We are currently working on the best way to provide library services to our community, and our patrons when we re-open so we can keep both patrons and staff safe. Next time you're in, please follow the procedures at the library as we work to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Libraries are about people and that doesn't change whether we are open or closed. It's those who serve and those who are served by library services. It is not the building that we normally serve from nor the physical items that we circulate. We still have a responsibility as public librarians to help you our patrons seek knowledge and social gathering wherever you may be.

Our public wi-fi is available and open anytime you would like to use it from the parking lot. Some spots are a little better than others. Feel free to sit on a bench or in your car and utilize it anytime you would like, while observing social distancing, whether it's in the morning or late at night.

Currently, on our Facebook page, our Youth Services Librarian is providing storytimes two to three times per week. Check out Miss Kathryn on Facebook. We have Lego Challenges. The CBI – Cat Book Detectives made their debut on April 2 providing Reader's Advisory on the last three titles you've read. It'll be available on Thursdays from 1-4 p.m. on Facebook while we are closed then once a month when we reopen. We are cooking more than normal too (are you as well?) and hope to share with you what recipes we're utilizing from cookbooks around the house. It's also National Poetry Month this month. We hope you share with us your favorite poems and what you've been up to as well.

Besides Overdrive e-books that are currently available to you at this time, we also have Ancestry available to our patrons offsite for a limited time. As you know, the service is usually in library use only. ProQuest, Ancestry's parent company, has enabled us to use it while we are closed. To log in, you use the same password you use to access Overdrive. You can access it through the library's catalog Encore found at <http://tds-mt.iii.com/iii/encore> at on the bottom right under Library Links. If you have any questions, please send me an email at ppoplawska@tds.lib.mn.us

If you're on social media, our most up to date information is on Facebook. There is a staff member available Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. if you'd like to give us a call at 507-359-8331. You can always shoot us an e-mail as well.

As always, we look forward to seeing you in the library, safe and healthy, soon!