

Making the best of what we have now.

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Patience is not a strength of mine. I know most of you who have been in the children's room might disagree with that statement. I have been blessed with an unbelievable amount of patience for children. That is a blessing for someone in my professional position. So I guess rephrasing the statement to "I'm not really good at waiting" would be a more accurate. Most days, I want what I want and I want it now.

This is the time of year that my article would inform you of our plans for the summer reading program. Unfortunately, I can't do that this year. Like all of you, I am waiting to see how and when we will be able to re-open. So much of what we usually do for the program is in person in the library. And that does not appear to be something we will be able to this summer. So how is this year's summer reading program, "Imagine Your Story," going to work? Let me tell you what I do know right now.

Let's get the bad news out of the way first. We know that we will not be meeting at the library and hanging out in any size of group. So, no in-house programming for crafts, themed projects, or presentation and performances. We will not be able to have a kick-off party. We will not be signing anyone up for the program and handing out reading records, but we were going to move away that type of model this year anyway. At this point I am not sure how we are going to allow participants to pick up their free book. Sounds bleak, right?

Not so fast! Here is what we are going to be able to do. We will be tracking our book circulation, which is the number of books checked out of the library. This means that the whole community is going to help us work towards our circulation goal. We will have a visual meter for this at the circulation desk. We are going to help Jack climb the beanstalk each week during summer reading. If we hit our goal, we are hoping to buy something cool for the children's room and the young adult areas of the library. Each time you check out books you will get to cast your vote. We will be doing so much of our programming online, so that you can join us. This includes story time, themed projects and Lego challenges, and our musical performance by the Jolly Pops. Every week we will have a craft or project for you to pick-up to take home and make. Instructions will be included, but you can also tune in at a specific time to make the craft or project with a presenter. These videos will be posted on the library's Facebook page or aired on the NUCAT channel, or maybe both. We want to reach as many of our patrons as we can. We are hoping to have a city-wide scavenger hunt and a story walk. I am currently working on an online book review form that families can fill-out and then be entered to win a prize. Prizes this year will be gift cards to New Ulm shops in support of our community.

It's going to be quite a change for us this summer, both at the library and in our community. I think with patience, love, and kindness we can still have fun and make this a great summer of making the best of what we have now.