



2020 annual report

from the **director**

What a year 2020 was for all of us. Together, we struggled to stay safe, connected and healthy. I am proud that Wheaton Public Library (WPL) worked closely with the City, schools and businesses by serving as a lifeline to provide virtual library services such as reference, storytimes, digital content, economic relief resources, webinars, Zoom programs, childcare and literacy tools and so much more while the Library doors were closed. As we slowly reopened, I was even more proud of how resilient the staff was in returning to work and how strongly they came together to build a Curbside and Grab & Go service that was able to successfully serve you safely, both inside and outside the Library.

This summer, we saw protests right outside the Library in our parking lot as well as Adams Park. Aligning with our mission statement that WPL is a welcoming destination, we offered and continue to offer several virtual programs focusing on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. Wheaton was also hit with a strong derecho storm, which evolved into a tornado that touched down on the west side of the Library building. Thankfully, the damage was minor and everyone remained safe.

During November and December, the City Council and Library Board of Trustees supported an interior remodel project that allowed for us to create better socially distanced public and office spaces. The project also allowed for public service desks to be

equipped with safeguards to protect the staff when needed. Visitors will see the changes in full completion in February 2021.

I would be remiss to not remember the first quarter of 2020 before the world shut down. We had a great time partnering with the Wheaton Park District for the Library's first after-hours fundraiser, Mad Fore Plaid. We also were a successful grant recipient of a federal grant of \$10,000 to help shape Wheaton with the 2020 U.S. Census effort. Most importantly, we were proud to launch a new upgraded library catalog system called Polaris. Polaris gives Library users the simplest way to access and enjoy our collections.

It is with great pride that I present this remarkable 2020 Annual Report. I look at it with hope and excitement because I, along with the Library staff and Board members, plan to build on our 2020 successes as we shape the Library's future. Remember, my door is always open for you to share with me your thoughts, concerns or suggestions.

Betsy Adamowski, Executive Library Director



mission statement

Wheaton Public Library is a welcoming destination that connects the community to literacy, information, ideas and experiences. Grow with us!

Board of Directors

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year highlights

Hosted the Library's first afterhours fundraising event, **Mad Fore Plaid**, in partnership with the Wheaton Park District

Launched **Polaris**, a Library Integrated System

In response to Covid, developed a **Virtual Library** for all ages which includes reference, programming, online learning, library card registration, virtual reader's advisory, and more

Opened **library card registration** for all community members to access all virtual and digital content that is offered.

Developed a **Curbside Service** for material returns and pickups

Focused on **education & discussion** of topics such as health/pandemic, challenges of remote schooling, the election, and race & diversity was increased to meet the needs of the community during a pandemic

Developed **Take & Make Kits** for Teen and Youth populations

Opened the Library with reduced hours for a **Grab & Go** operation

Approved an **Interior COVID Alterations Construction and Furniture Project**

Was awarded a **\$10,000 grant** to promote and develop **Census materials and equipment** to help ease the Census process for all residents

Created **10 circulating STEAM Kits** for youth & teens from a **\$1,700 grant** from the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Chicago Section.

Implemented a **Teen Volunteer Program**

Hosted community-wide **blood drives** with Versiti Blood Center of Illinois

Hosted a **Back to School Supplies Drive** with People's Resource Center

Used the Library's **3-D printer** to produce **PPE face shield parts** for local hospitals



LIBRARY + PARTNERSHIPS = SUCCESS

65+ community partners



GRANTS

E-rate Funding Program
RAILS Census 2020
Rotary Club of Wheaton
Wheaton Lions Club

Friends of the Library

Promote public use and community support for the library, foster appreciation of its value as a cultural and educational asset to the community, and focus public attention on the resources, services, facilities, and needs of the library.

numbers at a glance

"It is so important for seniors during Covid-19 that we have these programs. Thanks to the libraries, we don't have to go out and still learn and keep our brains active."

~ library patron

youth

Over **100** passive programs recorded for children & families

4,859 attended
205 in-person programs

2,409 attended **340**
virtual programs

teen

541 attended **113**
virtual programs

TEENS PICKED UP
80 take & make kits

Including No-Sew Fleece Hats, LED Light Cubes, Tie Dye Masks, Hot Chocolate Spoons, and more

25 in-person programs

654 PARTICIPATED IN
43 PRE-RECORDED
PASSIVE PROGRAMS

46 TEEN BOOK BAGS
checked out July-December

adult

4,083 attended
198 virtual programs

1,820 attended **89**
in-person programs

154 Home &
Care Center
Deliveries 

11,273 Reference
questions
answered via phone,
email, Facebook and
Instant Message 
(**3,119** answered in person)

108 PPE pieces
3D-printed
for local
hospitals 

"I really enjoyed the class. The instructor did a good job explaining what to do, and I liked the descriptions of the techniques she used to create the materials we used. Thank you for having fun programs like this."
~ library patron

technology

228 videos added
to **YouTube**
viewed **13,351** times

3,903 explored
 **ancestry**

182 3D
PRINT JOBS

14,870 users
for **Lynda.com**

circulation

10,690 vehicles
came for curbside,
pickup June-Dec 

259,032
total items in collection

26,465 Audio Books
checked out

469,512 books
CHECKED OUT

145,867
visitors to the library

Total eContent checked out
167,090 

brc

53 Business Resource
Center programs
with **514** attendees 

technology

We began 2020 with the launch of Polaris, a Library Integrated System. This software solution offers powerful staff tools and an intuitive experience for patrons. When the library closed in March due to Covid restrictions, staff immediately jumped to the task of making library services available to patrons at home, including issuing library cards electronically and organizing online requests to be picked up curbside.

24/7 LIBRARY

- eContent usage jumped from 11% of our circulation in 2019 to 20% in 2020.
wheatonlibrary.org/econtent
- CreativeBug was added to our Premium Online Databases in April.
wheatonlibrary.org/research
- With our Online Catalog, patrons can now request library materials to pickup curbside or inside; and checkout ebooks and e-audiobooks from the catalog
catalog.wheatonlibrary.org

TECH CENTER

- 3D Print jobs can be ordered online and picked up curbside
wheatonlibrary.org/3dprint
- Mobile prints can be picked up curbside
wheatonlibrary.org/mobileprint
- 10 STEAM Kits for tweens and teens were added to Tech2Go with IEEE Grant funds
wheatonlibrary.org/tech2go

community

The Community Engagement Department pivoted to virtual programs using the Zoom platform in April. We conducted virtual book discussions, film discussions, TED Talks, and more. As it became clearer that this was our “new normal,” we scheduled lectures and demonstrations on history, cooking, science, art, and more. After the social unrest of this past summer, we felt the need to focus our programming on issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

LIVE PROGRAMS

- After-Hours Laser Tag
- *The Girl Who Wore Freedom* film screening
- Sunday Concerts

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS & LECTURES

- Talking About Race panel discussions with DEI200
- Art Demonstrations with DuPage Art League
- Cooking Demos
- Craft Alongs
- Local Author Fest
- Trivia Nights
- Christmas at Marshall Field’s
- Attracting Hummingbirds to Your Yard
- Chicago River Architecture Tour
- Astronomy Using Your Eyes
- Women of Cantigny
- Mammoths in Our Midst
- Pet Chats with DCAS

adult services

REFERENCE SERVICES

2020 brought changes to the way we answer questions for our patrons. Due to the library shutdown, we did not have any in-person interactions for several months during the year. However, changes made during reopening included routing all phone calls, emails and chats to the Adult Services Department. The increase in phone, email and chat questions reflects the continuing need for library services.

BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER

When the pandemic hit and the library shut down in mid-March, the BRC began presenting programs virtually and added at least one job search program a month, including a popular 6-week job search series. In addition, programming co-hosted with SCORE restarted in June and the BRC offered a 3-part series on searching the business database, ReferenceUSA. The BRC has continued valuable partnerships with multiple local organizations.

teen services

LIVE PROGRAMS

In January, 21 teens participated in our 3rd annual after-hours laser tag event. They had the run of the first floor of the library, and had a blast teaming up, hiding, and ambushing other players.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

To provide teens a place to connect in 2020 we created a Virtual Teenspace where teens can meet to play games, continue discussions on Anime, D&D, or Minecraft, and recommend their favorite books. Other highlights:

- Take & Make Kits
- Teen Book Bag Subscription
- Digital Escapes
- D&D Club
- Geek Talk: Minecraft
- Anime Club
- Young Adult Battle of the Books



"Today, my daughter said the library has the best zooms. Your programming has been EXCELLENT! We are so looking forward to the next few weeks. We will be with you."

youth services

LIVE PROGRAMS

We began 2020 with many live programs and experiences, including:

- 32nd Battle of the Books Season
- Macaroni Soup with Miss Carole and Clarence
- Iggy Peck Architect Book Party
- Disney Sing Along
- Book Clubs
- Winter Storytime

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

When the library had to close its doors in March, we quickly developed online youth & family programs to stay connected to our youngest patrons. Some of our favorites:

- Storytimes
- Cartooning with Mark Anderson
- Pete the Cat’s Noon Year’s Eve Party
- Craft Alongs and Draw Alongs
- Family Trivia Nights and Family Bingo Nights
- Holiday Treats with Chef Maddox
- Miss Katie Sings Sessions
- Wheel of Fun and Scavenger Hunts
- Creativebug Classes
- Teddy Bear Tea Party
- Jokes and Riddles

TALKING ABOUT RACE



"Great idea to get more social studies and discussions/learning sessions about race. More than ever, our Library is becoming a safe place to learn and listen to others who have a different background or simply practice other traditions or religions."



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