



L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library

SO MUCH MORE...

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

History does not repeat itself, but it rhymes.

— *attributed to Mark Twain*

1919: The work of the year just closed was necessarily interrupted by the epidemic of Spanish Influenza during which the Library was closed for sixty-two days. The stations which had been well started were closed and had to be discontinued for the entire year.

— *1919 Annual Report of the Eau Claire Public Library*

2020: This is what has helped me the most throughout the pandemic. What would I do without my library? The ease of ordering online, picking up books in the parking lot, the friendly voices on the phone whenever I call... you have made it safe and easy. I am so grateful. I hope you have some idea of how much you are valued, and the wonderful, soul-saving work you are doing.

— *Anonymous online customer comment*

Dear Library Stakeholders,

There's no better time to focus on shared goals than during a disaster. The crises of 2020 — global pandemic, political unrest, and economic uncertainty — have provided that opportunity.

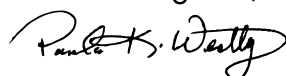
The library's number one priority was and continues to be the health and safety of customers and staff. We've devoted enormous amounts of time to redesigning our procedures to meet safety guidelines from state and local agencies. This year we also found out just how much the community needs library access. We've made radical changes to our services and continue to explore ways to expand service levels.

Since March 2020, the library has added a host of contact-free services. We now provide online storytimes and other programming, virtual reference services, and increased access to digital materials. We offer a contact-free hold pickup service, free outdoor Wi-Fi, food distribution, and access to no-cost consultations with our licensed social worker.

All these services have been designed, refined, and adapted to protect public health while fulfilling our mission to “promote lifelong learning, create collaborative spaces, and support open access to diverse materials and resources to enhance the quality of life in the community.”

In addition to all of this, capital campaign work and renovation/expansion design continued through virtual meetings and webinars. We are grateful to our community partners, Friends of the Library, Story Builder volunteers, library customers, and Story Builder donors. Most of all we appreciate your patience, words of encouragement, and library love!

Kindest regards,



Pamela K. Westby, Library Director
on behalf of the library's board and staff

***Thank you for your wonderful support and loyalty.
They make all the difference.***

2020 OUTCOMES

EQUITY INITIATIVES

- **382** Grab 'N' Go grocery food bags given away in collaboration with Feed My People.
- Staff participated in the Chippewa Valley Transformation Project.
- Received Wisconsin Libraries Transforming Communities engagement training.
- More than **6,000** books delivered through Home Delivery Services.
- Published new anti-racist resource list of books, websites, multimedia, community organizations, and upcoming events.

PANDEMIC PIVOT

- **9,855** people attended new virtual storytimes.
- **357,570** items were checked out with our new contact-free pickup service.
- Library art shows were moved online.
- Featured local musicians in "Sawdust City Sounds Like Home" video series.
- **1,173** electronic library cards issued online.
- New "Dabbler in Residence" online program series was launched.
- Staff sewed masks and used 3D printer to make ear savers.
- **329,427** electronic materials checked out.
- Crucial services and materials like DMV forms, unemployment applications, and voter registration moved online.
- **27,629** reference questions answered by library staff.

PEOPLE FIRST

- Loaned new library wellness kits in partnership with City-County Health Department and Wintermission Eau Claire.
- Kid and adult Summer Reading Programs, parenting classes, and book clubs for teens and adults went virtual.
- Created new YouTube videos on how to use the library's many resources.
- **324** activity kits checked out by families.
- StoryWalk in Owen Park, created in partnership with the City Community Services Department, inspired community support.
- Received United Way COVID Recovery Grant to set up more StoryWalks in the future.
- **1,013** people were referred to local organizations for mental and physical health, crisis management, housing, financial resources, and support during no-cost consultations with our licensed social worker.

MORE ROOM FOR EVERYONE

- Community members and organizations provided ideas and comments that were included in the renovation/expansion plans.
- The design for a complete renovation and **6,800** square foot addition to the library facility neared finalization.
- More than **100** campaign volunteers and leaders raised nearly **\$4.1M** for the Story Builder Library Expansion Campaign in 2020, which has grown to more than **\$6M**.



L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library

400 Eau Claire Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Eau Claire, WI
Permit No. 1557

L.E. PHILLIPS MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY
400 Eau Claire St., Eau Claire, WI 54701
www.ecpubliclibrary.info
715-839-5004 | librarian@eau Claire.lib.wi.us

© 2021 All rights reserved.

This report is available online at: www.ecpubliclibrary.info/mission.

