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**DATE:** June 3, 2021

**TO:** Library Board, Pima County Public Library

Pima County Board of Supervisors  
Pima County Administration  
Friends of the Pima County Public Library, Board of Directors  
Friends of the Arivaca Library, Board of Directors  
Friends of the Esmond Station Library, Board of Directors  
Friends of the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library, Board of Directors  
Friends of the Oro Valley Public Library, Board of Directors  
Friends of the Pima-Green Valley Library, Board of Directors  
Pima Library Foundation, Board of Directors

**FROM:** Karyn Prechtel-Altman  
Deputy Library Director

**SUBJECT: Public Services and Community Engagement Report – May 2021**

I was honored to attend the Government Alliance on Race and Equity/Race Forward Annual Meeting titled *Democracy for All - Governing for Racial Justice* on May 18-21. Over 1000 government employees across all sectors from around the United States are attending, and I am learning and connecting with others. Conference attendee's first assignment was to watch a video on "How the Racial Wealth Gap was Created" and I highly recommend everyone spend 30 minutes to watch: <https://www.racepowerofanillusion.org/videos/how-racial-wealth-gap-was-created>

I was able to visit both the Wilmot and Golf Links Libraries in May, and in April I visited the Himmel, South Tucson, Bear Canyon and Abbett Libraries. It has been a joy to reconnect with employees I have not seen in person for over a year.

**Library Services Manager - Kate DeMeester**

For the month of May, I continued to help my branches with adjustments to their services levels, and to make plans for increasing occupancy and customer time in the buildings. The LGBTQ+ met to discuss plans for Pride Month in June, as well as opportunities to reach the community throughout the summer and into the fall. Lastly, I assisted as part of team for a staff event to allow people to see one another in person again, and catch up on all the good and bad of the past year.

**Library Services Manager - Sharla Ronstadt**

I continued visiting libraries this month (Woods Memorial Library, Dusenberry-River Library, Flowing Wells Library, Wheeler Taft Abbett Sr. Library, Miller Golf Links Library, and W. Anne Gibson-Esmond Station Library) and attended some staff meetings. I also facilitated manager group meetings to collaborate and share information as it pertains to current services. In addition to supporting the branch libraries, I also coordinated Substitute Librarian's extra hours assignments and conducted three more orientations for those returning to work extra hours. I completed the Pima County sustainability training program, called THRIVE, in collaboration with the University of Arizona and Mrs. Green's World.

### **Library Services Manager - Amy Rusk**

This month I resumed some of my in-person visits to libraries and have enjoyed the chance to talk to staff. Most of my discussions with managers center around preparing our buildings for more customers in June and July. Attending a Community Zoom on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) provided helpful input for working with the Antiracism team. Maria Esparza and I presented the first draft of PCPL's Land Acknowledgement statement to Pascua Tribal Council, which went very well; and we are looking forward to meeting with the Tohono O'odham Council in June. In honor of Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month and my work with the Biblio Lotus Team, I have been immersing myself in relevant Asian American podcasts and poetry and attended a two-part Arizona Humanities series entitled, "The History and Impact of Chinese Entrepreneurs in Arizona."

### **Program Manager for Workforce and Economic Development – Ken Zambos**

This May, Pima County Public Library staff released a video celebration for Career Online High School's most recent graduating class of 2020! The video, posted on Pima County Public Library's website, includes short video clips from library staff who closely supported the program, along with the graduates' Academic Coaches, who encouraged and helped students through every step of the way. Library staff and coaches were extremely excited to celebrate students' achievements and extend their warmest congratulations.

The highlight of the video is the series of photos of the nine graduates that participated in the first part of the graduation event outside of the Joel D. Valdez Main Library. The photos provide a touching visual of a graduation ceremony as they highlight students, one by one, with the graduation song playing in the background. Three of the graduates also contributed to the video by sharing inspirational written messages. The motivational messages demonstrate pride in their accomplishments and instill hope for other potential students that may be watching.

Pima County Public Library staff is proud to share this moving video to praise and commemorate the 2020 graduates, and to inspire future graduates to come.

### **District 1 – Supervisor Rex Scott**

#### **Nanini Library – Caitlin Burns**

Nanini customers are still learning the news that we're open to public entry again and staff are happy to welcome them back. Yesterday a customer said to our clerk at the desk, "you all probably get tired of being told how great you are, don't you?"

The Amphi-sponsored snack program will end the last week of May while the libraries transition to the TUSD-sponsored summer lunch program. Nanini staff have been packing 1,500 individual snack bags each week for eight libraries since the stay-at-home order in December which amounts to about 50 boxes. We are so proud to have supported so many other kids and families throughout Tucson for the last several months.

#### **Oro Valley Public Library – Pam Park**

May has seen an increasing number of families coming inside the library to browse the Children's collection and check out books. It is a delight to see their joy in rediscovering the library after the months of only curbside. Preparations are underway for the Summer Learning Program when more children will be stopping by to immerse themselves in the joy of books and reading. Adult customers are equally happy to now be able to browse the stacks and discover new reading. Staff has been increasing their knowledge base about digital books as we get more questions from customers who have increased their consumption of digital books and media over the pandemic. We have been lucky to be able to offer the shady outside patio for wifi use throughout these past few months and we continue to do so.

**Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr. Library** – Meggin Kitterman

Customers are happy to be back in the library and are excited to be browsing. This month we are seeing more children than previously. The Grab and Go snack program continues attracting families, who are happy to learn that Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr Library will be a TUSD summer meal program site, providing meals to go for children and teens all summer.

In addition to the increasing traffic inside the library, there was a lot of parking lot activity. The Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr parking lot was one of the Pima County FEMA Mobile Vaccination sites. People were able to access the COVID-19 vaccine near the library May 11-13. Another activity currently underway in the parking lot is the creation of speed bumps. This safety measure arrives just in time to welcome back youth for the Summer Learning Program and book giveaway.

**District 2 – Supervisor Matt Heinz**

**Sahuarita Library** – Debbie Boyle

The Sahuarita Library remains closed for the time being. The new, larger Sahuarita Library will open in the summer of 2021.

**Sam Lena–South Tucson Library** – Kelly Wilson

Sam Lena-South Tucson Library has seen great enthusiasm around our new telescope donated by the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association. We have seen it circulate frequently and had numerous calls interested in using it in the future. It is great to know our community is seeking knowledge and inspiration beyond the stars.

Our Librarian wrote a wonderful Cinco de Mayo post on behalf of our community's cultural contributions to the world famous taco, which was posted on our webpage.

Our popular seed garden has seen increased engagement from community members including those who regularly come to harvest tomatoes and peppers for their tables. We received our new seeds and we have been very busy processing them for our local gardeners to plant this coming fall.

**District 3 – Supervisor Sharon Bronson, Chair**

**Caviglia-Arivaca Library** – Jodi Ohlson

The Caviglia Arivaca Library was happy to start our much-anticipated *Arivaca Reads Book of the Month Club*. *The Food Explorer: The True Adventures of the Globe-Trotting Botanist Who Transformed What America Eats* has proven to be a popular title, with folks sharing copies as the word has spread about what a great read it is. Patrons continue to notice how nice the branch looks (we spent the pandemic getting new carpet, repainting several areas both inside and out,) and there have been several positive comments on the variety of new titles on the shelves.

We continued to see many students here using Wi-Fi as the school year wrapped up. We were thanked by one teen because "...*You are the reason I am not going to summer school!*" In addition, a newcomer to Arivaca was weepy with gratitude when we were able to give him a library card and computer access at no charge. The strain of the pandemic has left many folks needing bonus acts of kindness and compassion.

### **Flowing Wells Library – Ingrid Trebisky**

Flowing Wells Library participated in Children's Day/Book Day, also known as El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Día), a celebration of children, families, and reading, and held annually on April 30. Leftover books from past Día celebrations were put on a cart near the library entrance and given away free to families who came into the library. It was so popular that staff left the cart out during the month of May. One little preschooler girl was so happy to pick out a book that she was literally shivering with excitement. The director of Ellie Towne Community Center visited the library with one of her employees who will be doing bilingual story times on their Facebook page. They came to check out some library bilingual books, and were able to get some bilingual books from the Día book cart.

Flowing Wells initiated a Seedling Takeaway Program this month. The Flowing Wells community can watch marigold seeds from the Seed Library sprout and grow each time they enter the library. Staff share information about the Seed Library and customers can sign up to take a seedling home.

### **Woods Memorial Library – Em Lane**

On May 18 and 19, Assistant Manager Monique Perez presented to the Amphitheater (Amphi) Parents as Teachers Virtual Playgroup, sharing information in both English and Spanish on utilizing library resources and our summer learning program. Amphi Parents as Teachers is a group of parent educators and families, primarily focusing on ages 0-5. Each family was provided with a library card application, a map of locations, a Grab N Go activity, and information about our Grab N Go snacks and Seed Library. Children's Services staff at Woods Memorial Library and Amphi Parents as Teachers have collaborated pre-pandemic, and look forward to continued collaborations.

## **District 4 – Supervisor Steve Christy**

### **W. Anne Gibson Esmond Station – Mary McKinney**

A woman was reading while sitting on a bench outside the library's entry. About 15 minutes later when she entered the library, the library staff greeter asked her if she was just finishing the end of that book, and the reader's smile showed through her mask. She said, "Yes! I just had a few pages left, but I didn't want it to end. I just love this author." She returned her book in the drop, and entered the library to find a new one.

### **Joyner-Green Valley Library – Victoria Salajko**

This month at the GVV library, we added two additional socially distanced computers available for public use. This required some creative thinking from staff, in order to find ways to manage our limited storage space, and open up more floor space in the branch for social distancing. We are glad to have these additional computers available. They have measurably shortened the amount of time our patrons wait for a computer, during our busiest times of the day.

Our Children's services staff members have been making contact with the teachers and students at neighboring schools this month. They have shared news with them about our upcoming Summer Learning Program. Our school-age community members have been excited to meet our librarians both virtually, and in socially distanced visits, and receive invitations from them to visit the library this summer.

### **Kirk-Bear Canyon Library – Linde Furman**

Kirk-Bear Canyon Library staff have been thrilled to welcome our customers back into the building again. We have been enjoying having all those interactions with the community we've been missing so much over the last year. Circulation of physical materials at our location continues to rise, which we couldn't be happier about! Staff have been working diligently to

spread the word to our customers about our upcoming Summer Reading Program offerings, including the very successful Story Sketches program. Customers have also been showing us love in very caring and thoughtful ways recently, including a beautiful gift of tulips that have just blossomed and are bringing everyone a little smile.

**Miller-Golf Links Library** – Kassy Rodeheaver

Browsing for books inside the building again remains an exciting activity at the Miller-Golf Links Library for our customers. While many readers like spending a little more time here browsing the book stacks, we heard from customers who needed to keep their visits short that they would like more book displays. To better serve them, staff brought back the new fiction and new nonfiction book displays to highlight books that were published in 2020 and 2021 while the building was closed. Customers have been telling us how great it is to quickly come in and find something off our displays to take home. We have to restock them on a daily basis!

Our Children's Services Librarian is busy installing a beautiful new bulletin board scene with drawings of life-sized cactus and desert plants above the children's picture books. Several staff worked on reorganizing the board books by title and moving the two halves of the collection closer together so that our families could more easily locate all of the titles. Circulation of our board books has really improved!

**Murphy-Wilmot Library** – Kathy Konecny

Murphy-Wilmot closed briefly for the installation of an improved customer service desk at the beginning of the month. Since reopening on May 5, customers and staff have given the new desk rave reviews. Customers love that the desk blends nicely with the rest of the library and is easily identifiable. They feel a bit more comfortable in a pandemic environment having some space between themselves and others at the desk. Staff are happy to have supplies like Community Food Bank bags and library card registration materials readily available in order to more quickly and efficiently assist our community.

Our AARP Tax Assistance representative thanked library staff for providing customer seeking tax help with AARP tax packets and contact information. According to her, we helped them help 1400 people this year! This is more than the previous year of 1200.

**District 5 – Supervisor Adelita Grijalva**

**Frank De La Cruz-El Pueblo Library** – Irina Delone

Even though the Library is not offering public access at this time, El Pueblo Library's Grab-n-Go Snack Program goes strong two days a week between 3-5pm. So far this month we have handed out 132 snacks to kids and 31 to adults.

Twenty-six items were checked out to the Mulcahy Y (this includes books and DVDs). Additionally, we provided them with 70 Grab-N-Go Activities.

A staff member continues to deliver Library and donated materials as well as Grab-n-Go kits to the Native American community. This month we provided 503 items to the San Xavier Education Center.

In addition, 293 items (including bi-lingual materials) were delivered to the El Pueblo Senior Center. Items consisted of English/Spanish adult non-fiction and fiction, magazines, and fotonovelas.

### **El Río Library – Kate DeMeester**

The El Río Library remains closed for the time being. We hope to reopen in the summer of 2021.

### **Himmel Park Library – Heather Ross**

As the weather gets warmer, we're seeing more people returning to the library, and they're all so excited to be back. Families are coming back for the first time since the pandemic started, and in some cases the children are so little it's their first time in a library! It's great to see their excitement at being able to look at books and take them home. One caller to the library thanked Himmel staff for adapting "eloquently" to all the changes during the pandemic.

Our display for Asian-American and Pacific Islander Month is also a hit. We have a wide spread of materials for all ages, celebrating the AAPI community, and we keep having to re-stock the shelf!

### **Martha Cooper Library – Tara Foxx-Lupo**

The Children's services team at Martha Cooper has been working on an exciting virtual programming effort for a number of months. Storytime in the Stacks is a series of short videos with an early literacy focus and targets those who would traditionally come to an in-person story time, from toddlers to pre-k. Each video briefly introduces participants to the staff involved, to give the kids a chance to see familiar faces and to create familiarity for those who might eventually attend. The videos include a short flannel story, usually adapted from a picture book, and a literacy tip for parents. In May, the team created one of our Storytime in the Stacks videos to coincide with Star Wars day, May the 4<sup>th</sup>. The video was full of fun Star Wars tie-ins, learning moments and references parents were sure to enjoy. The post has performed well and staff hope it has reached many Star Wars loving households.

The community is showing their appreciation of and need for the library by doing what they have always loved to do, visiting. Printing services are utilized heavily at Martha Cooper, as well as reserve pick-up, copying and faxing. These services are vital to the community and our increasing usage numbers indicate word is getting out more widely to those who need these services.

### **Richard Elías-Mission Library – Alina Rowe**

The Richard Elias-Mission Library is seeing increased traffic as we consistently serve over 100 patrons a day. Children will come to the front and ask for snacks several times a day. Multiple patrons thank us for being open and express gratitude to be able to select materials from the stacks again. A patron told a Library Associate "You guys always do right by me. I really appreciate it."

Richard Elias-Mission Library staff member Taylor participated in Virtual Career Day at Banks Elementary School speaking about her career in librarianship. Taylor also sent many Pima County Public Library outreach giveaway items such as pencils, stickers, and bookmarks, to the students of Banks Elementary. The teacher who picked up the items was visibly excited to receive the giveaways.

Many patrons come to the library for computer access. A patron with limited computer skills thanked staff member Connie for "helping me write a letter to the consulate so my brother and his family can come visit."

Our displays well used by patrons. Each morning there are four or five empty slots where patrons have checked out books off each display. These include mystery novels, new stuff, and two seasonal displays for Memorial Day and Asian American Pacific Islander Month.

**Southwest Library – Angie Grischkowsky**

Southwest Library remains closed for the time being. Instead, Southwest staff are providing support at three other branches during the staffing shortage: Richard Elías-Mission Library, Eckstrom-Columbus Library, and Miller-Golf Links Library. We look forward to reopening in the future.

**Valencia Library – Paulina Aguirre-Clinch**

It is time to celery-brate! Valencia Library is now a Seed Library! To commemorate this day, Valencia Library staff created a bountiful display with seeds and books available for checkout. Library Associate Thania made sure to post about this eventful day on Valencia Library's Facebook page – please check it out!

Children's Librarian Sara and Library Associate Thania presented Babytime via Zoom to Mission Manor Head Start home based families. Staff commented how nice it was to see the babies smiling faces. The teacher made sure to let Sara and Thania know that they did an amazing job. She even requested another Babytime for next month!

Library Associates Maggie and Nico presented virtually to three classes at Valencia Middle School. They talked about what it was like working at the library. Students were particularly interested in the square footage of the libraries. Apparently, they had just completed a unit on that same topic. They asked many questions and were very disappointed to learn that most staff started their workday at 8am. Perhaps they were hoping they would get to sleep in as working adults – reality hit them hard.