



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

April 2020

SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

Although library buildings were closed to the public, the Wichita Public Library remained open for business during April to ensure that resources and services that could be safely offered to residents were available for customer use.

The 11th Annual Young Artists exhibits were changed from in-person events to a virtual activity. Earlier in the year, young artists from early childhood education programs throughout the City were read stories after which they created art projects based on those titles. Instead of putting the artwork on display in libraries, each piece was photographed and placed into a collection of albums for children, parents and caregivers to view. Although the excitement of in-person artist receptions was lost, the digital displays made it easier for the children's creations to be shared with friends and family.



The Rainbow Fish by Crew, age 2, from Envision Childhood Development Center

Curation of the virtual branch continued to be a high priority. In total, over 5,000 unique customers borrowed 25,566 books from e-collections in April. This reflected an increase of 26% from March and a 98% increase from April of 2019. The most dramatic growth was in use of children's materials where loans increased from 703 uses in April of 2019 to 3,299 checkouts this April. At the same time, nearly 1,800 magazines were accessed during the Library's first month of Flipster online magazine access.

When staff became aware that many of the #ReadICT participants were staying home, reading more, and nearing completion of the year-long twelve book reading program, six new "bonus" categories were announced by *The Wichita Eagle*, the Library's #ReadICT co-sponsor. Since the inception of the program in January, participants have recorded completion of nearly 5,000 books read as part of the program.

OTHER NEWS

For the first few weeks of library building closures, the most frequent questions received by Library staff related to use of digital collections and requests for library e-cards. As stay at home orders continued, a more frequent reference question was “What’s open?” as customers called for assistance finding a variety of service such as where to find a notary, faxing and printing services, veterinary clinics, and even one customer who needed help finding a place in walking distance in order to get something to eat. Another theme of questions related to people asking for COVID-19 information. When one customer called to ask for a detailed understanding of the stay at home order, the responding employee recited paragraph by paragraph both the state and county public health orders. The customer expressed appreciation for the assistance that helped create a better understanding of facts and rumors related to the orders.

Library staff does their best in tracking down various essential services and providing customers with accurate information for operating hours during the quarantine. This often takes longer than just googling locations and sometimes involves tracking down social media posts to get updated information since Google’s information hasn’t kept up with all the changes.

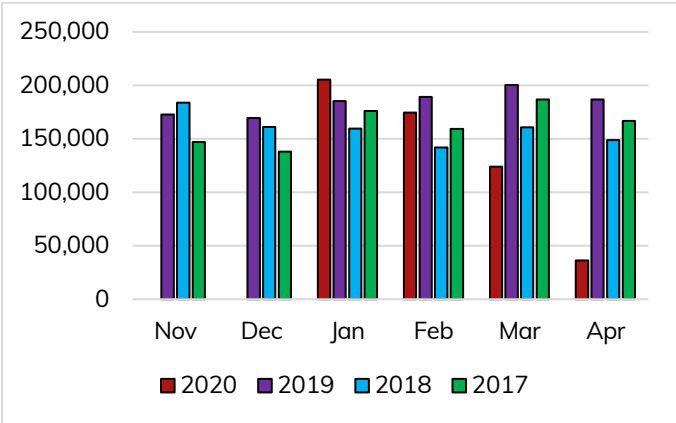
Library facilities closed to the public provide a unique opportunity for completing building maintenance. A mold remediation project was completed in the children’s area of the Alford branch library. At the Advanced Learning Library, new digital menu boards were installed in the coffee shop, new control boards were installed on the three rooftop units that provide climate control in the conference center in order to resolve ongoing humidity issues, rooftop unit filters were cleaned, semi-annual maintenance on portable walls was completed and the long-awaited replacement of Children’s Pavilion entry doors was completed.

Communications Specialist Sean Jones initiated a LEAN process improvement for tracking program cancellations resulting from COVID-19 restrictions. Instead of a series of email messages, Sean created a shared Excel spreadsheet for the Library, City Arts and Park and Recreation employees involved in programming and marketing. The spreadsheet provides everyone with program status information while also serving as a tracking guide to ensure that changes are completely updated across all platforms.

Rockwell Branch Manager Savannah Ball created a LEAN process improvement proposal to streamline the claims returned process. Customers who claim they have returned an item that is checked out on their account go through a two week search-in-progress process by staff. The proposal decreases these searches and gives front line staff an opportunity to quickly resolve a claims return.

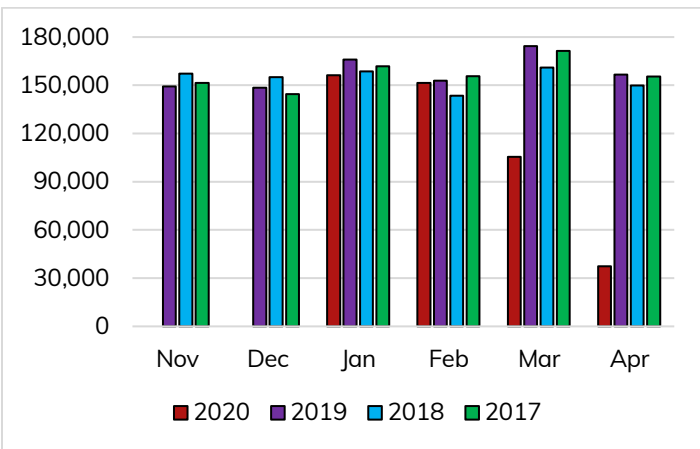
Service Dashboard *All library buildings were closed to the public beginning March 17.*

LIBRARY VISITS (door count, catalog sessions, and website visits)

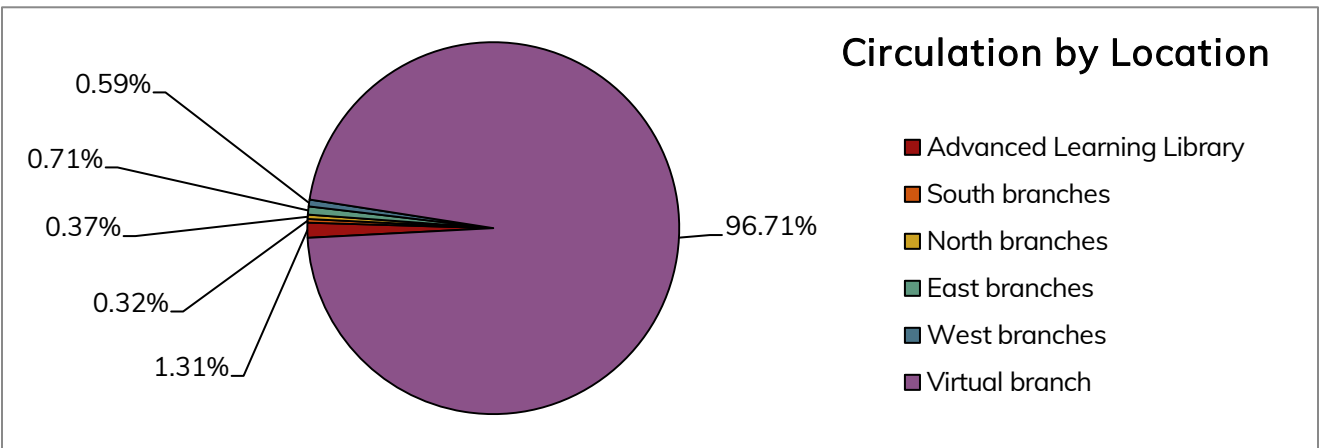


	APRIL		
	2020	2019	% change
Door Counts	0	83,297	-100%
Catalog Use	10,836	44,538	-75.67%
Website Visits	25,326	58,825	-56.95%
Total	36,162	186,660	-80.63%

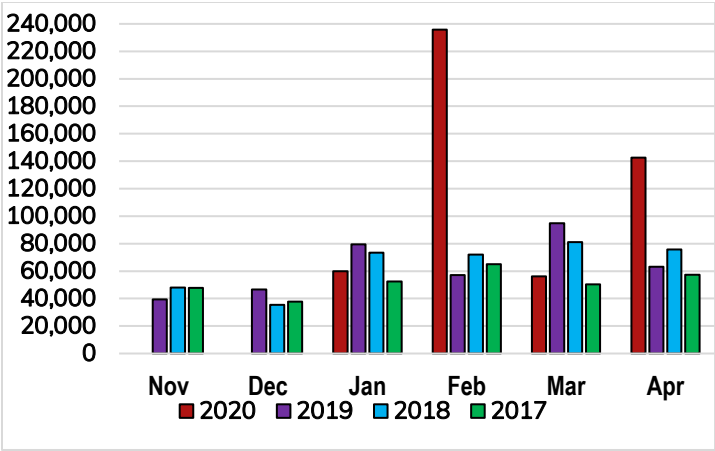
CHECKOUTS



	APRIL		
	2020	2019	% change
Physical Circ	1,232	136,494	-99.10%
Virtual Circ	36,175	20,116	79.83%
WPL	27,332	12,931	111.37%
State	8,843	7,185	23.08%
Total	37,407	156,610	-76.11%



QUESTIONS ANSWERED (by staff in person/phone and through online services)

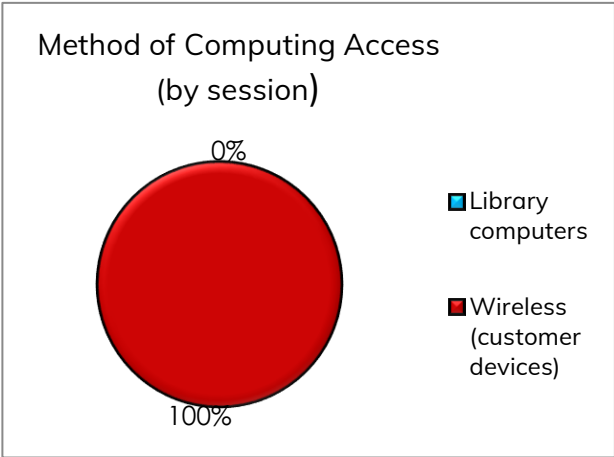


APRIL			
	2020	2019	% change
In person	N/A	9,043	N/A
Online	142,686	54,026	164.11%
Total	142,686	63,069	126.24%

Telephone reference transactions were not counted during the month of April.

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE – None offered during April

PUBLIC COMPUTING

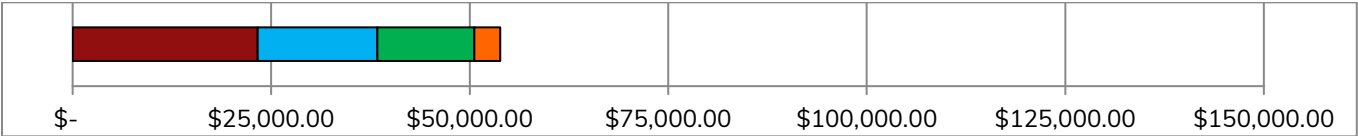


APRIL			
	2020	2019	% change
Workstation Sessions	0	10,788	-100%
Wi-Fi Sessions	736	9,273	-92.06%
Number of Users	78	2,079	-96.25%
Hours of Access	1,445	13,334	-89.16%

All public computing sessions delivered during April were Wi-Fi sessions conducted in library parking lots.

VOLUNTEERS (hours of service) – Suspended during April

MATERIALS DONATIONS (value if purchased)



Year to date total = \$53,831.25 Items added to Library collections YTD = 3,171

Materials donations include holdings processed from transfer of Kansas DAR library collections.

SERVICE SNAPSHOT: Recent Raving Fans Stories

Advanced Learning Library employee Ben Ropp received a call from a customer concerned that she left her Medicare card on the photocopier at the Westlink Branch prior to the branch closing to the public. Her message was forwarded to Westlink Manager Tracie Partridge who not only arranged a time for her to retrieve the card during the Library's closure but also provided her with a photocopy of the front and back of the card.

A customer called the Library because she returned an item with two bookmarks her children had made her. The bookmarks were located in a recycling bin and mailed back to the customer who was incredibly appreciative.

Business Librarian John Cleary spent a great deal of time in April searching the Foundation Directory Online database for grant information for local non-profits. He received thank-you notes from several organizations.

Realizing the difficulty distance learning students would face when they were unable to visit the Library to complete their semester-end tests, John also researched and developed procedures for a remote test proctoring service using Zoom software and a lockdown browser, when required by the university. One session has been completed successfully with additional exams scheduled for May and June.

As so many people have moved to work from home and business services have moved to online only, requests for technology assistance have remained steady. When one customer called for help finding Wichita E-Reads books on a Kindle, Librarian Daniel Pewewardy realized that the customer's Kindle was the same model as his own which he happened to have at the library that day. Pewewardy explained this to the customer and then went to get his own device. A return call was made to the customer and Daniel was able to guide the customer through a step by step process until the books were located. The customer was extremely grateful and thanked Daniel for the special assistance.

While she has been unable to make visits to child care centers, Youth Outreach Librarian Anne Harris has remained in contact with in home providers, center directors and teachers, sending them information about free informational webinars and other online resources to fill the gap for the loss of in-person service. Several of the providers have responded with appreciative emails, thanking Anne for her ingenuity in finding a way to continue to support child care providers.