



Book Report

AUGUST 2020  VOLUME XVIII

The New Now for Library Programs

The Coronavirus epidemic shows no signs of abating, so Johnson County Library has made the prudent and responsible decision to conduct only online programs and events through the end of 2020.

Already, online Storytimes and Book Parties have generated positive audience reaction and have attracted new participants who couldn't attend in person, including from states like Texas and Washington and even from as far away as Russia. Those offerings will continue, while other programming will be enhanced and expanded through the fall.

"Patrons have responded very well," said Events Producer Joseph Keehn. "We have a robust set of offerings and from anecdotal stories we are getting good reviews."

Shannon Goebel, youth information specialist at Lenexa City Center and

a member of the programming team, said response this summer has been encouraging, with good attendance and reviews for Librarians, and especially for programs featuring Jim "Mr. Stinky Feet" Cosgrove and illustrator Charlie Mylie.



Storytime on Zoom with Librarian Christine Peterson

"Part of why I think this summer has been successful is our awesome presenters that have been willing to work with us and try new things," Goebel said.

An all-day virtual event celebrating young people and Summer Reading success is scheduled Aug. 8. It will feature various workshops, an announcement of the writing contest winner, and a panel of authors who write for teens.

For the fall, programming is being specifically designed with online audiences in mind, with an emphasis on topics of particular importance in 2020: elections and race relations.

Civic Engagement Librarian Ashley Fick said the Library plans to host a virtual watch party for the first Presidential debate and possibly later ones as well. Civics 101 programming will provide information about the Electoral College and other essentials of knowledgeable voting. More information will be on the Library website.

In addition, events that have traditionally drawn large crowds in the fall will now be reimagined. The annual Writers Conference for adults, usually held at Central, will be offered online Nov. 14. And the annual Women & Money Day is being rebranded as WoMen & Money, geared to both women and men, with an online kickoff Oct. 3.

See Related Article.

Programming team members are excited about the recent acquisition of On24, a digital experience platform that is described as a "virtual building," with interactive events online. It's already used by big corporations but Johnson County Library is believed to be one of its earliest Library adapters.

"I think it's absolutely going to be a game changer," Goebel said, adding that it's user-friendly and flexible. "It essentially creates a conference-type environment, virtually. You can enter different rooms."

It has numerous engagement tools that individual participants can select, and the Library can do its own branding.

Sarah Askew, adult information specialist at Lenexa, is also on the programming team and did a lot of the staff training to prepare for online programming. She said training went very well and she too is enthusiastic about On24.

Askew said Library staff strived to be very strategic with this fall's programming, in bringing back Book Clubs in some capacity and providing crucial information on elections, race relations, and careers and personal financing.

"Here we are," she said. "These are services people will need."

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BRANCHING OUT

Johnson County Library's 'Virtual Branch'

Johnson County Library normally thrives with 14 branch locations that feature close-knit staffs offering in-person services and programs.

However, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the public closure of those buildings in mid-March, it was the catalyst for a new type of Library branch that could still serve patrons at a critical time.

"It was apparent we needed to find ways to provide access. We knew that we are the place a lot of people go for their information, so how did we continue that safely and with the technology we had in place?" recalls Adult Services Manager Kinsley Riggs, who serves as a leader on the team figuring out those solutions.

It meant answering all the emailed and telephone questions pouring in from patrons and creating online programming to replace in-person events.

"That's the work of our virtual branch," Riggs says. "Really, how do we provide public service virtually when we can't meet people in person?"

Youth Services Manager Angel Tucker, another leader of the virtual branch, says that after part-time workers were furloughed in April, she and Riggs created guides for full-time staff, working from home, to still serve patrons.

"We created documentation for folks to understand that we're in this new environment, what work can you do? Work with your manager and use this work plan as a tool," Tucker said.



Information Services Manager Kinsley Riggs, l, and Youth Services Manager Angel Tucker, r.

Riggs praised the Reference Librarians, IT department and others for getting those "virtual branch" Answers and Telephone Reference services up and running. Staff answered thousands of email and telephone questions. In May alone, the Library had 1,587 Answers tickets, compared to just 374 in May 2019.

In the past, a core team handled Answers and T-REF. "With the Virtual Branch, we said let's have everybody contribute," Riggs recalls, adding that about 60 people are now trained. It's worked well, and Riggs says those functions probably won't ever be completely siloed again.

In one dramatic example, Youth Librarian Erica Voell was inundated with more than 100 emailed questions on a recent Sunday afternoon. She appealed for help from colleagues, who pitched in quickly to whittle down the queue. "She emailed us to say how impressed she was with the teamwork that had been displayed," Tucker said.

With in-person branch services still limited, the Library also sought a new way to distribute summer books, at 20 different locations. "We're learning a lot," Tucker said, "and we'll meet with those community partners at the end of the summer to figure out what worked, what didn't, so in

the future we can potentially always have an outreach approach to book distribution."

One big positive is how the virtual branch has brought the adult and youth services teams even closer together. While the buildings were closed, staff held large Zoom meetings with everyone participating remotely, sharing insights and information.

"This virtual space has allowed a collaboration in a new way," Tucker said.

It's been eye-opening how flexible and creative everyone is, and it's likely to inform the way they work far into the future, Riggs said. "The world in general is on this rollercoaster right now," Riggs said. "It's been really tough on people, and overwhelmingly they've come together in a tremendous way to support one another the best they can, without being side by side."



TOP E-HOLDS



AUGUST 2020

- ◉ **The Vanishing Half** by Brit Bennett
- ◉ **The Guest List** by Lucy Foley
- ◉ **Big Summer** by Jennifer Weiner
- ◉ **Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man** by Mary L. Trump
- ◉ **White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk to White People About Racism** by Robin J. DiAngelo
- ◉ **The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir** by John R. Bolton
- ◉ **Camino Winds** by John Grisham
- ◉ **The Hate U Give** by Angie Thomas
- ◉ **Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You** by Jason Reynolds

PATRON SPOTLIGHT

Patron finds Career Value at Johnson County Library

Fran Eaks has lived in Merriam for about 13 years and would occasionally visit the Antioch Library branch. But she wasn't a frequent Library user and didn't give it much thought.

Then she began a job search earlier this year, right about the time that the COVID-19 pandemic was hitting the area. A friend recommended she look into Johnson County Library's resources.

She took that advice and found a whole series of worthwhile programs under the Library website's Career and Finance section.

She signed up for five different online classes, all offered by veteran Kansas City career consultant Karen Silins, owner of A-Plus Career & Resume LLC.

They covered topics like the self-directed job search, career exploration and transition, how to do an Internet job search, and how to write a powerful resume and cover letter.

Participants would receive an outline and materials a day ahead of time, and each session was about 90 minutes online.

"A couple of them have been super helpful," Eaks said of the classes. "The thing that's been most helpful to me is finding websites to explore." She thought the self-directed job search advice was particularly useful and discovered many more online tools than she realized existed, including how to research an employer before an interview.

Silins provides guidance on how job seekers can figure out their strengths and identify skills that are transferable from one career to another. She also discusses resume dos and don'ts. "If you haven't written one in a while, it's good to have that," Eaks noted, adding that Silins presented the material in a clear and interesting way that made sense.

The classes were on Zoom, so participants needed a camera-enabled computer. The Library also recorded the

presentations and posted them online, and Eaks appreciated the chance to go back and review one of the classes again.

"I'm all about drilling down into these things and getting more information," she said. "This has been an information-seeking process for me, seeing what all is out there. You get tips for what to do and what you shouldn't do."

The sessions were moderated by Dylan Reiter of Johnson County Library, and Eaks said he did an excellent job, introducing and helping to coordinate the classes. Participants could ask questions anonymously via the "chat" function and Eaks said Silins did a good job of answering everyone's questions. "It was all free of charge and I would certainly recommend it," she said.

Eaks hasn't yet found the job of her dreams but says the classes were well worth her time. "It's definitely educated me on what you need to look at," she said, "and what you need to consider when you are looking for a job these days."

This career search has also reminded Eaks that Johnson County Library has many other worthwhile materials and resources, both for education and enjoyment. She now receives the Library's regular email updates and appreciates seeing the broad menu of choices available.

"It's something that does appeal," she said of the Library as a community asset. "I think I'll always keep an eye on what they have going on."



Library user, and Women and Money fan, Fran Eaks.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

eResources Librarian Brings eWorld to Your Fingertips

When Hope Harms began her working life in a small-town Missouri Library, one of her most memorable experiences was helping an elderly patron who had never used a computer learn to connect with a long-distance friend via email.

Now, as Johnson County's eResources Librarian, she helps patrons access a vast array of online materials, educational services and databases.

In the arc of Harms' Library career, that's consistently been one of the most gratifying results. She loves connecting people to a world at their fingertips, in so many ways that enrich their lives. And never has that role been more important than during the Coronavirus pandemic.

"I think of myself as the primary nurturer and cheerleader of digital access to information that we can provide from the Library," said Harms, who has been eResources Librarian since October 2017. "Never has it felt so needed. And I do think it's appreciated."

Total eResource use skyrocketed after the pandemic shutdown. Axis 360 eBook weekly checkouts jumped from 6,000 in early March to nearly 12,000 by mid-April. Total weekly eBook + eAudiobook checkouts in Axis 360 surpassed 17,500 by mid-April. Weekly video streaming views rose from about 600 in early March to more than 2,500 by April 19.

The work was always intense, but since the pandemic Harms' role has been even more profound. "Everything is on steroids," she said.

She praises her collection development team colleagues for quickly pivoting to acquire more eBooks and e-audio materials. She personally has worked hard to make sure the Axis 360 platform operates as intended. She also oversees traditional research databases and eLearning resources and she's worked closely with the Library's

Communications team to make sure patrons know what's available.

Part of her job is negotiating with vendors to enhance offerings to patrons stuck at home. "I started having a lot of really quick and frank conversations with our vendors, and I will say most of our vendors have been very accommodating," she said.

In recent months the Library has dramatically expanded its eMagazine offerings. It enhanced the Kanopy video streaming service. In June, Harms helped launch Udemy, a video-based tech, business, design and hobby learning platform.

Harms is particularly pleased that the Library version of Ancestry.com, normally available just in Library buildings, is temporarily available to people at home, with their Library card, of course.

Harms has enjoyed helping patrons ever since she worked at the Sullivan,

MO Library on breaks from Truman State. After college, she and her husband moved to Johnson County, where he got a job at Garmin and she was hired as an Antioch Library page in 2009. She obtained a Library Science master's degree from Emporia State and worked as an information specialist at Central and on the Library web team before assuming her current role.

Harms appreciates her Library colleagues, especially front-line customer service workers, and is invigorated by her job's challenges.

"There is never a dull moment," she said. "I feel like this is a place where I can really try my chops at a lot of troubleshooting."

The pandemic has changed everything but has also accentuated the value of Libraries. "It's been fun to see people bring the Library home in new ways. We're right there with you," she said. "The Library is still alive and kicking, more so than ever."



Hope Harms, Library Collections Specialist, at Central Library.

EVENTS SPOTLIGHT

'Careers' a Library Mainstay during COVID

For many years, Johnson County Library has had robust programming, all free of charge, to support job seekers and people interested in personal finance and financial literacy.

The organization really beefed up its offerings during the 2008 recession, and Marty Johannes, longtime Career and Personal Finance Librarian, well remembers how important those services were in helping people navigate tough economic times.

Now, during the Coronavirus pandemic, JCL is again rising to the occasion, with online events geared to people's career needs during a new era of economic uncertainty. The Library contracts with two experienced career consultants who normally provide in-person workshops with lots of advice about the career search, resume writing, interviewing and networking.

When everything moved online in May, Johannes was delighted that those consultants – Karen Silins, owner of A-Plus Career & Resume LLC, and Efen Mojica, founder of All About You Consulting – could adapt to these challenging times and present on Zoom.

"Actually, both had experience doing online programs," Johannes said. "They are experienced speakers and they know their topic inside and out." Registrations spiked in June, once the marketing department highlighted these offerings. Johannes counts a total of 85 attendees to the live online presentations.

Anne Amoury of Leawood took Silins' June class on career exploration and found it to be really helpful in explaining different job boards and career search approaches.

"There's no sales pitch which is such a relief," Amoury said. "She's funny and she knows her stuff. I got a lot out of it." Amoury was interested in checking out the Library's other career classes as well. The programs are recorded and posted to be viewed later, further expanding the audience.

Johannes spoke to one participant who was surprised and grateful that the Library offers the service online. "He shared that he had been laid off by Sprint and wasn't having any luck finding a job. It was humiliating for him to go to in-person programs, but he was thrilled he could benefit from these without having to walk into the room," Johannes said. "We are reaching people we would not have been reaching before. There's a silver lining."

Women & Money Day is also a popular annual offering, done in partnership with Topeka-based Housing & Credit Counseling Inc. That program is also being adapted to an online world in 2020.

"We've retitled it to WoMen & Money," Johannes said. "So for the first time, in the midst of COVID, and also acknowledging that men can benefit from all this great financial information as



A popular 2019 Women and Money Day at JCL.

well as women, we decided to expand it to include men as well."

Instead of hosting a daylong event, the Library will provide several presentations. It will kick off Saturday Oct. 3, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m., with keynote speaker Carol Kando-Pineda, counsel to the Business Education Division with the Federal Trade Commission in Washington DC. She will host a discussion about scams and fraud, which have skyrocketed during the pandemic.

The kickoff will be followed by WoMen & Money Mondays, starting Oct. 5 with a presentation about investing and investment fraud by the Kansas Securities Commission staff. More information about registering will soon be available on the Johnson County Library website.



Marty Johannes, Reference Librarian who organizes JCL Career and Finance programs.



Karen Silins, who consults with JCL on Career and Finance programs.

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

Social Media Highlights

facebook

Johnson County Library - KS
July 22 at 8:00 AM · 

Join us for a YA Fantasy Author panel with Roseanne Brown, Dhonielle Clayton, Sarah Henning, Tessa Gratton, and Elizabeth C. Bunce, moderated by Megan Bannen!

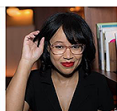
This event will be online, on August 8 at 3 pm. Register at the link below to receive a free book while supplies last!

Register here: <https://jocolibrary.bibliocommons.com/.../5f0cd800f2b01f45008...>

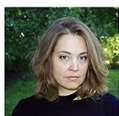
Roseanne Brown



Elizabeth Bunce



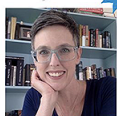
Dhonielle Clayton



Tessa Gratton



Sarah Henning



Megan Bannen

Imagine Your Story:

online

YA Fantasy Author Panel

Saturday, Aug. 8 • 3-5 pm

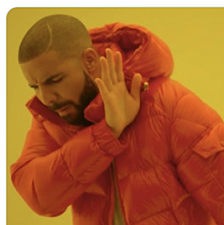
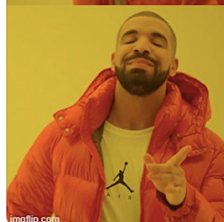
YA Fantasy Author Panel (marketing for the program on 8/8) - <https://www.facebook.com/JoCoLibrary/photos/a.379118417998/10158410289307999/?type=3&theater> 2.5k reach

Search Twitter

Johnson Co. Library
@jocolibrary

We are currently quarantining returned items for 72 hours before we check them in.

That means when you return items, you'll still see them on your account for 72 hours or a bit more, but don't worry - we will backdate your items to the correct date once we check them in.

Worrying
my items
will be overdueKnowing
they'll be backdated
correctly
after quarantine

1:11 PM · Jul 1, 2020 · Twitter Web App

We're quarantining items - <https://twitter.com/jocolibrary/status/1278390691639578625> - 200 reactions on Twitter, lots of "thank you"s & happy reactions

Search Twitter

Johnson Co. Library
@jocolibrary

Johnson County Library will reopen all 14 of its branches to the public on Monday, June 15 with limited services.

More information, including our FAQ, can be found here > jocolibrary.org/our-stories/al...


All branches OPEN June 15

SERVICES AVAILABLE:

- Holds pick up
- Material return
- Quick browsing
- Self-check of materials
- Public computers (one hour per day limit)
- Self-service printing and faxing

Masks are strongly encouraged, and additional safety measures will be implemented.

JOHNSON COUNTY Library

5:48 PM · Jun 5, 2020 · Twitter Web App

We're reopening! <https://twitter.com/jocolibrary/status/1269038488927850497> - 150 reactions on Twitter

Caitlin's Favorite Cookbooks

Johnson County Library - KS was live.
17 hrs · Caitlin's favorite cookbooks book party on facebook live
https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=293109448634478&ref=watch_permalink - 2k reach

As you can see by these posts,
the Johnson County library
system continues to thrive even
in these difficult times!
Thank you for your support!



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AUGUST 2020 VOLUME XVII

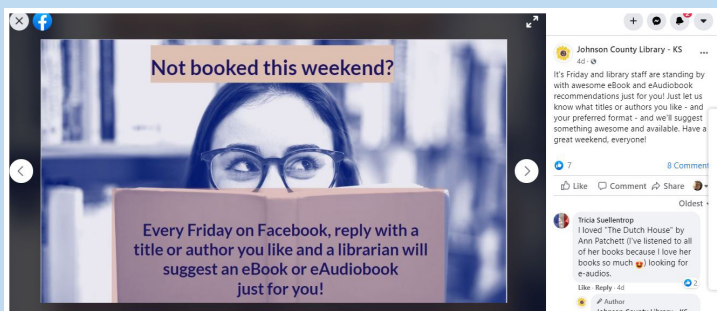
Month in Review JULY 2020



MakerSpace and microbit with Maker host Nick Ward-Bopp



Book Party theme - Mysteries! with your host Bet Mercer



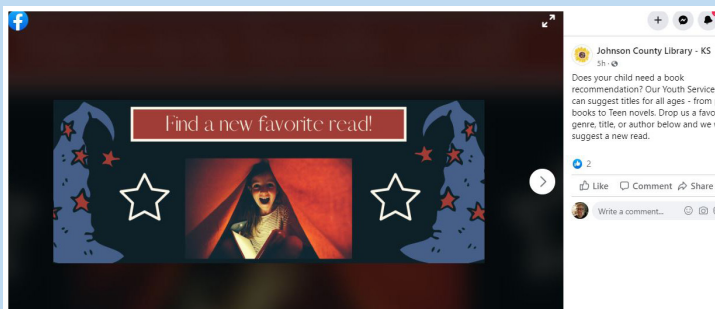
Find a good read with help from a Librarian



MakerSpace is at home in the digital sphere.



Online Storytime on Facebook Live



Youth Services Book Party!

NEXT ISSUE



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- Branching Out:** Oak Park Library
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- Staff Spotlight:** Abby Minard, InterLibrary Loan

JOHNSON COUNTY KANSAS Library

BOOK REPORT

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