

# ANNUAL REPORT

Providing  
equal access to  
quality resources  
for personal  
empowerment  
and community  
enrichment.

Adopted by the Board of  
Trustees, January 2020



## INSIDE THE REPORT

### PG. 2

New Integrated Library System  
improves online catalog

### PG. 3

Providing creative services during a  
pandemic to engage patrons

### PG. 4

Quick view of Library statistics

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Coming off the excitement from reopening the Morningside Branch Library after its extensive renovation, we turned our focus to strategic planning. In June 2019, Sioux City Public Library conducted a community survey regarding library services. The Library's Leadership Team and Board of Trustees reviewed the feedback as well as metro demographic data and identified Access, Inclusion, Adequate Staffing, Technology, Literacy, and Community Partnerships as focus areas forming the foundation for the new strategic plan. This plan was completed in December along with a new mission statement.

Next, the Sioux City Public Library's state accreditation was due. We are happy to report the Library has met the conditions as outlined in the *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Standards, Sixth Edition*, and achieved accreditation for the next three years. As an accredited library, Sioux City Public Library is recognized for efforts in all areas of library operations including governance and funding, staffing, library collection, services, public relations, access, and facilities.

With a concentrated effort guided by the strategic plan to continually enhance library services, Sioux City Public Library was on track to welcome more visitors to our locations this year than we have the past two years. Many services also showed growth. To improve the user experience with our online catalog, staff identified a new integrated library system and began migrating to Polaris early in the calendar year. You can read more about this change on page two of this annual report.

On March 17, all locations of the Library closed to the public in an effort to help flatten the curve of the COVID-19 virus in Sioux City. The closure brought most of our services and activities to a halt and greatly impacted projected uses of library resources. Luckily, no staff was furloughed.

The Library began a phased plan for reopening, starting with contactless curbside pickup on June 15 at our Perry Creek Branch. The curbside service proved popular with patrons. On July 6, the Morningside Branch reopened to the public with limited services and hours and brought us into the second phase of reopening. The Library remains at Phase Two at the time of this annual report.

*Helen Rigdon*

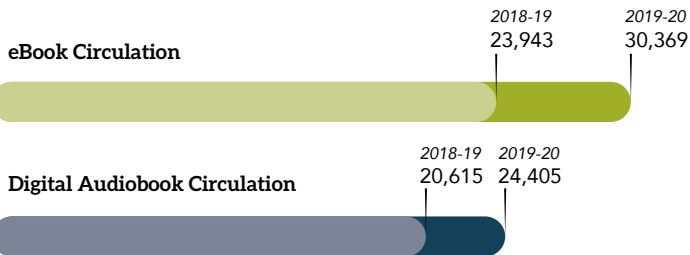
Helen Rigdon, Library Director

# NEW CATALOG SYSTEM

After more than a year of research, Sioux City Public Library went live on April 28 with the Polaris Integrated Library System (ILS). Polaris replaces Horizon, which had been the Library's ILS for 20+ years. The change provides long-awaited user-experience improvements for the Library's online catalog, as well as work efficiencies for staff.

The day it launched, the first patron comment came through Facebook exclaiming, "And it's mobile-friendly!!! Awesome!"

Among other benefits, Polaris also features more relevant search results, one-click requests that process holds without leaving search results, previews for some books before requesting to check them out, and the ability to text a call number to yourself for searching the stacks in-person.



## RECORD BREAKING

While overall circulation fell -21.9%, in part due to a temporary system-wide closure from March through June, digital checkouts continue to increase. **Ebook checkouts increased by 6,426, and downloadable audiobooks by 3,790**, both setting new records.



## TECHNOLOGY

New to the youth computer area at the Aalfs Downtown Library is an AWE Learning Computer. Purchased for \$3,171, the AWE Learning Computer is easy for young patrons to use and to play learning games that teach STEM in a fun and engaging way. It also takes the guesswork out of which websites are safe for children to visit, a benefit favored by parents and caregivers.

After installment in early December, the small conference room at the Downtown Library now offers audio-visual equipment thanks to funding from the Friends of the Library. The technology includes a 65" QLED TV, DVD player, and soundbar with the ability to connect laptops as well as Apple and Android mobile devices. The enhanced collaborative experience supports educational presentations by groups using the meeting space.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Sioux City Public Library held a series of Community Conversations through the winter months, co-hosting them with Connections Area Agency on Aging. The free programs brought 33 people to learn about navigating choices for a continuum of care, procedures for establishing substitute decision-making mechanisms, and avoiding senior targeted scams. Siouxland area experts in each topic lead the conversations to educate and empower attendees.

Each fall, National Public Radio (NPR) adds their favorite books, formed by suggestions from trusted critics, to its "Book Concierge," an annual, interactive, year-end reading guide. NPR linked three of Sioux City Public Library's *Check It Out* segments to its 2019 "Book Concierge." *Check It Out* is co-produced with Siouxland Public Media and offers reading recommendations for listeners tuned in to KWIT-KOJI.

## SUMMER READING

Necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the youth Summer Reading Program became a hybrid between a take-home kit and the free Beanstack mobile app to track reading goals and weekly challenges. **788 participants signed up and logged 71,992 minutes of reading, with the youngest participants logging 3,377 books.** They also earned 1,193 badges for milestones recorded with Beanstack.

Participation grew in the adult Summer Reading Program, where 72 participants used the Beanstack platform to track reading progress and logged 54,239 minutes. **Adults earned 375 badges for reaching milestones, an increase of 155 Summer Reading interactions** by active participants from last year.

“And it’s mobile-friendly!!!  
Awesome!”  
– Hannah

## CREATIVE DURING A PANDEMIC

Sioux City Public Library closed system-wide between March 17 and June 15, 2020, as part of local efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. During that time, library staff found creative ways to engage with patrons:

- **Library Storytime began streaming live on March 18** through the Library’s Facebook page and each Wednesday following. Special lenience from publishers allowed for Storytime to adapt to this format, reaching early readers at home. The streamed events averaged 13 virtual attendees.
- **Librarians recorded a series of YouTube tutorials** to assist patrons with getting started and accessing the Library’s collection of ebooks and digital audiobooks through the Libby app. More than 100 viewers watched the tutorials.
- **Episodes of Reference Roundtable began streaming live** on March 23. The open discussion about good (and bad) books, favorite genres, films, and more between librarians and viewers quickly gained a dedicated audience. Episodes averaged 358 unique viewers as well as 154 engagements.
- **Open Book Club adapted to discussions via Zoom.** Talks with the 14 attendees in June focused on themes, rather than single books, accommodating limited means to borrow titles while the Library was closed.
- **The Library scheduled its first contactless curbside pickup appointment** on June 15. In preparation, staff contacted nearly 300 patrons system-wide with holds on materials from before the closure to schedule appointments. In just 14 days, those patrons who still wanted their holds and patrons who placed new holds after the Library “opened” for curbside filled 284 appointments in June and an additional 83 out into July.



In October, the Library added more Outreach Storytimes and Book Van deliveries to our schedule. **Approximately 840 children are reached through 41 storytimes in a month**, and 400 items are delivered every three weeks via our Book Van service.



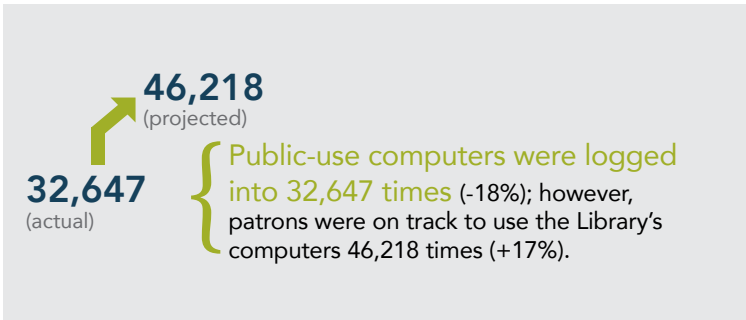
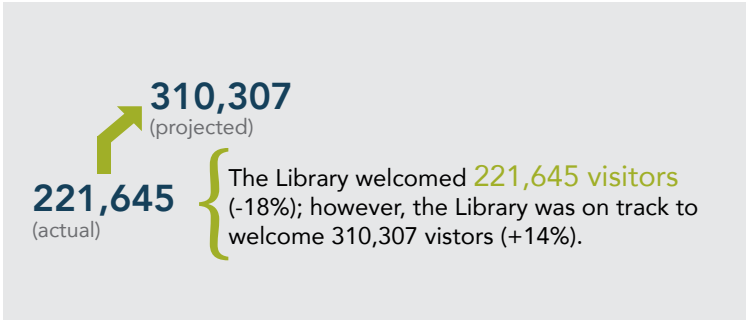
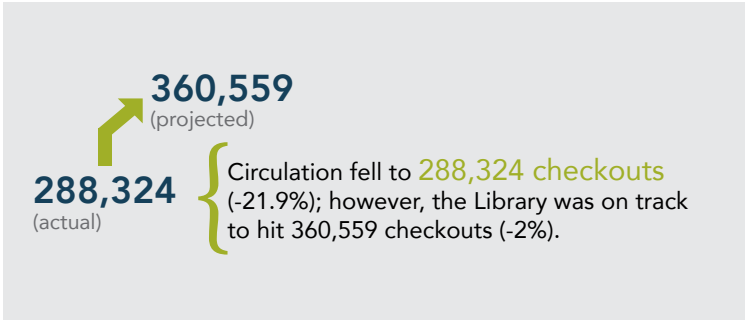
The Library began sending NextReads eNewsletters with genre-specific reading recommendations to subscribers in March. Between the number of newsletters and subscribers, **just over 1,500 emails are sent each month.**



**Patrons connected to the Library’s WiFi 136,354 times.** Even while fully closed for 3½ months, the 41% increase over last year shows the importance of this service to our patrons.



# Actual numbers and projected numbers show the impact closing due to COVID-19 had on the Library's statistics for 2019-2020.



**1,348 community uses** (+16%) of our public meeting spaces. This increase, even following the Library's 3 ½ month closure, shows the value patrons see in the additional meeting spaces at the Morningside Branch Library.



The Library now holds **168,168 physical books and recordings** in three locations.

- 11,004 new items added
- 26,677 outdated or damaged items withdrawn



The Library holds **90,928 downloadable materials**, a 21% increase in the amount of downloadable materials the Library held at the end of last year.

## BUDGET SUMMARY

Operating Budget (Not Audited)

**\$3,189,537** City Adjusted Budgeted Amount

### Expenditures:

\$2,307,654 Personnel  
 \$256,276 Materials  
 \$482,028 Building/Operations/Equipment

### Revenue:

\$57,999 Fines/Fees Collected

### Gifts and Grants Received:

\$81,296 Library Foundation Endowment  
 \$5,749 Gleeson Book Fund  
 \$52,935 Friends of the Sioux City Public Library  
 \$29,830 State of Iowa Funds  
 \$3,145 Other

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### President:

Todd Stanley

### Vice President:

Hope Schaefer

### Secretary:

Charles (Bill) McKenny

### Trustees:

Andrew Clausen  
 Heidi Reinking  
 Genevieve Radosti  
 Jane Vereen